

The Use of Professional Development to Promote Culturally Responsive Teaching of English  
Learners (ELs): Classroom Implementation without Conceptual Change

by

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## Dedication

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### **Abstract**

This study is focused on effective professional development (PD) that may increase teachers' awareness of culturally responsive teaching for English Learners (ELs). Teachers are not prepared to teach linguistically and culturally diverse students in today's classrooms. This research is part of a larger state-funded grant study that created a partnership with the university and a local school district with 30 teachers completing two university courses as PD. The study examined the framework of culturally responsive teaching, effective PD, and constructivism and found that: (a) the reform PD allowed teachers to develop knowledge of strategies, but not theory for teaching ELs; (b) active learning and collective participation were supported by constructivist activities but were focused on implementing classroom strategies; (c) the connections the teachers made between the PD and their ELs were limited to language background needs with minimal inclusion of culturally responsive pedagogy and second language acquisition (SLA) theory in PD discussions; and (d) external factors impacted the duration and the content focus of the PD. The effectiveness of the PD remained at a surface level with a focus on the implementation of classroom practices rather than conceptual understanding to create change. The study argues that in order for even well-designed reform models of PD to create sustained instructional change, there must be inclusion of deeper conceptual understanding of SLA and culturally responsive teaching.

*Keywords:* culturally responsive teaching, professional development, effective professional development, constructivism, constructivist professional development, English Learners (ELs), ELLs, Second Language Acquisition (SLA)

## Chapter 1: Introduction

Growing up in a suburb in the Midwest, I did not live among a large population of English learners (ELs<sup>1</sup>). Interestingly, my group of friends included someone whose parents came from Egypt and spoke Arabic at home and another with a mother born in South Korea, but neither one was considered an EL from my view point as a teenager. Neither came to school with an accent nor had visible difficulties being part of the school culture. In fact, from my perspective, we viewed each other's backgrounds just as we would with any traditional White family in the neighborhood. Nothing more. Nothing less. Progressing on to my college years at a large urban university in the Midwest, I became more aware of the rich diversity around me. My friends' unique backgrounds became more fascinating to me, but I was still not fully aware of the differences they may have had in school or the difficulties their families may have experienced living in my majority White, middle class neighborhood.

While my teacher preparation courses focused on diverse learning styles and how to modify instruction for struggling readers or special education students, none of the coursework brought attention to the concept of EL students, even in the city with many ELs in my college courses. Finally, in 2005, I was given the opportunity to spend a portion of my student teaching in New Zealand. I was working in a classroom in Auckland with seven and eight year olds from all over the world. I was now teaching students from Fiji, South Africa, South Korea, and Vietnam. I was working and learning in a country whose national anthem included the language of the Maori natives. I was working in a school that embraced diversity, differentiated

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<sup>1</sup> This study uses the most current abbreviation for English Learners rather than ELLs

instruction, and multiple intelligences with children as young as seven years old being aware of their strengths. The experience changed me in more ways than one, but overall it provided me with my first eye-opening experience with ELs. I was always fascinated with learning about other cultures and had traveled abroad leisurely while studying Spanish. But, now, I truly understood the language process and how learning is different and challenging for students from other countries and cultures. In New Zealand, I was experiencing the cultural differences as an outsider traveling abroad trying to teach ELs, but with the advantage of at least speaking the language of the country in which I was residing.

My experience in New Zealand motivated me to enroll in the Master of Education program at the same university upon graduation to continue studying foreign language education while pursuing certification in English as a Second Language (ESL). I continued to be fascinated with language education and language acquisition, but still felt like there was something missing. My concern was addressed when I enrolled in my one required course on bilingual bicultural education. This course introduced me to White privilege. The White privilege conversations put into words what I was experiencing and thinking as I grew as an educator: that schools should emphasize diversity and the need to increase one's own cultural awareness. The bilingual bicultural course that brought White privilege to the conversation changed my life as a White, middle class female. The conversation highlighted the desire I felt for diversity while teaching in my first district where one family in the entire school was African American and the rest were White families who had been in the same small neighborhood and attending the same schools for generations. These families questioned why learning a foreign language, Spanish, was important to be taught in school. I felt that my purpose was to open my students' eyes and highlight the benefit of embracing an open mindset about diversity and

cultures different than their own. While I did not come from a minority family, I developed a drive to work with diverse students and felt that something was missing from my undergraduate teacher preparation coursework while I discovered my new vision of an effective classroom teacher.

I shared this background about myself for two reasons. The first was to explain my passion to focus on the topic of professional development (PD) for teachers of ELs and why I was organically drawn to continue my studies in this area. The second was to share my experience in teacher preparation, which did not prepare me to teach the population of students in our schools. Unfortunately, this is true for most of today's teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Many educators shared my situation of being unprepared to teach ELs in the classroom. My background in foreign language and ESL instruction, as well as my desire to work with educators in the future, motivated me to research effective professional development for working with ELs.

My personal narrative continued with being included on a state-funded grant designed specifically to provide coursework for teachers working with ELs. As a member of the grant evaluation team, I had the opportunity to explore my interests in professional development for teachers of ELs further. The grant was designed to provide professional development to teachers that focused on meeting the learning needs of ELs, which aligned with my research interests. Being part of the state-funded grant provided a practical opportunity to explore questions unanswered in the literature.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The problem in today's schools is that the EL population is rising in PK-12 classrooms; achievement data show that ELs are not achieving at the same rates as their English-only peers;

and, teachers are not prepared to teach ELs in their classrooms. This dissertation presents the background of the problem as well as three areas in the literature that address the problem of preparing teachers to work with ELs, namely, culturally responsive teaching, professional development, and constructivism as an approach to learning.

### **Background of the Problem**

There is not a one-size-fits-all description of U.S. PK-12 classrooms. “Diversity,” as defined by Grant and Ladson-Billings (1997), “refers to the differences among people . . . [but] multicultural educators are usually referring to group differences” (p. 93-94). Many researchers describe diversity among individuals and groups in terms of race, ethnicity, class, gender, and religion (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997; Nieto, 1996; Banks, 1989, 2004; Banks, Cookson, Gay, Hawley, Irvine, Nieto & Stephan, 2001). Others also include “language, religion, ability, age and sexual orientation” (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997, p. 94). Diversity plays a vital role in multicultural education: “Continuing education about diversity is especially important for teachers because of the increasing cultural and ethnic gap that exists between the nation's teachers and students” (Banks et al., 2001, p 196). Public schools are not mono-cultural, with student diversity present in all areas, including both urban and suburban areas. Banks et al. (2001) explain, “Diversity in the nation's schools is both an opportunity and a challenge. The nation is enriched by the ethnic, cultural, and language diversity of its citizens. However, whenever diverse groups interact, intergroup tension, stereotypes, and institutionalized discrimination develop” (Banks, et al., 2001, p. 203). When reading the literature in this dissertation, “diversity” includes all students who come from different backgrounds (race, ethnicity, religion) than the majority in the school, while the term “ELs” or “culturally and linguistically diverse” includes students whose first languages are not English at home.

**Growing number of ELs.** According to the Migration Policy Institute, in 2007-2008, 10.7% of students were ELs in the United States with that number increasing each year (Batalova & McHugh, 2010). The percentage of ELs continued to increase and in 2013–14: “ELL [English Language Learner] students in cities made up an average of 14.1 percent of total public school enrollment, ranging from 9.6 percent in small cities to 16.6 percent in large cities” (Kena, Hussar, McFarland, de Brey, Musu-Gillette, Wang, Zhang, Rathbun, Zhang, Wilkinson-Flicker, Diliberti, Barmer, Mann, & Velez, 2016, p. 93). In addition, the “percentage of students in ELL programs was generally higher for school districts in more urbanized areas than for those in less urbanized areas” (Kena et al., 2016, p. 93). The number of ELs entering schools continues to increase across grade levels, with the highest number of ELs at the kindergarten level with a reported 17.4% of students entering U.S. Schools as ELs (Kena, et al., 2016). According to the National Center for Statistics (2014) 73.9% of all schools have at least one student who is not a native English speaker. It is important to realize that “not all students learning English are immigrants. Many have been born and raised in the United States and speak another language at home and in their communities” (Nieto, 2013, p. 76). For these students who speak their native language at home with their families, “their first exposure to English may be when they enter kindergarten” (Nieto, 2013, p. 76). At the same time, there may be immigrants who have some exposure or limited proficiency to English prior to moving to the United States (Nieto, 2013).

**ELs’ academic achievement is behind their English-only peers.** Not only are the numbers of ELs increasing in the United States, but the achievement data are showing that ELs are often under performing academically (Kena et al., 2016; Durden, 2008). Since 1998 when EL student data was collected, the “average reading scores for non-ELL 4th- and 8th-grade students were higher than the scores for their ELL peers” (Kena et al., 2016, p. 185).



Specifically, “In 2015, the achievement gap between non-ELL and ELL students was 37 points at the 4th-grade level and 45 points at the 8th-grade level” (Kena et al., 2016). This reading gap for 2015 was “not measurably different from the achievement gaps observed in 2013 and 1998” (Kena et al., 2016, p. 185). The data for high school show that “non-ELL 12th-graders scored higher than their ELL peers by 49 points” with, again, no measurably different closing of the achievement gap (Kena et al., 2016, p. 186). The achievement gap for ELs compared to their English-only peers has not improved and continues to be a problem in reading scores. This fact holds true in the study district where EL students scored lower than non-EL in every grade level on the state standardized assessment in 2014 (Adler & Sedgeman, 2015). The achievement gap for the study district showed a 39.3% gap among fourth grade ELs and a 52.7% gap among eighth grade ELs compared to their non-EL peers (Adler & Sedgeman, 2015).

**Teacher Preparation.** Within the realm of teacher preparation, the problem of low achievement among ELs as their numbers continue to rise while their needs are not being met should be addressed (Durden, 2008; Nieto, 2009, 2013). Currently, our classrooms are growing in diversity, but the population of educators continues to come from the dominant culture of White, middle-class citizens (Ladson-Billings & Tate IV, 2009; Durden, 2008). This can potentially be problematic if the teachers are unaware of the needs of their diverse students (Ladson-Billings, 2004; Gay, 2002, Banks, 1989).

Darling-Hammond (2006) described the situation for new teachers as follows:

In the classrooms most beginning teachers will enter, at least 25% of students live in poverty and many of them lack basic food, shelter, and health care; from 10% to 20% have identified learning differences; 15% speak a language other than English as their primary language (many more in urban settings); and about 40%

are members of racial/ethnic “minority” groups, many of them recent immigrants from countries with different educational systems and cultural traditions. (p. 301)

The classroom described by Darling-Hammond (2006) still exists, with larger numbers of ELs today, nearly a decade later; yet, the data show that not all teachers are required to take coursework in meeting the needs of ELs (Ballantyne, Sanderman, & Levy, 2008). While some university teacher education professors and programs attempt to address increased diversity prior to educators entering the classroom, “they give little consideration to the fact that *all* [italics in the original] classrooms in the future will have students whose first language is not English” (Nieto, 2009, p. 469). Nieto (2013) continues to believe that teacher education programs are not doing enough to prepare teachers to work with diverse students, especially in urban settings because while they may “make an effort to teach preservice teachers to work effectively . . . with students of diverse backgrounds, many teachers enter the profession with little experience in working in these communities (Nieto, 2013, p. 24).

In a roundtable report conducted by the National Clearinghouse for English Language acquisition (NCELA), in 2008 only four states required ESL endorsements for all teachers: Arizona, California, Florida, and New York (Ballantyne et al., 2008). Seventeen states had programs that included the special needs of ELs, with an additional seven states pending their National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) standards to implement programs that included the needs of ELs (Ballantyne et al., 2008). At the time of the report, there were still 15 states “where there is no requirement that all teachers have expertise or training in working with ELLs” (2008, p. 120). The majority of teachers are entering the classroom without a background in working with ELs based on the state requirements, yet one in four students in today’s public school classrooms speak a language other than English at home

(Nieto, 2013). Therefore, schools must hire, train, and promote teachers with experience teaching ELs and who understand the needs of EL students or they will continue to marginalize ELs and hinder their achievement (Nieto, 2009, 2013).

Without substantial understanding to reach ELs' needs, the problem continues to grow with veteran teachers as well (Nieto, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 2014). I often hear misconceptions or prejudices among educators about ELs (particularly Middle Eastern ELs) and their families, cultural backgrounds, and learning capabilities. For example, in the fall of 2014 at a back-to-school professional development session, teachers were asked what strengths and advantages ELs bring to the classroom and the room fell silent. In small groups, the teachers focused more on the challenges of teaching ELs reading and social studies as well as being evaluated on these students' test scores rather than any strengths they may bring. The discussions did not include the background experiences of some of the EL students, many of who are refugees. Refugee students have extraordinary needs: many have experienced death, uncertainty and danger on their journey to their current homes in the U.S. Knowing this information can help educators understand the challenges and needs that come with teaching refugee students and create a safe, welcoming environment to foster learning for them in order to promote achievement and prepare these students for successful lives.

### **Seeking Solutions through Cultural Responsive Pedagogy, Professional Development, and Constructivist Perspectives**

The following review of the literature examines the roles of culturally responsive pedagogy, professional development, and constructivism to address the problem of unprepared teachers of ELs. Choosing these three areas of research was based upon my experiences in K-12 schools with teachers of ELs, my doctoral coursework in the constructivist approach to learning,

and the large presence professional development has in the K-12 field. Focusing on culturally responsive pedagogy and its characteristics can bring awareness of the needs of ELs to teachers (Nieto, 2013; Gay, 2002). In order to teach ELs successfully, teachers require an awareness and understanding of the cultural needs of individuals along with the skills needed to reach the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students (DelliCarpini, 2008; Durden, 2008; Nieto, 2009, 2013). Instructing teachers on culturally responsive pedagogy provides an opportunity to prepare teachers to meet the needs of the ELs in their classrooms (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 2004, 2009; Nieto, 2009, 2013). In addition, the constructivist approach to learning can provide opportunities for teachers to be reflective in their own beliefs and practices in relation to culturally responsive pedagogy while connecting their learning to their own experiences (Kroll & Ammon, 2002). Constructivism centers around the concepts that constructing knowledge is personal based on individuals' experiences (Piaget, 1978) and that individuals learn from interacting with their peers (Vygotsky, 1987). Finally, educators are mandated to attend minimum requirements of professional development, which provides a potential opportunity to address the problem of teachers being unprepared to teach ELs in culturally responsive ways.

Professional development may provide an avenue to increase educators' best practices for ELs while creating classrooms that are more culturally responsive due to changes in teacher beliefs (Pianta, 2011; Darling-Hammond, 2008; Holland, 2005). According to Adler (2015) "traditionally, there are two distinct routes for professional development: pre-service in a formal teacher preparation program [initial teacher *education*] and in-service [commonly referenced with the term professional development] while on the job" (p. 89). The following literature review uses both definitions of professional development; however, the term "teacher education" refers to university students preparing for their teaching careers as discussed under teacher

preparation, while “professional development” is the focus of this dissertation and refers to the definition of in-service development distinguished by Adler (2015). Furthermore, professional development can go beyond classroom implementation and strive for changing and reforming a school or system to better reach the needs of the growing number of diverse students in classrooms.

## **Chapter 2: Review of Literature**

The purpose of this literature review was to analyze theories and past research to answer the question of “How can professional development effectively foster culturally responsive teachers?” Research for this literature review was built upon previous years of researching the topic using Proquest, ERIC, and the Search Summon<sup>TM</sup> browser on the Mardigian Library System searching for ELs, English Learners, teacher education, culturally responsive teaching, and multiculturalism. For this review, I extended my search to include cultural awareness, effective professional development, intercultural competency, constructivist professional development, and teacher beliefs towards English learners. References within research articles were used as guides to find relevant studies as well. Compiled books on critical pedagogy, constructivism, and teaching English learners provided additional references for the review. Three bodies of literature that assist with answering the question of “How can professional development foster cultural responsive teachers of ELs?” are: culturally responsive pedagogy in relation to the learning needs of ELs, professional development and what effective professional development looks like for teachers of ELs, and the constructivist approach to learning as it connects with both culturally responsive pedagogy and effective professional development.

### **Culturally Responsive Pedagogy**

The framework of culturally responsive pedagogy focuses on being reflective and acknowledging one’s self awareness of his/her own culture beliefs and the beliefs one has towards other groups of people, in this case the culture of the students in our classrooms (Gay, 2002; Bacon, 2014). Culturally responsive teaching, according to Gay (2002) “is defined as

using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively” (p. 106). Being familiar with culturally responsive teaching can help promote learning for all students in today’s classrooms (Gay, 2002; Durden, 2008; Nieto, 2009, 2013). Prior to understanding cultural responsive teaching framework, one must become familiar with the complex role of culture in individual’s lives.

**Defining culture.** Culture refers to the unique ways that specific social groups interpret the world in which they live (Giroux, 2009; McLaren, 2009). Culture is a complex system in which there are three main entities: “dominant culture, subordinate culture, and subculture” (McLaren, 2009, p. 65). In the United States, the dominant culture has historically been the White, middleclass (Gay, 2002; McLaren, 2009). The dominant culture is defined by McLaren (2009) as the “social practices and representations that *affirm the central values, interests, and concerns of the social class in control of the material and symbolic wealth of society* [italics in the original]” (p. 65). Meanwhile, the subordinate culture includes the non-dominant social groups who live in the same society as the dominant culture, but who have less power and influence (McLaren, 2009). ELs fall into the subordinate, or marginalized, culture category as they “live out social relations in subordination to the dominant culture” (McLaren, 2009, p. 66) of native English speakers. While most members of society live their lives either within the dominant or subordinate cultures, there are subcultures whose members create their own identities that differ from the dominant culture in and also hold less power and influence (McLaren, 2009). Each of these cultures has its own values, beliefs, symbols, and cultural forms that express the culture of the particular group (McLaren, 2009).

Culture, therefore, is complex. There are certain elements of culture that “are more important for teachers to know than others because they have direct implications for teaching and

learning. Among these are ethnic groups' cultural values, traditions, communication, learning styles, contributions, and relational patterns" (Gay, 2002, p. 107). For teachers to understand culture as determined by Gay (2002), it is also necessary to understand the hierarchy of cultures in our society presented above by McLaren (2009), as well as the connection between cultural groups and power emphasized by Giroux (2009). Giroux (2009) stated:

First, the concept of culture has been immediately connected with the question of how *social relations are structured* within class, gender, race and age formations that produce oppression and dependency. Second, culture has been analyzed within the radical perspectives not simply as a way of life, but as a *form of production* through which different groups in either their dominant or subordinate social relations define and realize their aspirations through asymmetrical relations of power. Third, culture has been viewed as a *field of struggle* in which the production, legitimation, and circulation of particular forms of knowledge and experience are central areas of conflict. Fourth, the production of culture has been analyzed primarily through analysis of language as the constitutive and expressive signifier of meaning [italics in the original]. (p. 451)

The four arguments made by Giroux (2009) demonstrate the complexity of culture in society and that many of the students from diverse backgrounds in today's classrooms are living their lives and constructing their experiences from subordinate perspectives. The complexities and struggles of those not in the dominant culture are relevant to the culturally responsive pedagogy framework (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 2014). Individual students in classrooms experience education through the social relations that represent the culture they identify within their own lives (Gay, 2002; Nieto, 2013, Ladson-Billings, 2014).



Cultures themselves are evolving and changing across generations as cultural practices change (Ladson-Billings, 2014; Nieto, 2009). It is not enough to learn about what is culturally relevant for one culture because within each generation, the culture and what is relevant to that culture can change (Ladson-Billings, 2014). The circumstances vary both broadly from ethnic group to ethnic group but also on individual basis, where educators need to not quickly assume that they understand the culture of one student even with similar language or ethnic backgrounds. For example, EL's parents may keep the traditions of their home country's culture while their children may be shifting away from those traditions based on their experiences in U.S. schools and acclimating to the United States (Ladson-Billings, 2014; Derderian-Aghajanian & Cong; Packard, 2001). Derderian-Aghajanian and Cong (2012) revealed these differences in their exploration of the challenges and difficulties two Chinese and two Middle Eastern students faced in regard to cultural stereotypes at school. The Chinese students were stereotyped as high achievers and the Middle Eastern students were prejudged based on negative views of terrorism (Derderian-Aghajanian & Cong, 2012). All four students had difficulties navigating in the new U.S. culture at school (Derderian-Aghajanian & Cong, 2012).

Packard (2001) provides another example of the intercultural gap between the beliefs and traditions of parents and their children in her study with her own Chinese-born mother. The study focused on using culturally relevant books to connect and understand parents' and students' cultures (Packard, 2001). Like Packard's (2001) examples, the EL students in today's classrooms have different circumstances that affect their individual culture. Ladson-Billings (2014) described a similar situation with Hmong students who represented three generations of Hmong families in the Midwest; she wrote that "while these third-generation youth identify as Americans, they also understand themselves as Hmong-Americans, and their experience of

Hmong culture is different from that of their parents and elders” (p. 75). Ladson-Billings (2014) believes that “teachers who want to understand Hmong culture must recognize this heterogeneity of cultural experience” (p. 75). Variances can also occur within generations of ELs when the culture of older siblings may also differ than those of their younger siblings who are first-born American citizens as students try to navigate in the U.S. schools’ culture. The refugee background of many students can create new cultural changes as well. Immigrants have various experiences when moving to the U.S. with some arriving with their families voluntarily, while often refugees may be escaping adverse conditions in their home countries (Cummins, 2012).

**Theoretical perspective of culturally responsive pedagogy for ELs.** Educators who practice culturally responsive teaching support changing pedagogy to fit the needs of marginalized students, including ELs (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 2004; Giroux, 2009; Bartolomé, 2009). Culturally responsive teaching includes critically examining school curriculum and environments (Gay, 2002; Bacon, 2014; Ladson-Billings, 2004). Fullan (1993) believes that “the teacher who works for or allows the *status quo* [italics in the original] is the traitor” (p. 14). In other words, while teachers’ biases in accepting inequities and the status quo may not be intentional, improving teachers’ understanding and awareness of their responsibilities in shaping the lives of their students can be supported through culturally responsive pedagogy.

Culturally responsive, or culturally relevant, teaching has been a large focus in the field due to the works of Ladson-Billings (1995) and Gay (2002). Additionally, “culturally relevant teaching sees excellence as a complex standard that takes student diversity and individual differences into account” (Durden, 2008, p. 411). Gay (2002) argued that culturally responsive teaching is cross-curricular, not an isolated subject. It should encompass teachers’ lessons and beliefs about how each of their students learns in the classroom (Gay, 2002; Banks, 1989, 2004).

Furthermore, being culturally responsive allows educators to discontinue prejudicial or inappropriate practices in the classroom and correct the inadequacies that occur with diverse students in schools (Nieto, 2013). This can be done by having teachers educate themselves about contributions from various ethnic groups and cultural understanding of diverse groups of people (Gay, 2002). Educators cannot over-generalize information and create new stereotypes or misinformation about their students or their families (Ladson-Billings, 2004; Nieto, 2009; Gay, 2002). Making it a priority to understand the intricacies of culture and avoiding stereotypes by having genuine concern and interest through mindful practice can change the school environment for diverse students, including ELs (Bacon, 2014). Schools with teachers who have deep understandings of culturally responsive teaching produce “practices [that] help students make connections between their community, national, and global identities” (Durdin, 2008, p. 411). Ladson-Billings (2014) and Gay (2002) would agree that diverse populations benefit from teachers who are cognizant of these students’ specific needs and experiences. Ladson-Billings (2014) also highlighted the complexity of culturally responsive teaching acknowledging, “scholarship is ever changing” (p. 75). In other words, while research continues to evolve and expand in the field, educators need to stay current on the literature being published, the cultures of their students, how the particular cultures have evolved, and how the curriculum in schools evolved in comparison.

Recently, Ladson-Billings (2014) challenged how others have interpreted her concept of culturally relevant pedagogy, which she presented first in 1995 (Ladson-Billings, 2014). Too often frameworks in education become trivial buzzwords, which Ladson-Billings (2014) warned could occur with culturally relevant pedagogy. Ladson-Billings (2014) challenged the way educators and researchers look at culture and the original framework of culturally relevant

pedagogy by evolving the ideology to an ever-growing concept of “culturally sustaining pedagogy” (p. 77). Ladson-Billings (2014) warns that if educators stop learning and growing through scholarship, it is similar to the “academic death” that occurs too often in classrooms, stating “if we ever get to a place of complete certainty and assuredness about our practice, we will stop growing. If we stop growing, we will die, and more importantly, our students will wither and die in our presence” (p. 77). To avoid this halt in learning, Ladson-Billings (2014) encouraged her followers and current educators to be aware of the significance behind true culturally appropriate curriculum, that is intricate across content areas and practices, in order to not only push for equal opportunity and success for diverse students, but to also ensure that all students and educators think critically about the situation and its reality in the school system. Having this belief system and creating this environment produces a deeper level of multiculturalism beyond the surface level, buzzword mentality (Banks, 1989, 2004). The need to have a comprehensive and efficient understanding of current practices and the ability to evaluate decisions in terms of cultural responsiveness is something school leaders and educators need to continue to embrace in order to improve the school experiences and achievement of EL students.

Culturally responsive teaching requires teachers to infuse their understanding of culture, and the cultures of their students, into their daily conversations and lessons in the classroom (Gay, 2002; Durden, 2008; Nieto, 2013). Overall, culturally responsive teaching should provide educational experiences that “directly connect with the cultural and linguistic talents, and realities that children bring with them into the classroom, rather than . . . assimilating children into mainstream, discourse and culture” (Durden, 2008, p. 416). The culturally responsive framework includes cultural awareness, intercultural competency, teacher beliefs and attitudes about diverse populations—in this case, specifically ELs, social justice, and the important role

language plays in the classroom in the decisions and actions teachers make when working with diverse students.

***Cultural awareness.*** Cultural awareness encompasses more than just knowing the definition and roles of culture (Gay, 2002; Banks, 1989). The role of culture and the framework of culturally responsive pedagogy support a deeper meaning of cultural awareness in education (Giroux, 2009; McLaren, 2009; Gay, 2002, Nieto, 2009, 2013). This requires teachers to move beyond simply defining culture to specifically discussing the deeper awareness teachers need to know about culture and its impact in education (Gay, 2002). Gay (2002) argued:

Teachers need to know (a) which ethnic groups give priority to communal living and cooperative problem solving and how these preferences affect educational motivation, aspiration, and task performance; (b) how different ethnic groups' protocols of appropriate ways for children to interact with adults are exhibited in instructional settings; and (c) the implications of gender role socialization in different ethnic groups for implementing equity initiatives in classroom instruction. (p. 107)

Educators who have cultural awareness must not only comprehend these ideas presented by Gay (2002), but they must also be able to understand how to adapt their behavior and beliefs in intercultural contexts (Bennett, 2004). Cultural awareness entails a higher order understanding for people of other cultures and the contributions made to society (Gay, 2002; Banks, 1989, 2004). Educators must first acknowledge the ideas presented above by Gay (2002) and then also recognize that culturally responsive teaching involves “acquiring detailed factual information about the cultural particularities of specific ethnic groups” (Gay, 2002, p. 107). That is to say, teachers need to recognize that there needs to be a representation of other cultural

groups besides European White culture that dominates the United States school curriculum and find authentic connections and contributions to the diverse cultures of the students to incorporate into their lessons (Gay, 2002).

Cultural awareness is not an isolated topic, but rather an infused belief system that should be evident across curriculum contents and school environments (Gay, 2002; Banks, 1989; Nieto, 2009). However, to teach with this goal of cultural responsive pedagogy requires moving away from the traditional, more direct, model of education found in many curriculums (Kroll & Ammon, 2002; Banks, 1989, 2004; Gay, 2002). Kroll and Ammon (2002) explained, “education modeled on a transmission model of learning tends to reproduce the status quo” (p. 8). In our society, this would mean continuing to have education favor White, middle-class Americans because they are “people who fit the conventional notions of knowing” (Kroll & Ammon, 2002, p. 8). The transmission model, also referred to as direct teaching, does not necessarily meet the needs of ELs as the teacher is directing the lesson without checking in on the students’ abilities to connect and understand, which often leaves the ELs behind as they try to comprehend a curriculum not written to meet their needs or to include their cultural identities (Kroll & Ammon, 2002; Gay, 2002, Nieto, 2009).

*Self-analysis of cultural awareness.* Culturally responsive teaching requires that teachers be aware of their own cultural identities, as well as those of their students (Gay, 2002; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Howard (2006) stated, “We can’t teach what we don’t know” to share the knowledge teachers need to know about themselves, their students, and their curriculum to reach diverse classroom populations. Many teachers have never experienced a deep self-analysis of cultural awareness for their own cultures or of the cultures of their students because, “deep understanding of learning and learning differences has not historically been a central part of

teacher education” (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 303). Cultural awareness is necessary to understand more about the cultural identities and learning styles of EL students (Nieto, 2009; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Gay, 2002). Darling-Hammond (2006) believes “without knowing deeply how people learn differently, teachers lack the foundation that can help them figure out what to do when a given technique or text is not effective with all students” (p. 303). Having teachers face their own cultural identities through critical reflection relates to culturally responsive teaching, constructivism, and effective professional development (Nieto, 2009; Schon, 1987; Fullan, 1993).

Giroux (2009) analyzed the concept of "self-conscious critique" (p. 27). Self-critique supports the concept of culturally responsive professional development because it shows the value of teachers being culturally aware of their own beliefs, as well as reflecting on their actions in the classroom (Giroux, 2009; Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995). Without reflection and critical self-critique, one cannot grow and improve as an educator, specifically in evaluating his/her own cultural awareness, identifying a hidden curriculum and the constructs of his/her students' learning (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2014; Bacon, 2014; Nieto, 2009, 2013; Fullan, 1993).

Unfortunately, the process is complex and uncertain as teachers face their own self-analysis, but the impact is beneficial (Colombo, 2007). Teachers' cultural awareness was found to improve when cultural conversations and examples were included in the professional development workshops (Colombo, 2007). Parents in the community, university faculty and professional development facilitators completed a 16 workshop series with 27 teachers over four and half months that worked on improving teachers' cultural competency and understanding of Latino EL students (Colombo, 2007). The professional development workshops were in collaboration with a community program to support the Latino student and parent community in

a school district. All but two of the 27 participants thought the workshops were useful and experienced cultural understandings and life situations new to them (Colombo, 2007). Two important themes that showcased success for improving cultural competency in the study are creating an opportunity to have “a sense of being lost” and “spending time with culturally different others” (Colombo, 2007, p. 13). The participants acknowledged they understood how some of their students felt when given a lesson in a language other than Spanish, their native language (Colombo, 2007). The teachers were also able to have time in the community in two field experiences and work with Latino parents, which gave them an inside perspective they would not have had otherwise (Colombo, 2007). One thing missing from the study’s professional development, however, was the ability to explicitly make connections between the workshops and the practice in the classrooms, which was believed to be the cause of the two teachers who lacked an increase of cultural awareness (Colombo, 2007). Teachers who did not already have a sense of cultural competency or the desire or ability to critically self-assess did not necessarily see direct connections on how the workshop materials related to their classrooms (Colombo, 2007). Colombo’s (2007) study, while in a Spanish-speaking district, shows the lack of understanding and the need for intercultural experiences to build cultural competency in majority teachers who are teaching diverse EL students. There is a need to create these experiences through professional development in-services but to also ensure that the cultural awareness transpires into the classroom connection for teachers of ELs (Colombo, 2007).

***Intercultural competence.*** Intercultural competence refers to having the ability to understand one’s own culture and to successfully interact with those from other cultures in an appropriate and understanding way (Alleman-Ghionda, 2012; DeJaeghere & Cao, 2009; Dogancay-Aktuna, 2005). The skills to communicate with or teach students from other cultures



are dependent on intercultural communication (Dogancay-Aktuna, 2005). Dogancay-Aktuna (2005) criticized that intercultural communication (ICC) has not been utilized in the field of education as necessary, which they define, “as the process occurring when the producers and receivers of a message belong to different cultures” (p. 100). Additionally, intercultural communication is needed in education “when the teacher, teacher methodology and/or materials are the products of one (sub)culture, and the receivers are members of other (sub)cultures” (Dogancay-Aktuna, 2005, p. 100). A disparity occurs often in schools with diverse students, especially large numbers of ELs, when the teaching methods an educator chooses are relative to his/her culture but are not appropriate and received the same way by the students (Nieto, 2009; Dogancay-Aktuna, 2005; Colombo, 2007; Farmer, Hauk, & Neumann, 2005; Darling-Hammond, 2006). Furthermore, one may recognize other cultures and exhibit traits of cultural awareness (Gay, 2002; Banks, 1989, 2004) but not necessarily interact with others utilizing ICC which requires a change in behavior (Dogancay-Aktuna, 2005). Intercultural competence and ICC can be resourceful skills to increase student learning and promote culturally responsive teaching as educators become more interculturally competent themselves and in their teaching practices (Dogancay-Aktuna, 2005; Alleman-Ghionda, 2012; DeJaeghere & Cao, 2009).

As teachers learn to shift how they act or think, it is important to know that they do not lose their own cultural identities, rather that they adapt, not assimilate, to meet the needs of the student or the situation in the classroom (Bennett, 2004).

***Teacher preparation and coursework.*** Teacher education should provide information about culture and culturally responsive teaching to future educators (Ladson-Billings, 2014; Nieto, 2009, 2013). Studying the power of culture “should become the touchstone of a teacher education curriculum” (Giroux, 2009, p. 451). Incorporating the role of culture would require a

shift from the isolated required university course about multicultural issues to a more integrated approach across content courses (Banks, 1989; Nieto, 2009; Sleeter, 2012; Nieto, 2013). Many researchers (Nieto, 2009, 2013; Banks, 1989, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 2014) have discussed preparing teachers to be more culturally responsive by practicing social justice and including the needs of diverse students across disciplines. While some university teacher education professors and programs attempt to address the lack of understanding about the needs of diverse students to educators entering the classroom, it is still not common practice in teacher education programs (Nieto, 2009, 2013; Banks, 1989, 2004; Giroux, 2009; Ballantyne et al., 2008). Furthermore, multicultural concerns are not necessarily the focus in school districts or universities, where achievement has the spotlight, yet these issues need to be prioritized (Samson & Collins, 2012; Alleman-Ghionda, 2012; Dogancay-Aktuna, 2005; Ballantyne et al., 2008).

Samson and Collins (2012) examined the effectiveness of teacher education programs to prepare teachers to work with ELs. They found that while 49 states reported having accredited programs that incorporate the needs of ELs, “the enforcement of diversity standards and the use of research-based knowledge on best practices when it comes to ELLs is often not reflected in program requirements” (Samson & Collins, 2012, p. 17). Individual state initiatives have a considerable influence on the education of ELs and policy will determine how much support and emphasis state universities put on preparing teachers to meet the needs of ELs (Samson & Collins, 2012). For example, while Arizona, California, Florida, Pennsylvania, and New York mandate specific coursework focusing on ELs, other states only generally reference ELs in their other courses, while there are still 15 states without any requirements (Samson & Collins, 2012; Ballantyne et al., 2008). There are variations of requirements even among the five states that offer coursework on ELs (Samson & Collins, 2012). California requires “specific teacher-

performance expectations that address the needs of English language learners” (Samson & Collins, 2012, p. 8); Florida requires three credits in ESL and 15 semester hours “if the teachers will be providing primary literacy instruction” (p. 8-9); New York requires six credits in “general language acquisition and literacy”; and, Pennsylvania requires three credit hours in EL coursework for all teachers (Samson & Collins, 2012). Due to the inconsistencies across state requirements, the recommendation for targeted professional development on the needs of ELs to prepare teachers already placed in schools who were not given enough coursework preparation (Samson & Collins, 2012). Alleman-Ghionda (2012) also would agree that there needs to be a larger emphasis on preparing teachers and believes intercultural education needs to play a larger role in university education programs. Alleman-Ghionda (2012) explained that intercultural education is appropriate for all ages, which means it can be included with adults learning to be educators, as well as in the classrooms of young students. Intercultural education’s “primary aim is to train individuals to perceive and recognize linguistic and sociocultural diversity by increasing sensitivity to socially and ethnically based prejudice, conflict, and misunderstanding; xenophobia; and racism” (Alleman-Ghionda, 2012, p. 1213).

Intercultural education provides an avenue for discussing these issues prior to teachers entering the classroom to help support “ethnic minorities and migrants . . . [who are] often subject to discrimination. Not acknowledging their social background and specific educational needs in striving toward equal treatment would only result in further discrimination” (Alleman-Ghionda, 2012, p. 1213). Intercultural education highlights the importance of preparing teachers to meet the specific needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students and conveys the necessity of school leaders to encourage teachers to learn about teaching ELs or they will

continue to marginalize ELs and hinder their achievement (Nieto, 2009; Samson & Collins, 2012; Alleman-Ghionda, 2012).

***Teacher beliefs and actions.*** When educators are not aware of their beliefs and actions towards ELs, they risk "dehumanizing" students by taking away their true learning and stalling any change from occurring in the classroom (Giroux, 2009). Culturally responsive teachers have positive views towards ELs (Nieto, 2009, 2013; Durden, 2008). All teachers need to become aware of their beliefs towards ELs, even teachers who come from minority cultures themselves need to learn about the language and culture of others, because while they might assume similarities exist; the process is not generalizable (Nieto, 2009; Howard, 2007).

Shestok (2013) investigated culturally responsive teaching by examining teachers' beliefs and attitudes with eight elementary teacher participants. Shestok (2013) reported, "all participants indicated that they believed teachers' beliefs including biases and stereotypes, influence classroom practice" (p. 3). The participants connected the concept of beliefs to the power of reflection. Throughout the interviews, the teachers reported that having coaching opportunities for professional development, such as community visits and peer conversations, with time for reflection improved their understanding of working with diverse students (Shestok, 2013). The study combined the culturally responsive concept of self-analysis with critical reflection in order for teachers to better "understand their students and the different places their students are culturally" (Shestok, 2013, p. 5). The influence of professional development opportunities on teacher beliefs and practices was evident when reflection was given priority (Shestok, 2013). While no formal workshop was given on cultural responsiveness, the conversations with their coaches and the formal interviews allowed for teachers to strengthen their cultural awareness and understanding (Shestok, 2013). Results showed that the teachers

“voiced the importance of reflection for making sense of their learning experiences and that the one-on-one interviews provided venues for reflective thinking” (Shestok, 2013, p. 4). Because of these implications, Shestok (2013) proposed that “a paradigm shift needs to take place so that informal experiences can be recognized and included in teachers’ professional plans” (p. 5). This shift would emphasize the importance of culturally responsive discourse with colleagues for professional growth.

*Deficit model.* Teachers’ beliefs can unfortunately create a deficit model of education for students (Delpit, 2009; Nieto, 1996, 2009). Deficit views refer to “theories that hypothesize that some people are deficient in intelligence and/or achievement because of genetic inferiority . . . or because of cultural deprivation” (Nieto, 1996, p. 390). In addition, cultural deprivation thinking includes not only the cultural background of students but also the view that EL students “have been deprived of cultural experiences deemed by the majority to be indispensable for growth and development” (Nieto, 1996, p. 390). To create opportunities for ELs, teachers’ practices should “move away from the deficit model to a recognition of the cultural and linguistic knowledge and resources that students bring to their education” (Nieto, 2009, p. 478). This requires teachers to be reflective of their own beliefs and the interpretations that their practices have with their diverse students. Teachers’ attitudes and beliefs play a major role in the environment that the teacher creates at school for ELs, which in turn plays an essential role in student achievement (García-Nevarez, Stafford, & Arias, 2005).

Nieto (2013) interviewed teachers who she considered to thrive in the classroom while working with diverse students. Based on the interviews, Nieto (2013) advised educators to learn about themselves and about their students in order to be more culturally responsive in their thoughts and actions. While recognizing that this is a difficult process, Nieto (2013) suggested

“teachers need to not only evaluate their knowledge of subject matter and pedagogy . . . but also their knowledge about and interactions with students, especially those with diverse backgrounds” (p. 150-151). In other words, teachers having knowledge about their beliefs and how they interact with ELs can have an impact on the learning and experiences of ELs in the classroom (Delpit, 2009; Nieto, 2013).

***Social justice.*** Social justice also supports the culturally responsive framework because it looks to value diversity and create equal opportunities (Howard, 2006, 2007; Ladson-Billings, 2014; Gay, 2002). In a study by Howard (2007) schools created real change towards social justice and meeting diversity needs by following five phases: “(1) building trust, (2) engaging personal culture, (3) confronting issues of social dominance and social justice, (4) transforming instructional practices, and (5) engaging the entire school community” (p. 17). Howard’s (2007) study concluded that professional development is an essential piece in guiding teachers and leaders through the mentioned phases, resulting with improvement with student success. As a result from the study’s “authentic and sometimes contentious conversations that emerged from . . . [workshop] activities, several core leaders and the superintendent identified a need to craft a strong Equity Vision statement” (Howard, 2007, p. 19). Thus, the study went beyond content and created a true change towards social justice for diverse students (Howard, 2007). “Professional development for creating inclusive, equitable, and excellent schools is a long-term process” (Howard, 2007, p. 22) but necessary to change school and learning environments.

***The importance of language.*** Language plays an important role in culturally responsive teaching for ELs, who are culturally and linguistically diverse (Nieto, 2009, 2013; Gay, 2002; Delpit, 2009). Teachers’ beliefs and attitudes towards ELs can also include their views towards the home language of the student (García-Nevarez et al., 2005). “Negative teacher attitudes

toward ELLs' native languages may produce teacher behavior that can lead to, or at least sustain, teachers having negative attitudes towards the students themselves" (García-Nevarez et al., 2005). Karabenick and Noda (2004) surveyed teachers' beliefs towards ELs and bilingual education because they believe it is important to evaluate and be aware of teachers' attitudes because they "affect teachers' motivation to engage with their students, which can, in turn, translate into higher student motivation and performance" (p. 56). Teachers' attitudes and receptivity towards professional development can improve or hinder the success of the in-service and the success of their EL students (Karabenick & Noda, 2004). The authors also point out that many of these students had little to no literacy skills in their first language prior to entering school (Karabenick & Noda, 2004). Surveys were used to measure teacher beliefs and mixed results showed that while the district was favorable towards EL students, there were still misconceptions about the literacy of ELs in their first language, their English proficiency, and how teachers assessed these students (Karabenick & Noda, 2004). The results showed "evidence that the district teacher population would benefit from substantive, research-based information, which, in turn, would optimize their interface with the district's bilingual and ESL services" (Karabenick & Noda, 2004, p. 65). The survey data showed an "apparent need for information [which] was evidenced by their misinterpretation of the definition of bilingual education and its implications for the instruction of ELL students, and overestimation of the costs of bilingual and ESL education" (Karabenick & Noda, 2004, p. 65). Karabenick and Noda (2004) summarized that general education teachers do not have the background or prior knowledge in the importance of language and its role in developing English proficiency for ELs. However, as a result of the authors' involvement, the school district demonstrated positive changes in working with ELs (Karabenick & Noda, 2004).

Understanding EL students' use of language, which is promoted through culturally responsive teaching, can support EL students' achievement (García-Nevarez et al., 2005; Fillmore & Snow; Lucas, Villegas & Freedson, 2008). In their study in Arizona, García-Nevarez et al. (2005) searched to gain an understanding of elementary first-fourth grade teachers' attitudes towards ELs and their languages. Both bilingual and monolingual classroom teachers participated in the study. García-Nevarez et al. (2005) found that bilingual teachers believed that prior knowledge is transferred from the child's first language to English, meaning that it was helpful to allow students to switch back and forth and that having instruction taught in Spanish (their native language) increased the ELs' self-esteem (García-Nevarez et al., 2005). In contrast, the English as a Second Language (non-bilingual) instructors did not see the same value of instructing students in their native language to build self-esteem in school, but rather that Spanish be used to facilitate instruction and give directions (García-Nevarez et al., 2005). All of the participants had at least three years of teaching experience, with a mean of 11.7 years, which means they were not novice teachers in the field, yet many did not have a strong understanding of the ELs they were teaching or their linguistic needs (García-Nevarez et al., 2005).

Teachers with positive beliefs about their students' native languages view ELs as being assets, while teachers with negative outlooks view students speaking languages other than English as deficits (Kose & Lim 2011; Nieto, 2009, 2013). The results found by García-Nevarez et al. (2005) that showed benefits of using both English and the native language when learning in school supports the theories of second language acquisition that specialists in the field utilize when working with ELs, yet is not included in most general education courses (Ballantyne et al., 2008; García-Nevarez et al., 2005). The general education classroom teachers who had not specialized in teaching ELs in their study had the "most negative attitudes towards using and



teaching the native language in the classroom” stating that English should be the only language used to teach the curriculum (García-Nevarez et al., 2005, p. 304). The results are important because the majority of teachers that ELs will encounter in school will be traditional classroom educators, who according to the results will not necessarily have the most positive views and beliefs towards ELs (García-Nevarez et al., 2005). Teachers’ attitudes towards ELs and how to instruct them differed by their experience and certification for working with ELs. Those teachers with bilingual training were much more in favor of using Spanish, the native language of the students, during instruction and “saw a need for their students to learn both the English and Spanish language simultaneously” (García-Nevarez et al., 2005, p. 312). While bilingual instruction is not universally used, the study’s results concluded that many classroom teachers are unaware or insensitive to the needs, both academic and linguistic, of EL students (García-Nevarez et al., 2005). EL students need to feel that there is a place and respect for their own language and culture, while being taught when and how to use Standard English to succeed in U.S. schools (Delpit, 2009; Nieto, 2013; García-Nevarez et al., 2005).

*Use of language in the classroom.* The impact of teachers’ views of language as presented above can also play a role in how language is used in the classroom. The importance of discourse with diverse learners is often a complex subject that needs to be addressed with teachers (Delpit, 2009; Cazden & Beck, 2003). Educators should consider both the language students bring to the classroom versus the Standard English promoted in schools and should accordingly consider the use of language (choice of words, examples, etc.) that shapes the message they are giving during their lessons (Delpit, 2009; Nieto, 2013; Cazden & Beck, 2003; Fillmore & Snow; Lucas et al., 2008). Cazden and Beck (2003) discussed the inequalities of language that can occur in classrooms where linguistically diverse students are in classrooms

with White teachers or students. Although teachers may be unaware, the use of language in the curriculum and in classroom discourse can cause subordinate perspectives in the classroom (Cazden & Beck, 2003). Language can influence behaviors in the classroom as well. Cazden and Beck (2003) explained, “Nondominant groups may take on certain behaviors (like silence or resistance) and internalize certain self-perceptions (such as images of inferiority) from prolonged, sometimes multigenerational experiences of low-status contact” (p. 191). ELs may experience resistance or feel inferior while at the same time, “members of a dominant group may adopt certain behaviors and internalize certain self-perceptions in response to prolonged, multigenerational experiences of high-status contact, more monocultural lives, and frequent White privileges” (Cazden & Beck, 2003, p. 191). The hierarchy of status that language can imply relates directly to the definitions of culture discussed earlier by McLaren (2009) and Giroux (2009) and understanding the power of language is an integral part of culturally responsive teaching (Nieto, 2009, 2013; Durden, 2008; Au, 1998; García-Nevarez et al., 2005; Colombo, 2007).

Language is as integral piece of promoting and practicing culturally responsive teaching with ELs (Delpit, 2009). For example, when teachers correct students’ speech for errors, they are actually hindering those students from wanting to participate and converse in class (Delpit, 2009). The negative impact of error correction is evident for both the African American Vernacular English (AAVE) speaking students (Delpit, 2009) and ELs (Krashen, 1982). By over-correcting, teachers create a classroom with anxiety, which also can obstruct English language acquisition for some ELs (Krashen, 1982). Delpit (2009) used a lesson in which she made up her own rules of language and had adult college students try to speak and answer questions. The adult learners agreed that it was near impossible “to apply rules while trying to

formulate and express a thought” (Delpit, 2009, p. 325) and that focusing more on the rules than the meaning can result in silence. Using this type of example with current, experienced educators in professional development could potentially create empathy and awareness for teachers of second language acquisition for ELs.

*Role of native language.* One’s first language can play both a positive and negative role when learning a second language. Selinker (1975) developed the interlanguage hypothesis in which one’s proficiency of his/her second language will not be at the same level as his/her ability to use the native language without the presence of peers who are native speakers of the second language. Selinker’s (1975) application of the interlanguage hypothesis to children in his study of elementary German-speaking students attending a French immersion school in Canada demonstrated that students made common mistakes in the second language by applying grammatical rules from their first language. Selinker (1975) explained these occurrences as “language transfer” of the first language to the second and as “overgeneralization” and “simplification” of second language grammatical concepts (p. 143, 148). In terms of the role of language in the classroom for ELs, teachers should be cognizant that this interlanguage relationship exists and may be produced by the ELs in their literacy practices (Selinker, 1975). Students learning English as a second language may have instances where new rules of language are then achieved correctly based on their knowledge of their native language, or mistakes may occur based on the role of interlanguage (Selinker, 1975). The role of interlanguage and the influence of one’s first language on their use of English in the classroom should not be negatively viewed by educators (Selinker, 1975; Nieto, 2013).

Au’s (1980) study of the Kamehameha Education Project in Hawaii described how native Hawaiian background students communicate in different ways than the dominant culture. The

Hawaiian students in the study used talk-story in their classrooms, a communication technique not used commonly in the standard, middle-class White instructional design. In other words, having access and being allowed to use their native discourse in school helped the students in the project succeed. Without knowing the role of language and this element of cultural information about students, teachers misunderstand students' abilities and understandings (Au, 1980; Bartolomé, 2009). Unfortunately, "by robbing students of their culture, language, history and values, schools often reduce these students to the status of subhumans who need to be rescued from their 'savage' selves" (Bartolomé, 2009, p. 340). If educators are not valuing these students and practicing culturally responsive pedagogy, then the students leave school feeling less "human" or less deserving of an education and successful life than their White peers. Educators need to stop practicing the deficit view of minority students (Bartolomé, 2009; Nieto, 2009, 2013).

Additionally research supports the concept of teachers needing to know about language development in order to instruct ELs appropriately (Fillmore & Snow; Lucas et al., 2008). In order to be prepare classroom teachers to teach ELs appropriately, Lucas et al. (2008) recommend teachers having a strong conceptual understanding of second language learning in order to be linguistically responsive educators. Essential understandings include how students develop conversational and academic language, the importance of native language knowledge in correspondence to learning English, the need for comprehensible input, social interaction, and explicit instruction in learning language forms and functions (Lucas et al., 2008). Teachers having this knowledge can best include appropriate language learning opportunities within the context of their classroom content instruction (Lucas et al., 2008; Fillmore & Snow, 2000).

The subtopics of cultural awareness, intercultural competency, teacher beliefs, social justice, and the importance of language discussed above encompass many of the elements of culturally responsive teaching. All play a role in understanding culturally responsive teaching, however it is the implementation and practice of these beliefs that is most crucial (Gay, 2002; 1995, 2014). Educating teachers about the elements of culturally responsive pedagogy and the implications on ELs' learning can be powerful if teachers are given an opportunity to construct their knowledge based on their personal beliefs and experiences (Colombo, 2007; Nieto, 2013). The second focus of this literature review is on professional development for preparing teachers to effectively teach ELs.

### **Professional Development**

Professional development can improve teacher learning and can be relevant to school improvement and student success (Hawley & Valli, 1999; Pianta, 2011; Guskey, 2002a). While pre-service teacher preparation is a form of professional development, professional development for this dissertation refers to the educational workshops, courses, and other in-service opportunities that current educators have access to once in the classroom. Farmer et al. (2005) believe that "just as the best teaching empowers students, the best professional development empowers teachers" (p. 70). Examining what effective professional development entails is necessary in order to align the culturally responsive framework with the opportunities for constructive teacher learning described above through future professional development. Professional development serves a larger purpose than the workshop or course alone, as it should result with improved outcomes in the classroom for students (Shulman, 2005; Diaz-Maggioli, 2004; Guskey, 2002b; Pianta, 2011; Darling-Hammond, 2008). Regardless of the type of professional development in which teachers participate, they modify and implement the

approaches learned in their classrooms after the training whether they do so intentionally or subconsciously, but not necessarily in the correct manner (Hawley & Valli, 1999).

By fully engaging in professional development, educators are potentially expanding their own learning. Viewing learning as a lifelong process, as discussed by Ladson-Billings (2014), supports the role of professional development and its purpose for educators (Nieto, 2013; Pianta, 2011, Shulman, 2005). Teachers hold the power for student success while they “allocate and manage the students’ time, set and communicate standards and expectations for student performance, and in a multitude of other ways enhance or impede what students learn” (Hawley & Valli, 1999, p. 128). The fact that teachers can “enhance or impede” (Hawley & Valli, 1999, p. 128) student learning and success in schools highlights the powerful role educators have in student development, but also the impact of environment and belief systems in student success (Nieto, 2013; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

When discussing professional development, one must remember that it is the main form of training that teachers receive once they graduate from universities and enter the classroom. Within any learning community, such as professional development, there are certain structures for learning (Shulman, 2005). Shulman (2005) analyzed the three main dimensions of “signature pedagogies” in which professionals follow: “*surface structure*,” “*deep structure*,” and “*implicit structure*” [italics in the original] (pp.54-55). Surface structure consists of concrete content about a topic as well as how to interact within that topic; in this case culturally responsive teaching could be a surface structure to include the elements of cultural awareness, intercultural competency, and teacher beliefs and attitudes (Shulman, 2005; Gay, 2002). Implicit structure includes morals and beliefs, or whether or not something is fair or equitable (Shulman, 2005). This structure can provide opportunities to discuss social justice and equity behind the culturally

responsive framework (Gay, 2002; Howard, 2007; Banks, 1989, 2004; Nieto, 2013). Deep structure removes the moral and emotional conversations, and focuses on whether the action is true to theory, that is to say if the decisions and practices made in the classroom actually follow the culturally responsive framework in theory. Shulman (2005) described these three structures as the operations, the “set of assumptions” of knowledge, and the “set of beliefs about professional attitudes, values, and dispositions” (p. 55). What Shulman (2005) recognized as missing from these main elements was the “pedagogy of practice and performance” (p. 55). In other words, the emphasis on how to put theories or beliefs into practice is often missing in professional training, yet the goal of professional development is about outcomes and improvement. In the field of education, the concluding results of professional development are to yield classroom implementation to create student achievement and teacher improvement (Diaz-Maggioli, 2004; Guskey, 2002b).

Unfortunately, the effort to put theory into practice is not as emphasized with in-service professional development for current teachers as it is in university teacher preparation courses (Diaz-Maggioli, 2004). Envisioning the greater picture, the implementation of the professional development goal or strategy it is that teachers are learning can support teacher and student success. It is not about the completion of the time, but rather the effort and learning that are involved and how they can change the environment of the schools when the educators return to the classroom (Diaz-Maggioli, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2008; Nieto, 2013). Often, those providing professional development do not consider the learning styles, evaluations, and input of the teachers who need to be “fixed” (Diaz-Maggioli, 2004, p. 2) from top down professional development mandates.

**Effective professional development.** Many researchers have examined what makes professional development effective (Desimone et al., 2002; Hawley & Valli, 1999; Guskey, 2002a; Guskey, 2002b; Kose & Lim, 2011). Desimone et al. (2002) identified six structural characteristics of effective professional development that improve teaching and learning of students: reform type, duration, collective participation, active learning, coherence, and content focus. Desimone et al. (2002) summarized a three-year study on the effects of professional development and changing teacher practices, which looked at the characteristics of effective professional development using information from “the National Evaluation of the Eisenhower Professional Development Program” (p. 82). Their three-year study is substantial in that it included data from 93% of school districts in the country in a national study and 30 schools in 10 districts from a sample that focused on professional development (Desimone et al., 2002). Each characteristic of effective professional development is discussed below.

**Reform type.** The first feature, the reform type of professional development, which Desimone et al. (2002) found most effective for creating change, is not the typical course or conference organized professional development found most often in schools (Desimone et al., 2002; Pelayo, Mateo, Mendoza, & Ragusa, 2012). Reform organized professional development is a larger commitment or project, field experience, often with mentoring or coaching sessions “in contrast to a traditional workshop, course, or conference” (Desimone et al., 2002, p. 83). The reform organization plays an important role in the success of professional development, yet only 18.7% of the activities in the study followed a reform model (Desimone et al., 2002).

An example of a reform model of professional development is the “*Professional Learning Processes (PLP) Model*” [italics in the original] used as a foundation in the study by Kose and Lim (2011, p. 198). Kose and Lim (2011) surveyed teachers at an urban elementary



school in the Midwest after they were involved in a reform model of professional development. “Instead of learning solely through ‘sit and get’ external workshops, conferences, or college courses, quality professional learning engages teachers in *job-embedded active learning* [italics in the original] through activities such as discussing student work, co-planning, sharing teaching practices, and observing teaching” (Kose & Lim, 2011, p. 201). The research study took the concept of the PLP model and applied it in an avenue to promote social justice by using another example of professional development reform known as the “*Transformative Professional Learning* [italics in the original] (TPL) Model” (Kose & Lim, 2011, p. 198). While the PLP model focused more on the process, the TPL focused more on content (Kose & Lim, 2011). The TPL model “involved how much teachers reported learning in their schools within five transformative content areas: English language learners or bilingual students (ELL) [sic], students who qualify for special education, students living in poverty, students of color, and teaching for social justice” (Kose & Lim, 2011, p. 198). The study found that teachers had stronger outcomes with more content focused professional development with transformative learning impacting the classroom (Kose & Lim, 2011). However, the deficit view towards these subgroups of students was not necessarily decreased with the TLP content focused professional development but rather with staff meetings that the authors considered followed the PLP reform model (Kose & Lim 2011). Overall, Kose and Lim (2011) believe the study showed three implications for specific transformative professional development but that there should be integration with content and student outcomes. The first implication is “that practitioners should design professional development that intentionally promotes and assesses specific transformative beliefs and practices” (p. 212), meaning that covering a topic alone did not create transformative positive changes and there is a need to make connections for personal beliefs and practices of

teachers to change. Secondly, professional development should be differentiated based on the content and the teachers' needs (Kose & Lim, 2011). Thirdly, "practitioners likely want to embed teaching for social justice in professional learning as it has a consistently positive association with transformative teaching" (Kose & Lim, 2011, p. 213). These three implications all support both effective professional development as well as the components of culturally responsive pedagogy (Kose & Lim, 2011; Desimone et al., 2002; Gay, 2002).

Howard's (2007) study relates to the work of Kose & Lim (2011) in that it followed a reform model that was transformative in design in order to promote improved learning for marginalized students. Howard's (2007) study used professional development as a way of "unraveling social dominance" by having school "leaders examine how issues of privilege, power, and dominance might be functioning in their schools to shape educators' assumptions and beliefs about students and create inequitable outcomes" (p. 19). The workshops in the study included activities that created conversations focusing on race and identity and resulted with school and district improvements (Howard, 2007). The study was transformative in nature and resulted with increased test scores on both, the "New York State" language arts and math tests, increasing by 11% for "black and Hispanic students" in language arts and 21% for those students in math, while at the same time decreasing the achievement gap (Howard, 2007, p. 21). The reform type of professional development was evident in the Howard (2007) study as it focused on race and inequality directly.

*Coaching.* As mentioned in Desimone et al. (2002) and supported by Pelayo et al. (2012), another example of reform professional development involves coaching and mentoring teachers. Coaching has two main components: (a) the idea that professional development providers need to coach their teachers by modeling the practices they wish for the teachers to acquire and (b) the

teachers are coached both during professional development and beyond during the implementation of concepts. By expanding the coaching into the classroom, the mentors or coaches are increasing the effectiveness of the professional development (Desimone et al., 2002). “By locating opportunities for professional development within a teacher’s regular work day, reform types of professional development may be more likely than traditional forms to make connections with classroom teaching and they may be easier to sustain over time” (Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001, p. 921).

The second definition of coaching is to support continued implementation. The coaching model promoted the most success for implementation of the practices presented during professional development for working with ELs in the Pelayo et al. (2012) study. “Changes in teacher practices were most noticeable among those that embraced the personalized coaching, support and feedback” (Pelayo et al., 2012, p. 16). Professional development should have some element of continued coaching if the desired outcome is to have an ongoing impact in the classroom. In addition, Pelayo et al. (2012) suggested that the coaching element of professional development include scaffolding for teachers. This means that the way the coach interacts and how much they participate with the teacher “must respond to teachers’ learning needs” (Pelayo et al., 2012, p. 18). Beyond first year mentee programs, very little professional development includes coaching, yet the research shows that it can create more long-term success (Pelayo et al., 2012; Desimone et al., 2002; Colombo, 2007).

If the goal is to create teachers who are culturally responsive in the classroom, then professional development facilitators can model by practicing culturally responsive strategies with their teacher learners (Pelayo et al., 2012, p. 18). Educators come from various backgrounds and have a variety of beliefs and needs when attending professional development.

“Educator practitioners must avoid making assumptions about how teachers relate to students with whom they share similar cultural and linguistic backgrounds” (Pelayo et al., 2012, p. 17). In other words, we cannot assume that educators have a deep understanding of their students, regardless if they come from the same ethnic background or not (Nieto, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 2014; Pelayo et al., 2012). This belief not only models the concepts of culturally responsive teaching, but it allows the expression of ideas from all teachers to aid in the construction of knowledge (Pelayo et al., 2012). “If professional development providers are culturally and linguistically responsive in working with teachers by modeling the use of culturally responsive teaching practices, teachers will be in a better position to do the same with their own students” (Pelayo et al., 2012, p. 18).

Reform in implementing coaching may lead to stronger comprehension and practice of cultural responsive teaching learned through professional development (Desimone et al., 2002; Farmer et al., 2005). The reform characteristic of effective professional development is also apparent in the study by Farmer et al. (2005), which was aimed to implement standards into culturally responsive teaching. The reform model used involved a heavy emphasis on reflection to deepen the understanding of the teachers attending the professional development (Farmer et al., 2005). Potentially, the reform model can commit teachers to becoming more aware of the need for cultural relevant curriculum and schools (Farmer et al., 2005; Kose & Lim, 2011; Desimone et al., 2002). While it has been over a decade since Desimone et al. (2002) classified reform as a strong characteristic of professional development, many professional development opportunities offered to teachers still follow the traditional model, yet the reform model promises more effectiveness.

***Duration.*** Duration relates to the length of time spent learning the content of the professional development as well as the amount of time spent on implementing the activity (Desimone, et al. 2002). The more time spent on practicing and learning, the more effective the professional development topic is on promoting theory into practice (Desimone et al., 2002). Thus, typical one-time workshops do not support the duration characteristic, while more reform types that involve larger commitments both during and beyond the school day have a greater duration (Desimone et al., 2002; Colombo, 2007). The field experiences of the teachers in the study by Colombo (2007) provided an example of a non-typical professional development opportunity with a longer duration of time for learning.

Duration is an essential piece of professional development “distributing activities across an extended period of weeks or months” was needed for effective professional development outcomes (Farmer et al., 2005, p. 61). Farmer et al. (2005) included a year-long training that included summer math institutes that expanded the teachers’ training beyond the school calendar. It is important to note that time should be focused throughout its duration (Desimone et al., 2002; Kose & Lim, 2011). Interestingly, Kose and Lim (2011) found that the duration of time spent on professional development mattered: “the findings do not support an argument that enhanced professional learning in one area (e.g., special education) necessarily predicts improved transformative teaching in a different area (e.g., students of color)” (p. 211). Kose and Lim’s (2011) study highlighted that simply spending more time is not enough: the time should be spent on the specific skills or content that one hopes to transcend into the classroom.

***Collective participation.*** Collective participation refers to the participants from the same organization attending the same professional development, creating a more communal goal across grade levels as well as teachers and administration (Desimone et al., 2002). This structure

provides an opportunity for teachers to work with each other and support each other as they learn a new skill or concept through professional development (Desimone et al., 2002). The collective participation characteristic was evident in the Kose and Lim (2011), Colombo (2007), Howard (2007) and Farmer et al. (2005) studies where the entire staff of teachers were part of the professional development process, as well as the participants in the studies. In addition, Howard (2007) included full faculties in his study for creating reform through professional development and Farmer et al. (2005) incorporated collective participation with teacher reflection, which relates to the next characteristic of active learning.

Collective participation allows for collaborative discourse for constructing knowledge (Desimone et al., 2002; Applefield et al., 2001; Shestok, 2013). Collective participation is also necessary for establishing culturally responsiveness in professional development (King, Artiles, & Kozleski, 2009). Due to the importance of discourse and collaboration, it is important that “professional learning engages educators in joint, productive activity through discourse, inquiry, and public professional practice” (King, et al., 2009, p. 7). Collaborative discourse during professional development supports constructivism in that it includes social interaction for constructing knowledge due to “dialogue within a community engenders further thinking” (Fosnot & Perry, 2005, p. 34). Considering culturally responsive teaching, Gay (2002) suggested, “building community among diverse learners is another essential element of culturally responsive teaching” (p. 110). This is applicable to both teachers who are learners in the professional development arena and the students they teach in the classroom. In addition, the concept of culturally responsive teaching requires both self-analysis and sharing of the beliefs of others, that one would expect some form of disequilibrium to take place while learning about others’ views and the views and learning styles of diverse students. Fosnot and Perry (2005)

acknowledged that “disequilibrium facilitates learning. ‘Errors’ need to be perceived as a result of learner’ conceptions, and therefore not minimized or avoided” (p. 34). The environment that the facilitator brings to the professional development supports this form of communication and learning. Just as professional development leaders need to provide a supportive environment for teachers to learn, teachers also need to create safe communities in their classrooms “in which all students are encouraged to make sense of new ideas—that is, to construct knowledge that helps them better understand the world” (Villegas & Lucas, 2002, p. 28). This suggests that professional development needs to create the same for educators in order for true reflection and construction of new knowledge to take place in the area of cultural responsiveness.

*Active learning.* Professional development that promotes active learning, “opportunities for teachers to become actively engaged in the meaningful analysis of teaching and learning” can help teachers understanding and success (Desimone et al., 2002, p. 83). Active learning relates directly to the topic of reflection as discussed earlier. In the studies by Colombo (2007) and Farmer et al. (2005) a reflection and discussion piece was implemented with teachers to promote active learning in professional development. The field experiences with community activities featured in the Colombo (2007) study not only provided active learning, but also took the learning into a new environment outside of the school walls. Many of the reform models for professional development (Howard, 2007; Kose & Lim, 2011; Farmer et al., 2005) focused on creating a deeper understanding of knowledge through active learning, which was evident in teacher interviews reflecting on the learning process.

In addition to active learning through the professional development activities, educators can actively construct knowledge through the conversations the professional development sessions encourage (Howard, 2007; Desimone et al., 2002; Farmer et al., 2005; Colombo, 2007).

Discourse is key for creating opportunities for learning. This includes the opportunity for teacher to converse about their learning experiences in regard to culturally responsive pedagogy (Shestok, 2013). In order to promote culturally responsive teaching through professional development, there should be opportunities for teachers to construct knowledge of their own self-analysis of cultural awareness and reflection. This process can potentially support a culturally responsive environment in schools by changing the ways teachers think about culture and their culturally diverse students (Gay, 2002; Bacon, 2014; Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2014).

Culturally responsive teachers not only promote communication as a learning tool for content, but they also promote language as a means to communicate on relevant topics to the students' lives that is not presented in the current curriculum (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). By knowing the child in this sense, teachers build relationships and promote construction of knowledge. Professional development could promote this discourse to occur in a manner that would support learning from peers in order to implement culturally responsive teaching strategies in the classroom.

Active participation also relates to the reform type of professional development where mentoring and coaching are included. As discussed earlier, the mentors and coaches help facilitate learning and guide the discussions of the professional development through scaffolding, (Desimone et al., 2002; Fosnot & Perry, 2005; Pelayo et al., 2012). The scaffolding approach directly relates to Vygotsky's (1987) Zone of Proximal Development and the structure to "(1) focus on a 'learner's conception; (2) extending or challenging the conception; (3) refocusing by encouraging clarifications; and (4) redirecting by offering new possibilities for consideration'" (Fosnot & Perry, 2005, p. 25). The coaching model supports the previous concept of



collaboration and discourse, as well as the idea of “cognitive coaching” to support implementation, all of which are related to constructivism (McIntyre, 2002, p. 54).

*Action research as professional development.* Active learning also supports the Zeichner’s (2003) recommendation that teachers serve as action researchers for professional development. By putting teachers into the field, professional development can focus on “the philosophical orientation toward teachers and their learning that is embedded in the organization, structures, and human interactions in a program” (p. 306). The idea of teachers using professional development to guide action research in the field can create change and awareness of their needs (Zeichner, 2003; Guskey, 2002a). This is relevant because as more teachers become aware of the true meaning of culturally responsive teaching and what it means for their classrooms, then they can use action research to track their own progress or initiatives as well (Nieto, 2013).

**Coherence.** Coherence refers to the connection the professional development activity has with the teachers’ goals and need to improve in certain areas, as well as its alignment with the standards the teachers must use in lesson planning (Desimone et al., 2002). Therefore, effective coherence cannot transpire if the teacher participants do not see the need or rationale behind the professional development. Lack of coherence may have been the case with the Kose and Lim (2011) study where the results were not as strong in promoting transformative teaching after providing transformative professional development. The importance of relevant content was discussed by Kose and Lim (2011), which supports the concept that the purpose of the professional development must clearly come across to its participants (Desimone et al., 2002). Based on these past studies (Desimone et al., 2002; Kose & Lim, 2011), having an understanding of why culturally responsive pedagogy is relevant and valuable prior to any form of professional

development taking place establishes a purpose and rationale for the educators involved. The active learning characteristic can help support coherence when professional development creates situations for teachers to learn through their own development (Shestok, 2013; Colombo, 2007).

Coherence with the goal of improving education for ELs can relate to the reform type of the professional development as well as apparent in the study by Colombo (2007) where the majority of the teachers interviewed connected the reform structure of the professional development with their purpose, or coherence. Colombo (2007) found that “five of the nine teachers who participated in the in-depth interviews suggested that the experiential nature of PD workshops created a sense of being lost that was helpful to their understanding of CLD [culturally and linguistically diverse] students” (p. 13). The participation improved the connections to the EL students, which increased the coherence of the professional development (Desimone et al., 2002; Colombo, 2007). The opportunity described to feel lost, like many ELs feel in the classroom, emphasizes the need for connection between the professional development activities and the teachers’ knowledge to improve their students’ learning (Desimone et al., 2002; Colombo, 2007). The connections made by the teachers in the Colombo (2007) study show how coherence and purposeful content are essential characteristics for successful outcomes as presented by Desimone et al. (2002).

***Content focus.*** The final structural characteristic for effectiveness is the degree in which the activity is content focused, meaning how closely the professional development relates to “improving or deepening teachers’ content knowledge” (Desimone et al., 2002). Content refers to the topic and the knowledge being discussed through professional development. This supports the findings in the Kose and Lim (2011) study as mentioned above as well as the study by Farmer et al. (2005), which was content specific on creating culturally responsive application of

mathematics standards. In order to produce successful outcomes, teachers must be cognizant of the importance and purpose of the content, which is true for the content focus on culturally responsive teaching. For example, in a study by DeJaeghere and Cao (2009), professional development was implemented with teachers in a district in the Midwest to develop increased intercultural competency of teachers. DeJaeghere and Cao (2009), who were also influenced by the work of Gay (2002) and Banks (1989, 2004), integrated pre- and post-test data measuring teacher intercultural competency based on Bennett's (2004) model. The results of the study implied that ongoing professional development "can considerably increase educators' intercultural competence" (DeJaeghere & Cao, 2009, p. 444). Additionally, the introduction to the intercultural mindset contributed in some cases for teachers to continue with their own additional professional development on the concept while they practiced the theories with their students and their families (DeJaeghere & Cao, 2009). DeJaeghere and Cao (2009) had success with improving intercultural competency, but their results did show some variances. The authors warned, "if teachers find the professional development anxiety provoking, or even the larger purpose of the professional development . . . they may not be open to or engage with these experiences" (DeJaeghere & Cao, 2009, p. 445). This result emphasizes the importance of having purposeful content in order to promote coherence, also demonstrated with the Colombo (2007) study results.

Many of the one-time workshops of standard professional development fit this characteristic but content alone is not enough for successful professional development (Desimone et al., 2002; Kose & Lim, 2011; Pianta, 2011). Desimone et al. (2002) found that while the six features can lead to effective professional development, most teachers do not receive professional development that includes all six. Farmer et al. (2005) found only the three

characteristics: reform, duration, and collective participation were specifically listed as organizational factors for effective professional development. The idea of collaborative reflection to promote the content of culturally responsive teaching from Farmer et al. (2005) shows a connection to the other characteristics presented by Desimone et al. (2002). Ideally professional development includes the six characteristic presented by Desimone et al. (2002) to be considered effective, yet this is inconsistently the case.

**Evaluating professional development.** Most of the current professional development in our schools is considered ineffective in changing student outcomes, yet is very costly to school districts and organizations (Pianta, 2011; Darling-Hammond, 2008). Guskey (2002a) evaluated the role of professional development and whether or not it makes a difference in student outcomes and school improvement (Guskey, 2002a; Guskey, 2002b). Guskey, who started researching professional development as early as 1979, would agree with Desimone et al. (2002) in that there is not a clear consensus of the characteristics of effective professional development, but that key features can support the effectiveness (Guskey, 2002a; Guskey, 2002b). Guskey (2002a) provided five distinct levels for evaluating professional development. Good evaluations of professional development “require thoughtful planning, the ability to ask good questions, and a basic understanding of how to find valid answers” (Guskey, 2002a, p. 46). Guskey (2002a) believes that evaluation should occur throughout the entire professional development process and that this ongoing process can allow educators and administrators to “make thoughtful, responsible decisions about professional development processes and effects” (p. 46). There are similarities to the work of Desimone et al. (2002); however, Guskey (2002a) believes that each level builds upon the last for deeper understanding and improved outcomes versus listing six key features.

The five levels presented by Guskey (2002a) are designed to plan backwards and evaluate each learning goal and factor of professional development. Evaluating “participants’ reactions,” “participants’ learning,” “organization support and change,” “participants’ use of new knowledge and skills,” and “student learning outcomes” can help determine if the professional development was effective (Guskey, 2002a, p. 48). These evaluation levels provide a systematic approach to not only how professional development is effective, but also why it is needed. For example, each level either reflects upon the teachers’ perception or learning in support of the program or the organization, in this case the school, district, and leaders, support in carrying out the learning (Guskey, 2002a). Often, teachers may want to change their practices to implement new concepts, but are restricted due to lack of time, planning, or district demands (Guskey, 2002a; Desimone et al., 2002). This connects to the concepts of duration, coherence, collective participation, and active learning (Desimone et al., 2002). Additionally, strong leadership to ensure these features are addressed and evaluated will support and provide to most likelihood of successful change (Guskey, 2002a; Guskey, 2002b). According to Guskey (2002a) lack of school support and leadership can “sabotage any professional development effort, even when all the individual aspects of professional development are done right” (p. 47). This explains why a “lack of positive results” does not necessarily go back to poor professional development content or design, “but rather implementation efforts” by the organization (p. 47).

***Evaluation of teacher learning.*** Evaluation of teacher learning from professional development should be conducted with a clear purpose and with specific content (Guskey, 2002a; Holland, 2005). “To be effective, professional development must provide teachers with a way to directly apply what they learn to their teaching” (Holland, 2005, p. 2). In the case of professional development, the evaluation of teacher learning of what they learned should occur

over time with various forms of information (Guskey, 2002a; Desimone, 2009; Holland, 2005). The key features by Desimone et al. (2002) discussed earlier can play a role in evaluating teacher learning because they provide conditions for teacher learning to take place (Holland, 2005; Desimone, 2009). However, prior to evaluating if teacher learning occurred as a result of professional development, it is necessary to understand what teacher learning entails and how it can be observed (Borko, 2004; Putnam & Borko, 2000; Johnson, 2006; Darling-Hammond, 2008).

*Defining teacher learning.* Due to its complexity, teacher learning occurs in many different contexts (Borko, 2004). Teachers are not only learning content knowledge of what they teach but also pedagogical knowledge of how to teach it (Borko, 2004; Freeman, 2002; Darling-Hammond, 2008). Specifically, teachers need to learn how to teach it to their current group of students and the prior experiences that the students bring to the classroom (Borko, 2004; Johnson, 2006; Darling-Hammond, 2008; Freeman, 2002). Teachers who have a deep understanding of the content knowledge can make connections to students' questions and misunderstandings (Darling-Hammond, 2008). "Teaching in ways that connect with students also requires an understanding of differences that may arise from culture, family experiences, developed intelligences, and approaches in learning" (Darling-Hammond, 2008, p. 92). Additionally, understanding how to appropriately teach content to ELs, in particular, adds another element of Second Language (L2) teaching into professional development (Johnson, 2006). Learning increases when professional development connects strongly to teachers (e.g. coherence) and they begin to construct connections outside of the course itself through their conversations with colleagues and students, classroom practices, school communities, and personal reflection (Borko, 2004; Desimone et al., 2002; Darling-Hammond, 2008). This type of learning can occur

through research and inquiry (Darling-Hammond, 2008; Johnson, 2006; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999). Therefore, “to understand teacher learning, we must study it within multiple contexts, taking into account both the individual teacher-learners and the social systems in which they are participants” (Borko, 2004, p. 4). To show evidence of teacher learning, however, Borko (2004) explores the learning of “subject matter knowledge for teaching, understanding student thinking, and instructional practice” (p. 5). These three avenues of knowledge each provide examples of teacher learning for evaluation (Borko, 2004; Guskey, 2002a; Holland, 2005; Darling-Hammond, 2008). The three main themes that emerged while researching teacher learning in multiple contexts are: learning is a social construct, discourse supports learning, and critical reflection creates deeper understanding and change.

*Teacher learning is a social construct.* Learning is a social process where what individuals learn and take away as knowledge are products and ideas from their interactions with others (Borko, 2004; Johnson, 2006; Darling-Hammond, 2008). In the case of teacher learning in professional development, educators are learning through their interactions with other professionals, the facilitator, and the content being presented (Borko, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2008). During professional development, teachers are learning through multiple lenses: the content knowledge of the subject or topic and the pedagogical knowledge of how to teach it with students (Borko, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2008). Therefore, not only do teachers need a deeper knowledge base of the topic they are teaching (Borko, 2004) but they must also understand the praxis of putting theory into practice through classroom pedagogy (Johnson, 2006; Darling-Hammond, 2008). Learning is individually constructed through social interactions and practices, not a linear progression of absorbing outside knowledge (Johnson, 2006). By establishing a new lens through praxis, teachers are able to learn through practice while they construct “their own

experimental knowledge as they reframe the way they describe and interpret their lived experiences” (Johnson, 2006, p. 240). Constructing knowledge through social interactions may be difficult for some teachers when they did not experience this type of learning in their own schooling (Klein & Riordan, 2011). While many professional development participants are volunteers, not mandated to attend but interested in the content or presentation, their learning from the professional development is not automatic or a given result (Borko, 2004; Schneider, Huss-Lederman, & Sherlock, 2012). Due to the need for learning, it is important to have opportunities for teachers to have social interactions and for professional development to include the key features of collective participation, active learning, coherence and content focus (Desimone et al., 2002; Desimone, 2009; Holland, 2005; Johnson, 2006; Darling-Hammond, 2008; Klein & Riordan, 2011).

When teachers attend professional development that explicitly focuses on specific content, teachers can develop a strong understanding through social interactions that “engage teachers as learners in activities” they would potentially use with students in the classroom (Borko, 2004, p. 5). Teaching through example, such as coaching and modeling, is also considered the reform type of professional development (Desimone et al., 2002). Watching other professionals teach and immersing themselves into student learning experiences “powerfully influences teachers’ practice and students’ learning of content” (Klein & Riordan, 2011). In the study by Klein & Riordan (2011), teachers often referred to their own inquiry and hands-on experiences in professional development when asked why they decided to implement a new strategy, in this study they were using the Expeditionary Learning (EL) Model to teach science. When teachers are given the opportunity of “wearing the student hat” (Klein & Riordan, 2011, p. 35) they experience a deeper understanding of the content, and also begin to understand the next concept



of knowledge of student thinking (Klein & Riordan, 2011; Darling-Hammond, 2008).

Furthermore, “if teachers investigate the effects of their teaching on students’ learning, and if they read about what others have learned, they become sensitive to variation and more aware of what works for what purposes in what situations” (Darling-Hammond, 2008). Giving teachers opportunities to learn through inquiry and construct knowledge about content and how students’ experiences the learning of the content supports teacher learning through multiple perspectives for diverse learners (Darling-Hammond, 2008).

Being aware of how children think and construct knowledge is crucial for teachers, especially when working with diverse students such as ELs who bring various experiences and prior knowledge to today’s classrooms (Darling-Hammond, 2008). By having the opportunity for social interaction with other teachers and experiencing learning through the students’ perspectives, teachers in professional development gain information on common student understandings and misconceptions when learning content (Borko, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2008; Klein & Riordan, 2011). As discussed in Desimone et al. (2002), the elements of active learning and collective participation support the social construction of learning in professional development. Together, providing teachers the opportunities to practice new instructional strategies, but to also form strong professional learning communities (PLCs) with other educators (Borko, 2004; Schneider et al., 2012).

Gaining information about student learning was evident in the study by Carpenter, Fennema, Peterson, Chiang, and Loef (1989), where 40 first grade teachers attended a summer institute on students’ thinking about science. The study selected 12 students to interview for teachers to gain understanding into their thinking process about science (Carpenter et al., 1989; Borko, 2004). The study led to better understanding of student needs due to the interviews and

reform type design (Carpenter et al., 1989). Additionally, student interviews led to increased teacher learning with ELs in a study by Schneider et al. (2012) where PLCs were evaluated on improving learning for culturally and linguistically diverse students. In one high school, EL students were interviewed in focus groups to share the challenges many of these students may face in school (Schneider et al., 2012). The focus group was created because the PLC teams felt that all content area teachers “needed to hear the concerns of the high school ELLs in their own voices” (Schneider et al., 2012, p. 384). The teachers learned about insecurities that led to ELs feeling hesitate to participate in class and that the EL students “appreciated teachers who work with them individually and who encouraged them in specific ways” and updated them on their grades and assignments (Schneider et al., 2012, p. 384). The professional development opportunity to create PLCs in the study led to teachers discussing students’ views and trying to understand how EL students feel and how their thinking can impact the learning in the classroom (Schneider et al., 2012). Also evident was the realization teachers reached about their EL students when the Colombo study (2007) participants expanded their professional development boundaries by working in the community to support students as well. Using active learning and collaborative participation in a non-traditional, reform, type of professional development has benefits into teacher learning, which can lead to better student outcomes (Desimone et al., 2002; Desimone, 2009; Darling-Hammond, 2008).

Beyond content knowledge and understanding student thinking, professional development can potentially lead to teacher learning about new instructional practices (Borko, 2004; McIntyre, Kyle, Chen, Muñoz, & Beldon, 2010). To evaluate whether this form of learning took place, evidence can be found in teacher lesson plans and the enactment of new instructional practice in the classroom (Klein & Riordan, 2011; Darling-Hammond, 2008; Borko,

2004; Fishman, Marx, Best, & Tal, 2003). The enactment of strategies in the classroom is dependent on the teachers' understanding of the strategies, preferably through experience and practice during the professional development (Borko, 2004; Desimone et al., 2002; Johnson, 2006; Klein & Riordan, 2011; McIntyre et al., 2010). In the study by McIntyre et al. (2010), teachers learned about the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) that can be implemented when working with ELs. During the study, 23 teachers were given SIOP training over 18 months, but only seven teachers implemented the strategy in its entirety (McIntyre et al., 2010). The classroom strategies that supported SIOP were evident in the seven teachers who were included in the classroom observations and their students' achievement, but the study lacked other features of effective professional development (content focus and coherence for some participants) (McIntyre et al., 2010). The McIntyre et al. (2010) study shows that while classroom practices can change from professional development, other factors contribute to the success of the enactment of new strategies in the classroom. Professional development that supports classroom implementation often needs a strong sense of fidelity of the program's strategies and the support to implement the new information into the context of the classroom (Echevarria, Richards-Tutor, Chinn, & Rattleff, 2011; Borko, 2004; McIntyre et al., 2010; Klein & Riordan, 2011; Fishman et al., 2003).

*Discourse supports learning.* When professional development allows for discourse opportunities it “provide[s] the cognitive tools—ideas, theories, and concepts—that individuals appropriate as their own through personal efforts to make sense of experiences” (Borko, 2004, p. 5). The opportunity to discuss new concepts and theories allows for educators' “enculturation into a community's way of thinking and dispositions” (Borko, 2004, p. 5). Teacher learning can occur when teachers are given opportunities to build competence in subject matter through social

interactions and discourse with other professionals (Borko, 2004; Johnson, 2006; Charteris & Smardon, 2014; Schneider et al., 2012). “The existing cultures and discourse communities in many schools, however, do not value or support critical and reflective examination of teacher practice” (Putnam & Borko, 2000, p. 8). Teachers, both novice and veteran, can learn from other teachers when given professional development or PLCs that allows for discourse communities to share experiences and teaching methods (Borko, 2004; Johnson, 2006; Klein & Riordan, 2011; McIntyre et al., 2010; Desimone, 2009; Talbert, 2010; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999).

Discourse with other teachers can be considered part of the reform type of professional development (Desimone et al., 2002) when teachers act as peer-coaches (Charteris & Smardon, 2014). In a New Zealand study by Charteris and Smardon (2013), peer coaching was investigated with 13 teachers in nine professional development groups to determine if discourse with peer educators helped with interpreting classroom observation data. The authors found that peer coaching led to conversations that questioned teachers to promote thinking, led to more reflection, and allowed for improved leadership through dialogic peer coaching strategies (Charteris & Smardon, 2014). Additionally, because the teachers were self-directed and in charge of the topics of their discourse, the teachers felt more empowered through inquiry, which improved their teaching practices (Charteris & Smardon, 2014). Discourse allowed for increased learning to occur and should be considered an avenue of teacher learning when evaluating the impact of professional development (Guskey, 2002a; Charteris & Smardon, 2014; Klein & Riordan, 2011; Putnam & Borko, 2000).

Discourse can also occur among students, such as the focus groups in the Schneider et al. (2012) study. Students were invited in to be part of the discussion and to share their voice (Schneider et al., 2012). This not only created an opportunity for ELs to participate in discourse

among the focus group, but it created more in-depth discourse among the teachers and PLC members as they confronted the ideas the EL students mentioned in their interviews and voiced their own concerns for working with ELs and EL support staff (Schneider et al., 2012). While discourse such as this example can be uncomfortable due to the potential prejudices or inequities that may arise, it is essential to creating change, which is another way of showing evidence of teacher learning from professional development (Darling-Hammond, 2008; Putnam & Borko, 2000).

*Teachers need critical reflection to create deeper understanding and change.* As mentioned above, discourse allows for the exchanging of ideas and learning through critical discussion, which supports teacher reflection (Charteris & Smardon, 2014; Putnam & Borko, 2000; Talbert, 2010). Reflection allows for deeper thinking about one's self because "thinking reflects social identity—who you are, your background and experience, your purposes, and your social context" (Freeman, 2002, p. 9). Critical reflection allows educators to think about their identity as a learner themselves and how it relates to their students' learning in the classroom (Freeman, 2002; Darling-Hammond, 2008; Schneider et al., 2012; Farmer et al., 2005). Finding meaning through reflection is a challenge for teachers, but "reflective practice must become a central pillar" (Freeman, 2002, p. 11). Professional development that allows for in-service teachers to critically reflect can have a powerful impact in the classroom (Freeman, 2002; Darling-Hammond, 2008; Guskey & Sparks, 2004). The reflection process can occur when teachers are given opportunities to be vulnerable to new concepts and theories (Farmer et al., 2005, p. 70). Farmer et al. (2005) thought that reflection involves a critical awareness for teachers and their students and can be included in professional development as a way to empower educators to develop "self-regulation and socially aware critical thinking" (Farmer et

al., 2005, p. 62). Additionally, teachers of ELs must reflect on their professional development learning with the context of their students' needs in mind (Johnson, 2006). They should "reflect both the processes of teacher learning and the impact of that learning on teachers' classroom practices and students' opportunities for learning" (Johnson, 2006, p.243). Reflection during the learning process helps teachers understand the learning they constructed through their interactions and conversations with other educators and how to apply it when teaching their specific students (Johnson, 2006; Freeman, 2002; Farmer et al., 2005; Klein & Riordan, 2011; Colombo, 2007).

*Key components that support the evaluation of teacher learning.* When evaluating teacher learning, one must consider if and how the elements of effective professional development (reform type, duration, collective participation, active learning, coherence, and content focus) took place to foster teacher learning (Desimone et al., 2002; Desimone, 2009; Holland, 2005). Guskey (2002a) recommends looking for examples of evidence, not proof, for evaluation. This evidence can occur through teacher feedback questionnaires or surveys, teacher interviews, classroom observations, reflection journals, and artifacts (lesson plans, classroom projects, photos, etc.) that showcase the professional development topic in action (Guskey, 2002a; Darling-Hammond, 2008; Klein & Riordan; Colombo, 2007; Farmer et al., 2005). Teacher learning should be evident in the student learning objectives found in their classrooms (Guskey, 2002a; Darling-Hammond, 2008; Pianta, 2011). Student outcomes directly relate to what instructional strategies and classroom opportunities should be evident in reaching those outcomes (Guskey, 2002a). When referencing the elements of effective professional development by Desimone et al. (2002), student learning outcomes relate to the coherence of the professional development with the standards teachers need to teach, as well as the connection the

teacher makes between the professional development and his/her beliefs and desires to improve learning for certain students, including ELs. Evaluating how professional development topics have been included into the teacher interactions and lessons shows the level of coherence of the topic with teachers' beliefs and urgency for improvement (Desimone et al., 2002; Guskey, 2002a; Desimone, 2009; Holland, 2005; Darling-Hammond, 2008; Borko, 2004). Student learning outcomes also correspond to the content focus feature discussed by Desimone et al. (2002) in that if professional development is focused on deepening and enriching teacher content knowledge, then the new knowledge should be evident in the classroom practices and student learning that is taking place (Desimone et al., 2002; Darling-Hammond, 2008). In respect to the growing diversity in schools and need for improved student achievement, having professional development opportunities that allow for "continual learning is the likeliest way to inspire greater achievement for children, especially those for whom education is the only path the survival and success" (Darling-Hammond, 2008, p. 99).

***Evaluation of student learning.*** In order to create a professional development evaluation plan that measures both teacher and student learning, one must understand what student learning outcomes may entail (Darling-Hammond, 1999, 2008; Guskey 2002a, 2002b; Sykes, 1999; Johnson & Golombek, 2003; Rodgers, 2002). Creating learning opportunities for English learners (ELs) requires additional knowledge and reflection (Pennycook, 1999; Johnson, 2006; Echevarria et al., 2011). Professional development that strengthens the connection between teacher and student learning is key for improved student outcomes (Sykes, 1999; Darling-Hammond, 2008; Pianta, 2011; Guskey, 2002a). To effectively account for student learning, the following areas will be addressed: defining student learning, classroom norms and practices that

influence student learning, and how student learning can be represented as part of an evaluation plan.

*Defining student learning.* The definition of student learning has evolved over time with new research and theories in education (Borko, 2004; Johnson, 2006; Putnam & Borko, 2000; Wilson & Peterson, 2006; Darling-Hammond, 2008). In the context of this study, learning for students is viewed as “a process of active construction [that] . . . is a social phenomenon, as well as an individual experience” (Wilson & Peterson, 2006, p. 1). Additionally, student learning includes “active engagement with information, both individual activity and collective work, [and] individual differences among students seen as resources, not obstacles” (Wilson & Peterson, 2006, p. 2). Viewing learning in this manner focuses on the situation in which the learning takes place and the process of learning as the most important, rather than the correct answer in the outcome, which puts the emphasis on the students’ thinking (Borko, 2004; Schifter & Fosnot, 1993; Johnson, 2006). Student learning is a complex task that is socially and culturally constructed (Johnson, 2006). The sociocultural perspective of learning views the individual connections that take place within the context of learning (Johnson, 2006). Johnson (2006) discussed the sociocultural view of learning, particularly for second language learners.

Johnson (2006) believes that:

Learning, therefore, is not the straightforward appropriation of skills or knowledge from the outside in, but the progressive movement from external, socially mediated activity to the internal meditational control by individual learners, which result in the transformation of both the self and the activity. (p. 238)

Johnson’s (2006) description of learning highlights the importance of understanding student learning in the context in which it takes place and the cultural perspective of who is doing the



learning. The learning is taking place within the student, rather than being acted upon them by the teacher's actions (Johnson, 2006; Wilson & Peterson, 2006). Teachers need to change the focus on what they are doing in the classroom to what learning is occurring with their students (Rodgers, 2002). Because of its complexity and individual sociocultural implications, meaningful learning is a "slow and uncertain process" (Borko, 2004, p. 6). When teachers become aware of their own teaching practices and view themselves as learners in the field, they can "open up their own awareness to the complex nature of learning and also to build community" (Rodgers, 2002, p. 232). The process of student learning must be discussed with teachers so that teachers are aware of the influence their practices have on student learning, as well as the social and cultural aspects of the situation the learners are given in the classroom (Johnson, 2006; Desimone, Porter, Garet, Yoon, & Birman, 2002; Borko, 2004; Rodgers, 2002).

*Situated learning.* Lave and Wenger (1991) termed "situated learning" to describe the influence of social situations on the learning of individuals. Social interactions and participation occur in situated learning when individuals are engaging on some level with the information and those around them (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Handley, Sturdy, Finchman & Clark, 2006; Brown, 2013; Putnam & Borko, 2000; Borko, 2004). "A situated learning space is one where learning and its application takes place in the same location" (Brown, 2013, p. 1). This description by Brown (2013) explains that situated learning is about the practice and application of knowledge, rather than the abstract concept of information being presented. Furthermore, Handley et al. (2006) reiterated that situated learning allows for the participation in the practice of using knowledge in a group setting, such as a classroom of students. Student learning is occurring socially through classroom interactions, while the individual student is learning through his/her participation (Handley et al., 2006; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 2010; Borko, 2004).

Because the learning is in the action of participating, or doing, “the individual learning should be thought of as emergent, involving opportunities to *participate* in the *practices* of the community as well as the development of an *identity* [italics in the original] which provides a sense of belonging and commitment” (Handley et al., 2006, p. 642).

By viewing learning as situative, teachers can examine student learning within the context the classroom provided (Putnam & Borko, 2004). “The situative perspective helps us see that much of what we do and think is intertwined with the particular contexts in which we act” (Putnam & Borko, 2000, p. 6). Additionally, “if teachers investigate the effects of their teaching on students’ learning, and if they read about what others have learned, they become sensitive to variation and more aware of what works for what purposes in what situations” (Darling-Hammond, 2008, p. 95). Just as teachers need to be able to apply their learning into the classroom situation, student learning needs to occur in a classroom community that allows for social interaction and practice to promote learning (Putnam & Borko, 2000; Borko, 2004; Handley et al., 2006; Rodgers, 2002; Johnson, 2006).

*Communities of practice.* Key components to the theory of situated learning are “communities of practice” (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Handley et al., 2006; Wilson & Peterson, 2006; Wenger, 2010; Brown, 2013). Communities of practice involve learners at various levels participating in a community (Wenger, 2010; Lave & Wenger, 1991). In a classroom, this includes novice learners as well as what Lave and Wenger (1991) refer to as practitioners, who are stronger or more experienced learners. In educational settings, communities of practice can include peer-to-peer learning for both teachers in professional development and students in the classroom (Wenger, 2010). Communities of practice allow for students to work with others to learn content and skills, but requires teachers being cognizant of who is participating and how

(Wenger, 2010; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Ball & Cohen, 1999). In order for communities of practice to be successful, teachers must know their students and students must be given opportunities for some form of disequilibrium, or conflict, in their learning to take place, which promotes working with others to gain better understanding and practice (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 2010; Brown, 2013; Fosnot & Perry, 2005).

Participation opportunities encourage students to construct their own identities within their communities of practice and allows for the application of learning to occur (Lave & Wenger, 1999; Handley et al., 2006). Communities of practice must be well designed so that all participants, both novice and practitioners, have opportunities for engaging participation (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Handley et al., 2006; Wenger, 2010). If the community of practice does not provide an appropriate opportunity for learning application, then novice learners may be denied participation due to more experienced and powerful practitioners (Handley et al., 2006) or practitioners may be disengaged and left to help novice learners at their level without an opportunity to expand their own thinking (Gebhard, 2005). In a study of second language learning, Gebhard (2005) discussed the communities of practice that can occur with ELs and their English-speaking peers. In one example, a Hmong-speaking EL named Pa Hua was working with Sandra on writing (Gebhard, 2005). In the learning session described, Pau was unable to speak with the teacher as she was working with other students and relied on Sandra to help her with a writing assignment (Gebhard, 2005). The classroom was multi-aged with Pa Hua in third grade and Sandra in fifth, and while this could be beneficial, Gebhard (2005) explained that while Sandra was working as a practitioner guiding Pa Hua in her learning, Sandra's learning was not being pushed by a more experienced peer. The community of practice allowed for participation, but did not work for both students. It important that teachers modify and

change communities of practice so that all learners are benefiting by working as novice and practitioners in various situations (Handley et al., 2005; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 2010).

The literature on evaluating professional development for teacher and student learning is helpful for future professional planning, but universal designs for professional development are difficult and challenging because “what works always depends on where, when and with whom” (Guskey, 2002a, p. 51). When it comes to working with ELs, all educators are second language teachers while teaching their content and professional development should help establish teachers who are “transformative intellectuals who can navigate their professional worlds in ways that enable them to create educationally sound, contextually appropriate, and socially equitable learning opportunities for the L2 students they teach” (Johnson, 2006, p. 250). This goal supports the literature in that there is not one simple solution for effective professional development, but rather key features and evaluations that can build effectiveness and transform learning for all students (Guskey, 2002a; Desimone et al., 2002; Pianta, 2011; Kose & Lim, 2011).

**Professional development as an agent of change and reform.** Effective professional development can lead to improved school environments for diverse students, including ELs (Pelayo et al., 2012; Nieto, 2013; Darling-Hammond, 2008; Johnson, 2006). Teachers have the potential to be agents of change (Fullan, 1993; Nieto, 2013; Howard, 2007). Professional development is key to school reform and improvement, both in how schools are organized and in allowing teachers to learn as professionals (Hawley & Valli, 1999). Hawley & Valli (1999) believe that “there is no more effective way to change schools substantially” (p. 129) than through professional development opportunities for their teachers. The problem, however, is that most professional development is not designed to create change due to its isolated workshop

concepts and disconnect from the actual students assigned to those teachers participating in the training (Pianta, 2011; Desimone et al., 2002). Professional development trainings are “predominantly one-time workshops that focus mostly on awareness or general knowledge rather than specific skills, or models that have little basis in what is known about effective instruction, curriculum, or classroom interactions” (Pianta, 2011, p. 1). The criticisms listed by Pianta (2011) support the characteristics presented earlier by Desimone et al. (2002). Using the suggestions from the research (Pianta, 2011; Desimone et al., 2002; Hawley & Valli, 1999; Guskey, 2002a) creating ongoing professional development that moves away from quick fix workshops to creating change through culturally responsive teaching may foster more effective results for today’s teachers.

Hawley and Valli (1999) further explained that the successfulness of organizations, including schools, depended greatly on three key factors:

(1) their flexibility, adaptiveness, and changefulness, (2) the quality of information that they have about the task they must perform and the probable consequences of alternative ways to perform those tasks, and (3) the capabilities (such as competencies and judgment) of the people responsible for the core technology [i.e. teaching]. (p. 130)

The preceding three factors listed by Hawley and Valli (1999) emphasized that in order for systematic success, school leaders and educators must be flexible, informative, and capable of taking concepts presented in professional development courses and series into practice by using these factors during implementation. This connects to the work of Desimone et al. (2002) and Guskey (2002a) in which evaluating effectiveness must include key features and levels of understanding. Putting theory into the classroom can help create success because it is more likely to be researched and evidence-based practices rather than the current trend (Guskey, 2002;

Desimone et al., 2002). In relation to the people involved, opportunities for teacher leadership research is increasing in popularity and the role of leaders in school success (Fullan, 1993; Smylie, 1995; Guskey, 2002b). Professional development can allow for teachers to practice leadership roles, which may develop change in practice and in organizations.

### **Constructivism Approach to Learning**

The third focus of this literature review is on constructivism. The constructivist approach is “a theory about knowledge and learning” (Fosnot, 2005, p. ix). In other words, individuals, both teachers as learners and the students in classrooms, construct knowledge that is uniquely meaningful to themselves based on their own past experiences and background. Having a constructivist approach to professional development for educators can potentially aid in the learning of content (Farmer et al., 2005; Kroll & Ammon, 2002; Keiny, 1994), such as culturally responsive teaching for ELs. Elements of constructivism were evident in the literature discussed above describing the social construct of teacher learning and the use of critical reflection for learning (Johnson, 2006; Borko, 2004; Freeman, 2002).

**Constructivism connection to professional development.** Many of the characteristics of effective professional development support constructivism, particularly collective participation, active learning, and coherence because these characteristics support individual teachers learning through social experiences (Desimone et al., 2002; Fosnot, 2005; Fosnot & Perry, 2005). Constructivism supports student learning (Fosnot, 2005; Fosnot & Perry, 2005; Piaget, 1978; Vygotsky, 1987). Students will construct knowledge individually and teachers should expect that individual students might understand concepts differently based on their individual perspectives (Fosnot, 2005; Nieto, 2013). Thus, educators should give the “learner the opportunity for concrete, contextually meaningful experience” (Fosnot, 2005, p. ix).

Students from diverse cultures and backgrounds construct knowledge differently (Durden, 2008). Because constructivism focuses on the personal construction of knowledge based on the individual's beliefs (Fosnot, 2005; Piaget, 1978), it aligns with the culturally responsive framework in that one must be aware of the influence of culture on learning and connections (Gay, 2002; Nieto, 2009, 2013).

Within the theory of constructivism, knowledge is described as procedural, conceptual, or metacognitive knowledge (Ammon & Kroll, 2002). In the field of education, conceptual knowledge helps teachers define the why or theory behind their practices while procedural knowledge can refer to the pedagogical practices and behaviors in the classroom (Ammon & Kroll, 2002). While both are used together in the act of teaching, the two types can be isolated when determining the type of knowledge a teacher is learning and developing (Ammon & Kroll, 2002; Piaget, 1978). Additionally, teachers need to develop metacognitive knowledge of the learning of their students while promoting the same type of self-awareness in their students (Ammon & Kroll, 2002).

Analyzing the types of knowledge in their development, Piaget (1978) also described the level of consciousness as “action, cognizance, and conceptualization” (Ammon & Kroll, 2002, p. 204). Each level of consciousness results with a deeper understanding of knowledge (Ammon & Kroll, 2002). For example, a teacher understanding at the action level behaves to attempt to solve a problem, while understanding at the cognizance level views the problem at a “global level [in which] “the important variables may be identified conceptually, but how consciousness to coordinate them is still a process of trial and error” (Ammon & Kroll, 2002, p. 204). At its highest level of consciousness, conceptualization, “the problem solver can reflect on and coordinate the different aspects of the problem” (Ammon & Kroll, 2002, p. 204). A conceptual

level of consciousness leaves the learner with a more complex understanding and awareness of the knowledge (Piaget, 1978; Ammon & Kroll, 2002).

Constructivism, established by Piaget (1978), focuses on constructing knowledge through personal experiences and reflection and social constructivism theorized by Vygotsky (1987) includes the ideas that language and learning are constructed through social interactions. The work of Piaget (1978) focused on how one relates knowledge to the individual constructs developed through interactions and experiences, meaning that each student will construct understanding individually and uniquely. Vygotsky (1987) established the idea of social constructivism and connected knowledge construction through experiences with others. “The social and cultural environment impacts and determines what and how we think” (Durden, 2008, p. 410). A constructivist approach that encourages constructing meaning based on one’s own experiences and that elaborates on the idea that ELs will construct meaning based on their culture and experiences may help structure more effective professional development that promotes culturally responsive teaching (Farmer et al., 2005; Keiny, 1994, Pitsoe & Maila, 2012).

A constructivist approach to teacher education, in particular professional development, involves viewing constructivism through multiple dimensions: learning and development, authority and facilitation, action and reflection, autonomy and community, process and content, power and empowerment, and critical thinking and multiple perspectives (Rainer, 2002). Each of these dimensions includes constructs to be considered when viewing the teacher as a learner during professional learning as well as the teacher facilitating learning with his/her students in the classroom (Rainer, 2002; Kroll and Ammon, 2002). With the content of culturally responsive teaching, one can particularly consider the constructivist dimension of critical thinking and multiple perspectives (Rainer, 2002; Harris, 2002). When experiencing



professional development, teachers must encounter experiences in which “the dialectical interplay between thinking critically about their own positions and then critically considering the multiple perspectives of others” (Harris, 2002, p. 165). Encountering this interplay “allows teacher-learners to construct new, more comprehensive understandings of knowledge” (Harris, 2002, p. 165). Through experiencing the views of others in professional development, teachers can potentially create similar situations in their classrooms (Harris, 2002). This dimension of constructivism connects directly to culturally responsive pedagogy in that “culture, language, race, and class influence perspectives on what counts as knowledge” (Harris, 2002, p. 166).

In addition to the opportunity to construct knowledge through professional development, constructivism can be applied to the evaluation levels discussed by Guskey (2002a) through a constructivist lens of professional development. Pitsoe and Maila (2012) suggested that professional development move towards a constructivist approach, partly due to the focus on the teacher’s own theories and needs and not a “one size fits all” approach (p. 322). In other words, just as educators need to allow for all students--including ELs to have culturally appropriate opportunities to construct knowledge, professional development can be structured to allow the same for teachers. Since professional development is a major component that shapes teachers’ philosophies and methods of teaching, it can be beneficial to create constructivist opportunities for teachers “to explore new roles” (Pitsoe & Maila, 2012, p. 318). A constructivist approach to professional development allows for a “social construct” and fluidity of professional development content (Pitsoe & Maila, 2012, p. 319).

Social interaction aids in reflection and learning (Pitsoe & Maila, 2012; Kroll & Ammon, 2002; McIntyre, 2002). Social interaction is an essential piece to constructivism and can play a powerful role in professional development that is not always common practice. “The

fundamental nature of social constructivism is collaborative social interaction” (Applefield, Huber, & Moallem, 2001, p. 38). The examples (Farmer et al., 2005; Colombo, 2007; Howard, 2007; Kose & Lim, 2011) provided in this literature review connect to the constructivist philosophy that allows for learners, in this case teachers learning to be culturally responsive, to be open to new constructs of educational practices and cultural awareness. Fullan (1993) emphasized, “It is not enough to be exposed to new ideas. We have to know where new ideas fit, and we have to become skilled in them, not just like them” (p. 16). Knowing where the new ideas fit aligns with the need for coherence and content focused professional development, both of which create more effective outcomes (Desimone et al., 2002).

***Teacher reflection.*** Reflection is a key component of constructivism, cultural responsive practice, as well as effective professional development (Keiny, 1994; Kroll & Ammon, 2002; McIntyre, 2002; Farmer et al., 2005; Fat’hi & Tabataba’i, 2011). Reflection should be an ongoing process for teachers as they become enlightened in their own cultural competencies and awareness, which can lead to both personal understandings and student empowerment (Kroll & Ammon, 2002; Au, 1998; Farmer et al., 2005; Fat’hi & Tabataba’i, 2011). With the increase of ELs and the need to improve their achievement, teachers need to be aware and reflect on the classroom learning environments they are able to create for their second language students and the relationship environment has on student success (Johnson, 2006). Teachers need to be aware of how their classroom environment influences student learning (Johnson, 2006; Johnson & Golombek, 2003).

Similar constructivist views for how diverse students construct knowledge that support Vygotsky (1987) and Cummins (1986) are presented in Au’s (1998) theoretical review that “builds on the idea that social constructivism offers implications for reshaping schooling in ways

that may correct the gap between the literacy achievement of students of diverse backgrounds and that of mainstream students” (p. 297). Au (1998) supported cultural understanding of students with diverse backgrounds, hoping for teaching to reflect upon the empowering of students. Au (1998) elaborated on the issue of empowerment as discussed by Cummins (1986) and stated, “empowered students are confident in their own cultural identity, as well as knowledgeable of school structures and interactional patterns, and so can participate successfully in school learning activities” (p. 304). By having educators reflect on their beliefs and practices, and by allowing students the opportunity for reflection for their learning construction, schools can use constructivism to promote culturally responsive teaching. Teachers can have this opportunity for empowerment and reflection through professional development (Farmer et al., 2005; Nieto, 2013).

The reflection process can occur when teachers are given opportunities to be vulnerable to new concepts and theories (Farmer et al., 2005, p. 70). Farmer et al. (2005) thought that reflection involves a critical awareness for teachers and their students and can be included in professional development as a way to empower educators to develop “self-regulation and socially aware critical thinking” (Farmer et al., 2005, p. 62). Critical awareness supports culturally responsive teaching, while the opportunities for constructing knowledge during the professional development supports a constructivist approach, as well as having characteristics of effective professional development (Desimone et al., 2002; Guskey, 2002a). Farmer et al. (2005) believe “the next step . . . is constructing and implementing ways to overtly expand and extend cultural responsiveness in professional development courses while also supporting and evaluating teacher-participants’ responsiveness to their own students as they participate” (p. 70).

There is a place for teacher reflection to improve learning (Farmer et al., 2005; Nieto, 2013, Shestok, 2013).

Reflection can occur both during a lesson or training or after the activity is complete (McIntyre, 2002; Schon, 1987). Building off of Schon's (1987) work, McIntyre (2002) discussed "reflection-in-action" where teachers are constantly reflecting and analyzing their decisions in the classroom, versus "reflection-on-action" where the reflection occurs after rather than during the learning process. Schon (1987) proposed that learners learn through practice, for educators this would be applying what they learn through professional development. Reflection-in-action would apply for teachers to simultaneously reflect as they solve problems as they arise in their classrooms or with their students. In the case of reflection for culturally responsive teaching, the reflection should include culturally appropriate and relevant information regarding the individual students as discussed in this literature review (Giroux, 2009; Nieto, 2013, Farmer et al., 2005). Teachers who practice reflection can also provide students opportunities to be reflective (Rodgers, 2002; Freeman & Johnson, 2005). Reflective teachers are present in their teaching decisions, while being able to describe their students' actions and classroom practices, experiment with new ideas and analyze their actions based on student performance (Rodgers, 2002). In addition, having students discuss their learning and reflect with each other, allows for teachers to collect information on student learning that can help guide instruction (Rodgers, 2002; Johnson, 2006). Reflection should have a purpose and should gather student learning through experiences inside and outside the classroom (Johnson, 2006). Reflection during their lessons and interactions with students is beneficial for educators (Johnson, 2006; McIntyre, 2002). McIntyre (2002) alleged it is the teacher's responsibility to follow a reflective practice to construct knowledge about their pedagogy and their students' knowledge to manage "old

constructs and accommodate new constructs” (p. 58). Teachers can learn to reflect upon their daily practices of culturally responsive teaching by attending professional development that encourages critical reflection in their decisions that they make in their classrooms with their diverse student populations.

Once teachers are aware of their own beliefs, those of their students and the need to implement culturally appropriate behaviors daily, then the process of reflection on their own teaching practices and pedagogy must occur. Reflection about teachers’ beliefs and visions can “force us to come out of the closet with doubts about ourselves and what we are doing” (Fullan, 1993, p. 13). In the Shestok (2013) study, the teachers’ reflection process of revisiting “their previous experiences through conversations and personal contemplation” allowed the participants to view “their experiences in new ways that enabled them to use the experiences in positive ways with their non-majority culture students” (p. 4). Reflection became a powerful tool for educators to analyze their own practices, beliefs and classroom decisions while they construct meaning (Shestok, 2013). The opportunity for reflection allowed for the teachers to view their experiences with a new mindset, one more appropriate for ELs, which connects the role of reflection with the path to culturally responsive teaching (Shestok, 2013; Nieto, 2013).

Reflection in professional development involves “giving teacher-participants the opportunity to reflect on and discuss the experiences they had as learners supports them in constructing new knowledge and beliefs about themselves in the role of teacher” (Farmer et al., 2005, p. 66). In the study by Farmer et al. (2005), teachers attended professional development that infused culturally responsive pedagogy with mathematics content. Farmer et al. (2005) learned through their study that “in order to acknowledge and value the experience of their students, teacher-learners need to recognize how an authentic, relevant, learning situation may

differ from the content of a textbook” (p. 69). They also learned that teachers “need to see how recognizing, valuing, and discussing many learning styles can be explicitly honored in instructional design” and that these learning styles “can be addressed by way of . . . multiple forms of assessment” (Farmer et al., 2005, p. 69). These results show a deep connection to the foundations of culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2002, Ladson-Billings, 2014; Nieto, 2013). In addition, the study aligns with the constructivist view in that reflection was deeply connected to the content and professional development learning process (Farmer et al., 2005). The elements of constructivism can potentially promote awareness of how individual’s, both teachers learning about the needs of ELs and the students’ learning from their own cultural experiences (Fosnot, 2005; Fosnot & Perry, 2005; Kroll & Ammon, 2002).

### **Conclusion**

The review examined the literature on culturally responsive pedagogy, effective professional development for teacher change and the constructivist approach to learning to provide possible solutions to the problem of unprepared educators teaching the increased number of ELs in today’s schools. The review found that culturally responsive teaching can promote better learning opportunities for ELs through teachers’ development of cultural awareness, increased intercultural competency, improved beliefs and attitudes towards ELs, and improved understanding about the importance of language (Gay, 2002; Nieto, 2009; 2013; Ladson-Billings, 2004; Bacon, 2014, Durden, 2008; Alleman-Ghionda, 2012; DeJaeghere & Cao, 2009; Dogancay-Aktuna, 2005; (García-Nevarez et al., 2005). The idea of applying culturally responsive teaching to professional development supports the concept of effective teacher-centered professional development that targets teacher-student interactions and the classroom environment for ELs (Pianta, 2011; King, et al., 2009; Bacon, 2014). The constructivism

approach to learning is also appropriate to implement in professional development as it establishes that individuals construct knowledge through their personal experiences (Piaget, 1978) and their social interactions with peers (Vygotsky, 1987). Allowing teachers to explore culturally responsive pedagogy through professional development could help teachers realize the personal construction of knowledge may be different for ELs and other diverse backgrounds, prompting the teacher to evaluate the method or text, rather than the student's ability (Colombo, 2007; Shestok, 2013; Alleman-Ghionda, 2012; DeJaeghere & Cao, 2009; Dogancay-Aktuna, 2005). Constructivist experiences during professional development can help promote true meaning of knowledge in the hopes of implementation (Kroll & Ammon, 2002; Farmer et al., 2005). Just as teachers should want to establish opportunities for students in their classrooms to construct meaning through social interaction with their peers, professional development should provide the same for educators (Farmer et al., 2005; Keiny, 1994; McIntyre, 2002). In addition, the powerful role of professional development for change can help minimize the problem of teachers not meeting the needs of ELs because it would support teachers communicating the issues for school reform and improvement (Guskey, 2002b; Hawley & Valli, 1999). School reform and change can also occur through promoting social justice, which includes reaching the needs of diverse students, including ELs (Fullan, 1993; Howard, 2007; Nieto, 2013).

Themes that emerged throughout the review of the literature are: teacher reflection, personal connection, and social justice. Teacher reflection plays an important role through the process of becoming culturally responsive, constructivism, and should be a main component of professional development (McIntyre, 2002; Shestok, 2013, Fat'hi & Tabataba'i, 2011). Nieto (2009, 2013) and Gay (2002) both discuss teacher reflection through becoming culturally responsive, while studies that included a reflection component resulted with better teacher

outcomes and learning (Colombo, 2007; Farmer et al., 2005; Shestok, 2013; Fat'hi & Tabataba'i, 2011). Personal connection relates to personally understanding and connecting to the process of cultural awareness, intercultural competency, the personal construction of knowledge established in constructivism, and personally finding relevant value and coherence in professional development content (Colombo, 2007; Nieto, 2013; Piaget, 1978; Desimone et al., 2002). Finally, the areas of culturally responsive teaching and professional development for change support the theme of social justice (Nieto, 2013, Kose & Lim, 2011, Howard, 2007, Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 2014). Teachers who truly understand the need for culturally responsive pedagogy in schools and practice the framework in their daily interactions with students are potentially creating an improved environment for culturally and linguistically diverse students, which strives for equality and justice in today's world (Howard, 2007; Nieto, 2013; Banks, 1989, 2004).

“We *can* [italics in the original] educate all children if we truly want to” (Delpit, 2003). There is an importance to examine how teachers feel about working with ELs, their awareness or lack thereof culturally responsive teaching, and if the concept is being addressed through professional development in a district that has the majority of its ELs speaking languages that are not often represented in studies, including many new immigrant families and refugees. Until teachers understand and have a deeper connections to ELs, and diverse populations in general, the current situation will remain unchanged while the achievement gap and negative outlooks will remain in the classroom. We are no longer in a society where teaching ELs is designated to specialists—all educators can benefit from being culturally aware and understanding culturally responsive practices. Current teachers need to be able to teach culturally responsively and implement appropriate practices and pedagogy in their daily interactions with their EL students.



For these reasons, exploring the concept of promoting culturally responsive teaching through professional development is relevant and necessary.

There is evidence in the literature that educators and researchers have some interest in culturally responsive teaching (Farmer et al., 2005; Kose & Lim, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2014; Howard, 2007; Colombo, 2007) and a desire to create schools that are not only more sensitive to cultural needs of diverse students, but also aware of how to transform the environment to be more appropriate and relevant for their students (Howard, 2007; Kose & Lim, 2011; Bacon, 2014). Unfortunately, most professional development continues to focus on isolated concepts or strategies (Desimone, et al., 2002; Pianta, 2011). What if professional development focused on the beliefs, the self-reflection and analysis, of teachers and how that alone can impact a student's achievement and experience in school? How can the ideas of constructivism be included with what research shows is effective professional development?

Educators, both novice and experienced teachers, are not prepared for teaching ELs successfully, therefore, highlighting a need for better preparation through in-service training (Nieto, 2013; King et al., 2012). In addition, most of the culturally responsive research in the United States includes work with Latino or Hispanic students and African American students (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2014; Delpit, 2003; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Watts-Taffe & Truscott, 2000; Colombo, 2007; García-Nevarez et al., 2005); it is less common to find research on schools with ELs who are mostly Middle Eastern in heritage, including refugee students. The Karabenick and Noda study (2004) is relevant because the district had a population of Middle Eastern ELs. Similarly the study by Derderian-Aghajanian and Cong (2012) included two Middle Eastern students for interviews. Recently, stereotypes and negative views towards Middle Eastern people are pervasive and it is necessary to raise awareness of how teachers' and

society's views can play a negative role in EL students' learning (Derderian-Aghajanian & Cong, 2012). The achievement data continues to show that teachers are not meeting the needs of ELs (Kena et al., 2016). In addition the studies by García-Nevarez et al. (2005) and Karabenick & Noda (2004) show that teachers without a specialization in ESL or bilingualism do not have the background knowledge about language development to teach ELs appropriately. Colombo's (2007) study showed the value of infusing cultural connections through professional development, but the need to be more explicit with these topics for teachers who do not naturally understand the connection and need to have cultural awareness. The results found in this literature review show the continued need for improved professional development training for general education classroom teachers.

Rather than focusing on teaching strategies alone, the literature found that explicitly integrating culturally responsive elements and opportunities for constructing knowledge and reflection into the coursework for teachers of ELs could be beneficial (Colombo, 2007; Farmer et al., 2005; Shestok, 2013). This literature review has the promise of creating a foundation for offering significant additions to the literature as it strives to better understand the problem of ELs' needs not being met in schools. If professional development is the most used method for teacher learning (Pitsoe & Maila, 2012; Nieto, 2013), then it is necessary to recognize and address the concern for creating appropriate classrooms for ELs through these in-services for current teachers.

The research study was designed to explore the potential of addressing the problem of unprepared educators (Nieto, 2013; Ballantyne et al., 2008) that need to improve their abilities to appropriately teach the increasing EL population in U.S. schools, who underperform in comparison to their non-EL peers (Kena et al., 2016). The increase of ELs in schools (Kena et

al., 2016; Batalova & McHugh, 2010) while teachers continue to be majority White (Ladson-Billings & Tate IV, 2009; Durden, 2008) and monolingual without enough training to teach linguistically diverse students (Nieto, 2013; Gay, 2002) drives the this research. One avenue to increase teacher awareness and prepare them to teach EL students is culturally responsive pedagogy (Gay, 2002; Nieto, 2013). This research study examined if teachers could become more culturally responsive, with increased intercultural competency, through engaging in professional development that is designed to better teach EL students.

### **Chapter 3: Methodology**

The study utilized a case design (Stake, 1995), which stems from a “void in the literature” and a need to analyze “real-life problems found in the workplace” (Creswell, 2014, p.20) of many schools with larger English learner (EL) populations. The following questions framed this study:

1. Can participating in a reform type of professional development influence a teacher’s understanding of teaching ELs?
2. Can the integration of constructivist activities in professional development help teachers transfer pedagogical and conceptual knowledge into their own classroom practice?
3. What connections are teachers making from the professional development strategies and coursework about language learning to their specific classroom population of ELs?

#### **Background of the Study**

The PD was designed to be equivalent to six university credit hours through an Improving Teacher Quality (IQ) grant funded by the state in partnership with the university and the school district (Adler & Sedgeman, 2015). While the PD was offered as coursework, it had attributes that Desimone et al. (2008) determined to be reflective of reform type PD. In particular, reform as defined by Desimone et al. (2002) is “such as a study group, teacher network, mentoring relationship, committee or task force, internship, individual research project, or teacher research center, in contrast to a traditional workshop, course, or conference” (p. 83). PD considered “[reform] type were more likely to have collective participation and longer

duration; and activities with collective participation and were more likely to have active learning opportunities, coherence and a content focus” (Desimone et al., 2002, p. 83).

### **Site and Participants**

The study took place in a large Midwest school district with a population of over 9000 ELs, with the less than a third of the ELL students considered proficient by the WIDA English Language Development Standards (Adler & Sedgeman, 2015). The local university offered professional development for 30 teachers in the district during the 2015-2016 school year through a state-funded grant in partnership with the state’s Department of Education. There were two sets of participants for this study: the 30 participating K-12 teachers and the professionals, which included the three professional development instructors employed by the university for the grant and the grant’s project director.

Most teachers were new hires, but had various levels of experiences in the teaching field (see Chapter 4 for details). Ten teacher participants were secondary (grades 6-12) certified and 20 teachers were elementary (K-8) certified. Two teachers in the study were male and 28 were female. All participants gave their informed consent in order to be included for the data collection of this study. Teachers were chosen and recruited by the district.

In addition to the teacher participants, the three course instructors and the grant study’s project director were participants in the study. The instructors were employed with the site district and currently work in administrative roles. The project director was a professor for the university who specialized in reading development and ESL. All four participants had experience teaching EL students.

All participants signed consent forms (Appendix A) that assured theirs and their students’ anonymity and informed them that they could refuse to participate and/or discontinue

involvement at any time without any effect on their participation in the courses. In addition, the project director and instructors also granted consent to be interviewed (Appendix B).

Pseudonyms were used to protect the identities of the participants and allowed for the potential of true representation of their beliefs in the interview process (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

The PD consisted of two university courses that were part of the university's state approved English as a Second Language (ESL) endorsement program. It included two courses: (a) a Teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) methods course, which included the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) for teachers of ELs and (b) a reading course aimed to improve teachers' knowledge on the development of learning literacy skills in English. The syllabi for the courses (Appendix C) were the same for both semesters of the study. The professional development supported the district's goal to prepare teachers to work with ELs as it developed the teachers' knowledge about ELs and language development. The PD was carried out at the district's administration building.

### **Data Collection**

Data that included pre and post coursework surveys, participant observations, artifacts, and interviews were collected in three phases:

- Phase 1: Pre-PD. The first phase of data collection was prior to the start of the PD in October 2015 and consisted of pre-PD teacher surveys.
- Phase 2: During PD. In Phase 2 data collected during the PD from October 2015 to April 2016 included: (a) instructors and the project director surveys, (b) field notes from participant observations during PD coursework, and (c) artifacts, such as participant daily feedback forms, exit tickets, PowerPoint slides, and other materials used during the professional development.

- Phase 3: Post PD. The final phase of the case study consisted of individual interviews with the three PD instructors and the project director, and post surveys from the 30 teacher participants.

All data collected were stored on the researcher's personal computer, which utilized a password protection cloud service, M-Box, secured through the university. Each is described below.

**Survey data.** The survey was adapted from the "Language Knowledge and Awareness Survey" (Appendix D) developed by Smitherman and Villanueva (2000). Permission to use the survey was granted by Dr. Smitherman (Appendix E). The purpose of the survey was to track any changes in teacher responses over the course of the research. Additional open response questions were added to the Post survey to gather further data on teacher learning from the coursework (Appendix F). The three instructors and the project director also completed the survey to learn how those who helped design the PD courses think about language and language issues that may arise in the classroom.

The survey was provided online through Qualtrics, a password-protected service. Surveys were returned electronically for increased security and privacy. Each survey was self-coded by the individual participants, using information only they would be able to identify. The survey link was emailed to all teacher participants prior to the coursework and a separate link was sent to the instructors and the project director. Survey results were saved electronically on a personal computer and backed up on the secure M-Box cloud service.

**Participant Observation and Field Note Data.** Field notes were collected during participatory observations of the PD coursework. A total of 15 PD sessions were observed and the researcher took on the role of a participant observer (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2011; Marshall & Rossman, 2011). All observations were written in the researcher's personal journal and then

transcribed electronically in Microsoft Word with numbered lines for secure storage to prepare for coding. The PD courses took place on scheduled Saturdays throughout the school year. All information observed was recorded, including environmental factors, daily agendas and presentations, mapping of the room, and detailed observations of the lessons taught in the classroom and conversations that occurred. The purpose of participatory observations was to document the PD content, teacher participation, and any evidence of teacher learning during the two PD courses. Additionally, reflection notes of any anecdotal conversations between the participants and the researcher were included in the field note journals.

**Artifact data.** Artifacts included the instructors' PowerPoint slides and handouts, teacher feedback forms, exit tickets, and other materials used during the PD courses. A wide variety of documents and course materials held the potential to provide helpful insight. The daily feedback forms and exit tickets were a requirement implemented by the instructors of the PD courses that provided insight into the personal reflection of the teachers. Any material collected from teachers was individually coded with the same code used on the surveys, however the exit slips were often submitted anonymously to the instructors and, therefore, could not be identified per individual. Instead, these materials, when needed, were used for larger group analysis. All school privacy guidelines were used for artifacts in relation to the study (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Analytic memos were made in the margins of artifacts as necessary for additional insight. When beneficial, photographs of PD completed activities, not participants, provided useful information as artifacts of teacher participation in completing the activity and learning displayed on the PD activities.

**Interview data.** Interviews for the study were conducted the three PD instructors and the grant project director. The interviews followed suggested protocols for qualitative research



(Weiss, 1994). Two protocols using a semi-structured approach were used: one for the course instructors (Appendix G) that for allowed for consistency across data collection and one (Appendix H) for the project director. Member checking during interviews and through discussions with the participants ensured ideas were presented accurately for all those interviewed. The PD instructors' interviews focused on the their reflections of the PD coursework, the teachers' learning, and on elements of culturally responsive pedagogy. The project director was interviewed to gain background knowledge of her experience with the state-funded grant, her beliefs about teacher preparation and PD, and included elements of culturally responsive pedagogy.

Participants were not required to answer interview questions they did not want to answer. Prior to beginning the individual interviews, each participant was asked permission for audio recording, which was optional. All interviews were audio-recorded and saved on a private I-phone and were transcribed directly from the audio file onto the researcher's secure laptop using the private password-protected M-Box cloud service. Once saved on to the laptop, the original file was deleted from the I-phone for further protection and anonymity. In the event that audio recording was not used, detailed notes and direct quotes were transcribed in order to obtain as much data as possible. The interviews lasted between 30-60 minutes at a convenient time and place chosen by the participant.

### **Data Analysis**

Analysis of collected data allowed for potential themes to emerge. Descriptive statistics were completed of the quantitative survey data and data triangulation occurred across multiple qualitative data sources including individual interviews, open-ended survey questions, and artifacts.

**Surveys.** The analysis of the pre and post surveys began with descriptive statistics (Creswell, 2014). The analysis included the “means, standard deviation, and range of scores” (Creswell, 2014, p. 163) for the important variables of the surveys. The survey questions with Likert scale results will be analyzed to determine if there was a statistical significant difference between pre and post survey results. Pre and post descriptive statistics will be compared to look for any changes or growth in pedagogical knowledge about teaching ELs. In addition, qualitative data from the surveys was coded with focused categories (cultural responsiveness/intercultural competency and constructivism) and holistic coding to aid in triangulation of the data (Saldaña, 2013). Holistic coding will look for themes across the responses.

**Field Notes.** The first coding involved focused coding on the concepts of: (a) cultural responsiveness/intercultural competency and (b) constructivism. The participatory observation field notes was coded with the focused categories: however, descriptive coding looked for other key phrases that occurred as well. Initial coding occurred immediately after observations were transcribed and analytic memos were written for reflection. As more observations were collected, revisions of the initial coding and new holistic themes emerged, which aided in determining the key findings of the study.

**Interviews.** Finished interview transcriptions from the audio recordings were typed in Microsoft Word to prepare for coding. Analytic memos were written after the interview, but prior to beginning initial coding to account for any helpful nuances during the interview (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

First, the interviews were coded to look for the same phrases as the observational field notes: (a) cultural responsiveness/intercultural competency and (b) constructivism. While

looking for those descriptions, in vivo coding of the interview data allowed for important themes to emerge with additional coding of: connection/coherence, external factors, use or role of language, and strategies. These common themes related to the three guiding research questions emerged through the coding process and were later triangulated with other data codes (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

**Artifacts.** Following the same format, artifacts were coded looking for examples of: (a) cultural responsiveness/intercultural competency and (b) constructivism. Once the new themes emerged from the previous coding (connection/coherence, external factors, use or role of language, and strategies), these themes were also utilized in coding the artifacts. This focused coding helped to identify and relate common themes or concepts (Saldaña, 2013). For this study, the reflection logs were used to look for the specific themes (listed above) across teacher learning of the SIOP components.

**Triangulation.** After all qualitative data was initially coded, axial coding took place, followed by triangulation of the data to expose evidence that supported emerging themes, which were: (a) external factors impacted the potential for the PD to include all research-based best practices, (b) PD activities and coherence to teachers' goals and practices (c) the PD instructors' philosophies of teacher learning addressed constructivist learning opportunities in certain areas, and (d) the inclusion of culturally responsive pedagogy was limited to language background and was underdeveloped

Data analysis provided evidence in support of the research questions, while comparing the data findings to the current research in the literature review. Triangulation strengthened the development of the main findings. The findings supported the significance of the study and offer further research suggestions.

**Ethical Considerations**

Using pseudonyms for both the study site and participants protected the anonymity of those involved. Member checking ensured that the researcher's beliefs and biases are not implemented into the data during collection or analysis, as the study was developed on a topic personally connected to the researcher. By using only objective observations and genuine interview transcription data, the analysis limited any bias and assumptions.

## Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Findings

### Introduction

The purpose of this case study was to explore how professional development (PD) may influence teachers' awareness of culturally responsive teaching, their beliefs regarding English Learners (ELs), and how reflection of these concepts can be implemented into classroom pedagogy. Three research questions were developed based on the overall concern for how professional development could foster culturally responsive teachers, namely,

1. Can participating in a reform type of professional development influence a teacher's understanding for teaching ELs?
2. Can the integration of constructivist activities in professional development help teachers transfer pedagogical and conceptual knowledge into their own classroom practice?
3. What connections are teachers making from the professional development strategies and coursework about language learning to their specific classroom population of ELs?

The main findings of this study are: (a) external factors impacted the potential for the PD to include all research-based best practices, (b) PD activities and coherence to teachers' goals and practices (c) the PD instructors' philosophies of teacher learning addressed constructivist learning opportunities in certain areas of the PD, and (d) the inclusion of culturally responsive pedagogy was limited to language background and was underdeveloped

This chapter is divided into three sections: (a) the teacher profiles, (b) background information of the study, and (c) key findings. Teacher participant profiles include grade levels taught and certifications at the time of the study. Background information includes information

about the project director and PD instructors, teacher selection, and the process of determining the PD content. Finally, the four major findings are discussed.

### **Teacher Profiles**

Twenty teachers in the study were elementary certified (K-8) and ten were secondary certified (6-12). Fourteen of the elementary certified teachers in this study taught grades K-5 and six were in middle schools; seven secondary certified teachers taught in high schools and three in middle schools. The teacher profiles are organized by school types (elementary, middle, and high school).

**Elementary Teachers (Grades K-5).** All of the fourteen teachers in K-5 classrooms held current elementary teacher certification. Additionally, three specialized in early childhood, two in social studies, three in math, four in science, four in language arts, and one in special education. The grade levels represented by the teachers were: Kindergarten (one teacher), first grade (three teachers), second grade (two teachers), third grade (one teacher), fourth grade (three teachers), and fifth grade (four teachers). Six teachers were in their first year of teaching, five had taught for one to three years, and three teachers reported having four to six years of teaching experience (Pre Survey). Additionally, three of the 14 teachers described their own language as “multilingual” or “multidialectal” (Pre Survey, 2015).

**Middle School Teachers (Grades 6-8).** The middle school teachers held both elementary certification and secondary certification. Six had elementary certification; three had secondary certification. The teachers specialized in the content areas of English/language arts (six teachers), math (two teachers), science (three teachers), social studies (one teacher), and speech (two teachers). Teaching experience for middle school teachers were: One teacher in her first year of teaching, three teachers taught one to three years, two taught four to six years, and

three had seven to ten years of teaching experience. Four of the nine teachers described their own language as either “multilingual” or “multidialectal” (Pre Survey, 2015).

**High School Teachers (Grades 9-12).** Seven high school teachers in the study held secondary certification. The teachers specialized in the content areas of English (three teachers), math (one teacher), and social studies (four teachers). Two teachers were in their first year of teaching, three taught four to six years, and one taught seven to ten years, and one taught for over fifteen years (Pre survey). Four of the seven teachers described their own language as “multilingual” or “multidialectal” (Pre Survey, 2015).

### **Background Information**

The university and district were partners in applying for and implementing a state-funded grant, which was based on low performance schools’ needs as indicated on a state eligibility list. The grant writing process was initiated when the project director, Dr. Martin<sup>2</sup>, approached the district. The need to improve instruction for ELs set the objective for the grant’s PD. The district chose the focus to be on ELs because of their increasing numbers and the ELs’ low-academic achievement rates. District personnel were involved with writing the grant, making it a joint effort between the university and the district. The district requested what the PD course content would include and the course instructors were selected to include three district leaders: Ms. Smith taught the English as a Second Language (ESL) course and Ms. Roberts and Ms. Nichols co-taught the reading course. The PD coursework included two university courses: (a) An ESL methods course, which included the components of the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) for teachers of ELs and (b) a reading course aimed to improve

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<sup>2</sup> All names are pseudonyms to keep participants anonymous

teachers' knowledge on the development of teaching and assessing literacy skills in English with an emphasis on reading.

The district was in charge of recruiting the teachers for the grant. All teachers who were listed as teaching ELs were sent an original invitation to participate in the spring of 2015 when the grant application was submitted. Another email was sent out district-wide a few months later. All new hires to the district were informed of the grant opportunity when they met with the EL director prior to signing on with the district. The final group of 30 teachers included 25 new hires for the 2015-2016 school year, nine of which were first year teachers. Three teachers were new to the district in 2014-2015 school year, one teacher was hired in 2012, and one was hired in 2007. Each new teacher signed an agreement that they understood that their job was contingent on their obtaining six credit hours in the ESL endorsement by the end of their first year. The new hires were given plans of study from four universities, but were told that there was a possibility of being part of the state-funded grant with this study's university, which had space for 30 teachers.

While the goal was to receive the grant in the summer in order to begin instruction in August before the 2015-2016 school year began, the initial award was conditional. Several revisions were written by Dr. Martin with district leadership and submitted to the state department of education before the grant was officially changed from conditional to approved in the beginning of October. The late award delayed the start of the grant and impacted the registration and scheduling processes. After working out how to register the teachers quickly, the ESL methods course began on October 10, 2015 and the reading course on October 17, 2015. Because of the delayed start date of the courses, the first semester schedule was crammed to fit in the required hours into a shorter semester. However, after officially starting, additional problems



that arose and grantor demands (e.g. changes in grant scheduling requirements and restrictions on budgeting for food) required changes to be addressed throughout the two semesters.

The background of the study provides the circumstances that led to the implementation of the study's PD courses. Findings, which were impacted by the design of the study and the participants involved, include: (a) external factors impacted the potential for the PD to include all research-based best practices, (b) PD activities had coherence when they were relevant to teachers' goals and practices, (c) the PD instructors' philosophies of teacher learning addressed constructivist learning opportunities in certain areas, and (d) the inclusion of culturally responsive pedagogy was limited to language background and was underdeveloped

### **Findings**

#### **External Factors Impacted the Potential for PD to Include Research-Based Best Practices**

External factors caused changes in the PD courses, which impacted the ability for the PD to reflect effective best practices. The three organizations involved with state-funded grant were: the school district, the university, and state. Trying to address each institution's requirements created different expectations that needed to be met and impacted how the PD was designed and implemented. Three external factors influenced the PD: (a) the district's requirement to have the PD count as university course credit, (b) the delayed start caused changes to the PD's schedule, and (c) meeting the needs of the district and the state impacted the best practices of the PD.

#### **The district's desire to have teachers earn credit required more rigorous content.**

The district demanded that the PD coursework count as six university credits towards the teachers' ESL endorsements, which supported the district's need for providing PD for their teachers of ELs. Dr. Martin accommodated the district's requirements with the grant. She said,

[I] thought we were going to do what we did with the previous grant [which included cohorts of teachers attending PD monthly for a school year], but in the early meetings . . . it became VERY<sup>3</sup> clear that unless their [the district's] teachers could have credit for coursework, it was a deal breaker. (Interview, 2016)

Dr. Martin thought that they could use a reform model of PD but still count as course credit, saying, “we COULD do . . . these day-long [PD sessions], spreading them out so they [the teachers] could go and come back” [to discuss their learning]. She continued, “so it seemed in theory ‘oh, we could do the same thing but guess what, we’ll just give them credit for it’” (Interview, 2016).

The district’s requirement to count the PD as course credit required the budget to cover the university tuition for each participant and the course content to meet university requirements for rigor. Dr. Martin asked about the coursework via a webinar with the state grant coordinators, “Because in the RFP [Request for Proposal] . . . says you can do coursework, but I wanted to be SURE. [Dr. Martin shared she] was getting pushback . . . right away from [the state grant coordinators] immediately but they couldn't say we COULDN'T do it. We just had to make sure the budget was correct. (Interview, 2016)

The next step involved Dr. Martin working with the district to determine which courses would be offered for the PD. Dr. Martin initially thought, “We could have six credit hours, which are the education classes [already in place at the university]. Which is the assessment class, it’s the methods class, and it’s the practicum. So that would be the six credit hours.” These were already established courses in the university’s ESL endorsement program; however, while working with the district, Dr. Martin was asked to include the district’s already established

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<sup>3</sup> Words in all capital letters were spoken with emphasis in interview responses

foundations of reading PD. Dr. Martin said that she “thought this makes sense. We could add it as an elective,” as an additional reading course focused on ELs to the university’s program, which Dr. Martin felt was needed.

The district’s requirement of the PD counting as university credit extended the grant submission process because the new course had to be approved by the state as a university ESL program elective before it could be included with the grant proposal. In addition to the work in getting the new reading course approved, Dr. Martin redesigned the existing PD content to meet the needs of ELs, which added a focus on ELs, saying “they could keep all the content but they had to acknowledge [ELs]” (Interview, 2016). The new course was successfully added to the ESL program at the university to be included in the grant.

Once the two PD courses were finalized to be included in the grant, the PD instructors were required to have their course content meet the requirement of the grant with agendas for each day as well as university syllabi aligning with the university’s expectation of rigor. The PD instructors adapted the PD content to align with university course requirements. The change to having the PD count as university credit required additional assignments to align with the content.

***PD instructors adapted the PD content to be a rigorous university course.*** The PD course instructors were required to meet university requirements while teaching their PD content. Therefore, the PD course syllabi were developed to include the necessary rigor of course content and assignments, as well as follow university recommended formatting and include Canvas, the university’s online learning management system (LMS) requirements for collecting and grading assignments. The new changes ensured the more rigorous course content was taught within the required university timeframe and followed university grading policies. Each PD course

included changes made by the instructors to address the needs of the district for the PD to be university courses.

*Reading course content changes.* Ms. Roberts and Ms. Nichols were required to make content changes for their PD course. Ms. Roberts and Ms. Nichols had to adapt their previous PD content to fit the university requirements for the grant teachers. Ms. Roberts said that they added assignments for the university course:

We also had to adapt it to secondary teachers. We had a very limited [past PD experience] of primarily sixth and seventh grade teachers, maybe one eighth, but no high school teachers before and so that was actually a pretty big adjustment. . . . The other adaptation that we made to the course I think was to be more explicit about English language learners. (Interview, 2016)

Ms. Roberts discussed how the course was adapted to include content for secondary teachers and English Learners (ELs). In order to include additional information about ELs, the Second Language Acquisition (SLA) expert contributed to the course content as a guest lecturer for an hour each semester.

In addition to having to make the content apply to secondary teachers, Ms. Nichols and Ms. Roberts had to include the rigor required of the university. Ms. Nichols provided information on the changes made to the original PD content for the grant coursework, explaining “we added obviously more . . . opportunities for the teachers to expand their knowledge and then there had to be proof of what they did and how they did it” (Interview, 2016). Ms. Nichols also shared that the course required the teachers to describe “why they did it [the reading strategies and assessments from class] and how they’re going to change it in the future” (Interview, 2016). In order to earn university credit, Ms. Nichols and Ms. Roberts “added IN-DEPTH case studies”

(Ms. Nichols, Interview, 2016). Ms. Nichols explained, the grant teachers “did case studies and they did research but we really went deeper when it was a college class [compared to teachers taking it just as PD].

Ms. Nichols elaborated on how she and Ms. Roberts asked teachers to go “deeper” in their learning; she explained that the teachers “had different assignments”:

They did three case studies that they had to do components of those case studies and then . . . [the grant teachers had to explain] ‘What [is] the impact on the future teaching of this student, what are your outcomes? What do you see for this . . . student?’ . . . Then they did a strategy binder . . . but . . . they had to actually USE the strategies in the classroom [and] report on them. [The grant teachers had to answer] ‘Is this a strategy that you would use again? Was it successful? Or would you change it and HOW would you change it?’ (Interview, 2016)

The PD developed over the past few years with the district, but was more rigorous for the grant teachers when compared to how it was offered as PD in the district in the past. The two semesters that included the grant participants made up the sixth and seventh cohorts of the district-wide reading PD; however, it was the first time Ms. Roberts and Ms. Nichols taught the PD as a university course for college credit. The district decided to allow non-grant teachers to attend the grant PD without course credit: eight non-grant teachers attended in the fall cohort and 12 non-grant teachers attended in the winter cohort. Therefore, the reading course included grant teachers attending the PD university undergraduate and graduate credit and non-grant teachers not enrolled for credit.

Ms. Nichols explained that the PD evolved over the past three years as “it became more rigorous.” She continued, “Obviously this year, when it became a college course, the rigor was

really bumped up.” The grant teachers “had to write papers [but] when it was [a district literacy PD] it was more go out, do the assignment, come back, let’s talk about it, let’s figure it out . . . let’s look at the lessons, how are you going to do it differently?” Ms. Nichols summarized, “so there was a lot more [work required] for the students who were taking it as a college course [versus those non-grant teachers attending as district PD only]. She continued,

as a college course, they [the grant teachers] had to report that, they had to write actual reports and . . . then go back to them after they retaught the lesson, if it was a lesson, or after they used that [reading] assessment piece and change their teaching. Then [they had to report] how did you change your teaching, reflect upon it, was it successful? Those are ways in changed [as a university course for the grant]. (Interview, 2016)

Ms. Nichols and Ms. Roberts both revealed they felt the rigor of the PD had to be increased for the grant teachers in comparison to the non-grant district teachers attending the PD. Ms. Roberts also explained the assignments in her interview. She informed me that there were five total assignments for the grant teachers: two written reflections, the strategy binder, the case study, and participation. Ms. Roberts described the change in the assignments with “the major [assignment] was doing case studies” (Ms. Roberts, Interview, 2016). Ms. Roberts described the case studies with grant teachers having to choose two to three students to assess using the assessments from the PD course, then “really thinking through their interventions based on the five components of reading, . . . writing about how the interventions went and then doing some planning for the future for these students” (Interview, 2016). She reflected, “so I think that was an opportunity to take everything that they had learned in the course and actually apply it to students who were actually sitting in front of them at the time” (Ms. Roberts, Interview, 2016).

Another assignment for the grant teachers taking the PD for course credit was to “prepare

a binder of strategies based on the five components [of reading] (Ms. Roberts, Interview, 2016). The strategies binder was meant to be “a tool kit” for teachers “so as they encountered other students who needed some work in phonics or vocabulary or whatever, they would have readily available strategies and activities available to them to go back to” (Interview, 2016). Both instructors thought the strategies binder was a useful resource for teacher to use with their students when they needed specific interventions in an area of reading. Each teacher was given some strategies during the PD coursework, but grant participants had to compile their own binder to submit as a graded assignment.

While the PD instructors based the course content on previous PD, they had to change elements of their previous PD for the grant due to it being a university approved course and needing substantial assignments. In addition, the course included a range of K-12 teachers; in the past, the PD was mostly offered and attended by PK-5 teachers. Ms. Nichols and Ms. Roberts both identified the changes they had to make to their PD content and the addition of course assignments for the grant.

*ESL methods course content changes.* Similarly to reading course taught by Ms. Roberts and Ms. Nichols, Ms. Smith also changed her PD content for the grant due to the university’s requirement for rigor. Because there were teachers taking the course at the undergraduate and graduate levels, there had to be separate syllabi. Ms. Smith kept a final reflection paper assignment that she included from when she taught the same course at another university for the undergraduate teachers, but added a more rigorous critical issue paper for the graduate level teachers, as recommended by Dr. Martin. The ESL methods course also scheduled in time for the SLA expert to contribute to the course content as a guest lecturer for an hour each semester.

Besides adjusting the final assignment, Ms. Smith explained that while she modeled this

course off of the previously taught course from another university, she changed the content to meet the teachers' needs in the course. Course assignments still required teachers to practice and implement strategies from the PD into their lesson plans, complete reflection logs about each SIOP component, present a final lesson plan to the class, and write a final paper. When asked if the course was similar to one she taught in the past, Ms. Smith said

Oh, I always upgrade it and always make it . . . fit the needs of the students [teachers] . . . cuz<sup>4</sup> like the first semester, there were more elementary teachers and the second semester, the winter term, was more secondary. So I would adjust it that way. [She further explained that she made] sure that the lesson plans that they view are at their grade level . . . any activities would be geared towards the CONTENT that they are teaching . . . like last semester we had a number of kindergarten teachers so we need to adjust what you're doing, the activities that you're doing or what you expose them to. (Interview, 2016)

The requirement to have the PD count for six university credit hours caused changes to how the instructors led the PD in the past and course content had to align with university syllabi. Dr. Martin and the three course instructors worked together to ensure the changes aligned with both the grant and university requirements and were adjusted as needed to meet the university's expectation of rigor. However, the schedule for both courses was also impacted by external factors due to late approval of the grant.

**External Factors Caused Changes to the PD's Schedule and Duration.** The state-funded grant's schedule was impacted by external factors such as the delayed start and demands from the state grant coordinators. Dr. Martin and the course instructors were required to adjust

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<sup>4</sup> Spelling in the transcripts is phonetic to represent what was spoken.



the timeframe of the semester schedule for the fall and the structure of the courses for the winter. With the grant's initial approval being conditional, the revision process became more challenging and time consuming, causing a delayed start and changes to the implementation of the PD courses. Additionally, the state grant coordinator's demands in the winter semester changed how the time was spent during winter PD sessions and required additional hours of PD to be scheduled.

*Schedule and assignment changes due to the late start of the PD.* The delay in beginning the PD coursework caused scheduling changes for the PD's timeframe. Scheduling changes included a shortened fall semester, late registration for teachers, and adjustments to fit university syllabi requirements and grant hour requirements in the shorter timeframe. The original plan was to begin in August prior to the school year starting and then spreading the remaining sessions over the course of the semester. While Dr. Martin and the instructors all agreed on having the sessions spread out to allow for teacher practice and reflection, the changes created concern. While Ms. Smith was able to keep her course design with separate SIOP components each week, she did have to meet more frequently in the fall semester due to starting in October rather than August. She also shortened her course assignments for the fall cohort to six reflection logs instead of the eight she required in the syllabus due to the shorter timeframe.

Dr. Martin also expressed her concern in her interview, saying, "we got awarded SO late, so that caused the scheduling to change so the semesters got REALLY compressed . . . So it was impossible to have this thing spread out" (Interview, 2016). The condensed schedule impacted the time teachers had in between sessions to try the PD content in their classrooms and reflect on the implementation, as well as the time the teachers had to work on the final course assignments due at the end of the semester.

*New demands from the state grant coordinators caused schedule changes.* External factors also resulted with changes in how time was spent during the PD course sessions. In addition to the condensed schedule, issues came up after the state grant coordinators visited in November. Even though scheduling and PD hours for the grant had not changed since submission, the state required changes in the number of hours. The change in hours and scheduling came from the grant coordinators viewing the use of substitute teachers during observation days from the reading course as double-dipping into the funds since the observations occurred during the school day with subs, rather than after work hours. The coordinators required the teachers to meet 15 days rather than the original 90-hour requirement because the PD was to follow university course scheduling. This issue did not come up until after the first semester coursework was completed. Dr. Martin had to address the issues of hours by adding an additional day for all teachers and a three-hour after school session for the winter semester reading course group. When the new semester began on January 9, 2016, how to present these grant changes to the teachers were discussed among the PD and course instructors. The decision was made to add another day:

April 23 as a last day to meet together to add more hours for grant and to blend the two courses. [The three instructors and the project director] discussed making it simple. Ms. Nichols had conflict . . . but the other instructors could be there. Also talked about emails back and forth, grant money issues with working lunches now and participants had to vote. (Field Notes, January 9, 2016)

This change resulted with Ms. Roberts and Ms. Nichols having to add an additional three-hour session for the grant teachers only. This was scheduled with short notice for the teachers to occur on a Monday evening rather than the typical Saturday class due to the requirement being

added at the last minute by the state grant coordinators and there only being two sessions left of the winter semester for the reading course. The three hour after school session was required for grant teachers while non-grant teachers did not have to attend the additional time due to it not being part of the original PD plan. The instructors developed new content and assignments for the new session.

*New demands caused changes to how time was spent during each PD session.* The November visit from the state grant coordinators resulted with new demands on how time was spent during the PD sessions. After their visit, the state grant coordinators informed Dr. Martin that the grant budget could not provide a morning snack, only lunch, which also had to be a working lunch. This new demand required a change in how the budget was used to purchase food for the teachers. Ms. Smith's winter cohort voted to have lunch provided with grant funds; the reading course winter cohort were initially not given an opportunity to vote for having a working lunch because there were 12 non-grant teachers in their sessions. Ultimately, the reading course instructors did decide to use grant funds to order lunch for the grant teachers on the last two course sessions while the non-grant teachers were able to leave on a lunch break. Due to the working lunch, Ms. Smith's class adjusted the schedule to begin and end earlier than originally planned. Ms. Roberts and Ms. Nichols began class 30 minutes earlier for the grant participants during the winter semester, which they called a "soft start" (Field Notes, 2015-2016) and included grant teachers reading articles on their own or having a grant-specific discussion before the non-grant district teachers came to class to start the actual literacy PD instruction.

External factors impacted the coursework and the scheduling of the PD sessions. The delayed start caused the first semester to be condensed and assignments to be adjusted, while new demands from the grant coordinators caused changes to the number of scheduled days and

how time was spent during each PD session. These external factors impacted the best practices of the PD.

**Meeting the needs of the district and the state impacted the best practices of the PD.**

The influence of the district's demands and state's requirements created changes to the best practices of the grant PD. Subsequently impacting the experience of the PD instructors, project director and the teachers. External factors impacted the evaluation process of the PD, the collective participation of the grant participants, and the teacher selection process.

*External factors impacted the reflection and evaluation of the PD.* The external factors (grantor's requirements and subsequent changes) impacted the reflection and evaluation process of the PD. Due to the late start with the grant's approval, the methods for reflecting and evaluating the grant had to be adjusted rather than follow typical university course protocol. The impact on the grant data collection and evaluation methods created frustrations for Dr. Martin, the instructors, and the teachers. Evaluation procedures also caused confusion for teachers on how to register for the courses and submit assignments.

The grant changes and delayed start created difficulty with: teacher registration, tuition payments, the grant evaluation process of collecting pre-coursework data on short notice, and the implementation of the online LMS. Dr. Martin had to adjust her plan for collecting the grant data due to the late approval because the course instructors did not have time to be trained on the university classroom LMS. This change resulted with the instructors using their own methods for collecting assignments and then sending those assignments to Dr. Martin for data collection. Dr. Martin was often checking in with the instructors to determine what data were submitted and by which method (Ms. Smith preferred email while Ms. Roberts and Ms. Nichols used Google Docs).

Because the grant was awarded after the drop/add period for course registration, teachers were registered late and sent auto-generated late fee notices. The first few weeks of the fall semester began with questions regarding these updates, with many teachers complaining. Well into the sixth week of the fall semester, Dr. Martin was still answering questions from teachers about tuition. The university process was behind due to the grant starting after the fall semester began. The late approval created complications with the registration system and teachers were concerned they would have late fees from the university. In addition, the typical university procedures were unable to take place, such as using the Canvas online LMS. The following field notes were taken at the beginning of the course session that day:

Dr. Martin subbed for Ms. Smith for this week's class. [She] began class asking if any questions or concerns. She said the university system is a slow process with registration.

They gave the information two days ago to pay tuition but has not processed yet.

(Field Notes, October 24, 2015)

In addition, the teachers often raised concern and asked questions in class, which took away from the PD instructional time. Time in class was spent answering teacher questions regarding how to turn in assignments in both classes, clarifying grant requirements, tuition questions in the fall, and addressing concerns about the additional April 23, 2016 session that was added after the original schedule was finalized.

Throughout the grant's timeframe, additional changes impacted the best practices of the PD. Dr. Martin continued to respond to grant demands with emails and tasks assigned by the coordinators. Dr. Martin expressed her feelings towards the PD and the state demands, stating,

I think you know that I've been really disappointed and I will never apply for this grant again . . . most of it has to do with the [state] Department of Ed. and the personnel, but

also some of it has to do with . . . I think the district itself made some of this difficult with . . . it has to be this way or we're not going to do it kinds of things. (Interview, 2016)

The district also became an external factor impacting the PD's best practices. One of the reasons of the delayed start, which caused the evaluation changes, was that the district wanted the reading PD to be an approved university course. Dr. Martin, who has worked with many school districts in her professional career said, "anytime I work with a district, I let them call the shots anyway" (Interview, 2016). In the end, Dr. Martin felt that even though the PD

Turned out to not be what I had envisioned and that's ok . . . 30 teachers got six credit hours and . . . hopefully they got a lot of new knowledge and understanding so I can't complain about that at all. (Interview, 2016)

The grant application process, ongoing revisions, and demands from the state coordinators showed that external factors caused changes to best practices of having a consistent reflection and evaluation system as well as a registration period to allow teachers to become familiar with the university with tuition and registration. In Dr. Martin's final thoughts of her interview, she summarized, "I always went along, but I found it difficult and I found the [state] department of education difficult. And I just . . . I don't want to do that again" (Interview, 2016).

The evaluation process of the coursework along with the data collection for the grant was impacted due to the late start and shortened time frame. The PD courses were unable to use the Canvas online system for teachers to submit their work and confusion occurred with university tuition and submitting assignments. Additionally the collective participation of the PD was impacted by the time spent on addressing these issues and the combination of grant and non-grant teachers.

*External factors impacted the collective participation of the PD.* Both the district demands and grantor's requirements impacted the collective participation of the grant PD. Collective participation and participant rapport was challenged with the unclear expectations for completing assignments for evaluation as well as the district's decision to include non-grant participants within the reading course. These two situations created tension for teachers at times and took the focus away from the PD course content.

Teachers often asked questions about class assignments. During the fall cohort of the ESL PD course, students taking the course for graduate credit were concerned about their critical issues paper. They asked each other about resources they found and wanted to work together on the assignment. There were teachers sitting at tables together determining the topic they wanted to use for the paper, which was due that day. Ms. Smith answered some questions individually when teachers came up to ask her about the assignment. She then addressed the class, acknowledging that there was some concern or confusion and suggested that they could choose a similar topic as someone else. Ms. Smith said, "When using similar topics so can share the research. Still your own paper, your own evidence but can be collaborative." She added that this may be the first time the teachers were writing this type of paper as graduate students (Field Notes, October 31, 2015).

Teachers asked clarifying questions about how to submit assignments, whether it was via email with the ESL PD course or using a Google Drive with the literacy PD course. On the last day of the literacy PD course for winter semester, the working lunch portion of class was dedicated to discussing assignments for the grant teachers who had to work through lunch and turn in graded assignments. Ms. Roberts and Ms. Nichols discussed grading procedures for the assignments. The strategies binder was discussed first and they clarified how the teachers had to

pick strategies from the binder provided from class or find their own strategies to include all five areas of reading in the binder to submit on the Google Drive. Ms. Roberts said, “we want everyone to get full points but we do read everything turned in and takes a long time to go through and work together to grade you.” As questions came up from teachers, Ms. Roberts continued explaining, “let’s talk about the purpose of the strategy binder. When you come across as student who’s struggling, you have a binder by element to use.” (Ms. Roberts, Field Notes, March 12, 2016). More questions arose, including Omar commenting, “I don’t want to be penalized if same or used the same [strategy] as someone else” (Field Notes, March 12, 2016). The instructors explained that the strategies are for instructional purposes and they can choose any they believe are useful. Ms. Nichols also responded, “It’s only 20 points and it’s not hard” (Field Notes, March 12, 2016). Ms. Roberts then clarified any questions on the case study assignment and reminded the teachers; “you have to do two [students] if undergrad and three students if taking for graduate [credit].” Regardless of undergraduate or graduate, each teacher was required to choose one student who was a below-grade level reader and one student who was an EL.

Besides being concerned with submitting assignments, the teachers were unhappy at times with grant requirements and scheduling changes that occurred over the course of the grant. When the decision had to be made about ordering food for the working lunches, the teachers began asking questions and debating back and forth. In addition, they were unhappy that the choice for lunch was going to be pizza the first week based on the grant budget of about \$5 per person for lunch each week. This conversation became a hot topic quickly:

Participants spent 20-30 minutes of time arguing over if working lunch with food provided or bring their own, etc. One group (ESL) [Ms. Smith’s winter cohort] voted for



a working lunch and Ms. Smith said they could leave at 1:15 then . . . and [READING] course decided not to spend grant money on lunch because of so many non-grant people too. (Field Notes, January 9, 2016)

The teachers were upset with the additional schedule changes that occurred. This included the additional Saturday meeting for April 23, 2016. The need to meet again was discussed with each cohort on what was originally planned to be their last day of the semester. For example, when discussing the need for the added date in April, the teachers in the reading course complained:

‘If the grant was approved with the schedule then why are we adding more time and changing calendar?’ One teacher, Humaira, already had to be out of town that day and scheduled a trip in the fall once she had the dates planned out. The instructors said they would have to have an assignment for make ups-and probably be rather long since it is a whole day if you miss. The participants were not happy but understood they needed to be here that day. (Field Notes, March 12, 2016)

The reading course instructors ended the discussion with letting teachers know they would know as soon as they heard from Dr. Martin if grant changes were accepted, [Ms. Roberts said] “so stay tuned” (Field Notes, March 12, 2016). The teachers became frustrated not having clear answers about the additional date’s schedule and requirements. The teachers were later informed through email about the specifics for the last meeting date.

There was also instructional time lost with the cohort taking Ms. Smith’s course winter semester. They scheduled to have their last day on April 16, 2016. On this day, Ms. Smith began class discussing the agenda for the additional day occurring the following Saturday. Teachers were upset over the assignments given to them for the following session, which

included a poster reflection of their learning and be ready to discuss a successful exemplar lesson they completed using information from the PD courses. Teachers were unhappy to do individual assignments and did not understand why they could not do it together as a group, which was allowed for some assignments by Ms. Smith. The teachers were confused over what was expected of them for the new April 23, 2016 meeting and were asking what they needed to prepare. The agenda for the additional day provided opportunities for the teachers to compile what they learned from each class about ELs and how they have used that knowledge in their instructional practices with a poster session similar to those at professional conferences. The teachers were to be split into two groups with half of the teachers standing by their reflection posters while the others viewed and asked questions before switching roles.

The teachers' confusion and frustration resulted with my simultaneously emailing and calling Dr. Martin during class, to help clarify the teachers' issues. As I stepped out into the hallway to phone Dr. Martin, Ms. Smith said to tell Dr. Martin that the teachers were "freaking out" (Field Notes, April 16, 2016).

We spoke for about 20 minutes on clarifying the agenda for next week . . . she mentioned that she had a different view of the poster session and thought they would be done at home and brought in complete rather than time to work on them in class . . . We discussed possible solutions as letting teachers work on posters in class but [the posters] could not be collaborative-it needed to be a personal reflection on what the teachers did in their own classrooms and in their own learning . . . When Ms. Smith shared Dr. Martin's clarification, there were teachers upset they could not do the poster with others . . . I explained that Dr. Martin wanted to know their own personal growth and that there wasn't much work to do-they already have been reflecting all semester in

assignments so just be prepared to put it together in a visual model. (Field Notes, April 16, 2016)

The teachers' frustrations continued the following week when the two cohorts met together on April 23, 2016; Dr. Martin reviewed the final documentation that was required by the grant and reminded the teachers that they signed grant consent forms in October with these details. The teachers seemed unprepared and unhappy about the tasks being asked of them, even though they were part of the original agreement.

Teachers complained there was another lesson plan assignment and got loud after the announcements. Dr. Martin explained the first was a pre and then they had a lesson submitted during the course and then this would be a post-a third lesson plan after all coursework is completed. Sarah and Noelle sat by me and complained [about] another lesson plan to do . . . Dr. Martin explained that they should be 'SIOPizing' their lessons and it does not need to be in official SIOP protocol but the components of SIOP should be evident in the lesson plan . . . After explanation, most [teachers] understood that it's something they are already doing. There were also some complaints on why district personnel from first lesson and second lesson did not observe them for third . . . This conversation went on for 10-15 minutes . . . Dr. Martin explained that the grant 'paid . . . for the course and all information was in the consent forms you signed in October. This part is not new.' Murmur [made by] Omar 'in the fine print.' (Field Notes, April 23, 2016)

After the discussion about the final lesson plan and observation, Dr. Martin explained the final running record required for the grant data. The teachers continued with their dissatisfaction, with Sarah saying "Is this a joke, I feel like [I'm] in a time warp" (Field Notes, April 23, 2016).

Dr. Martin and Ms. Roberts clarified the assignment with the following and then more questions came up:

Beatrice asked, 'What test is the running record; we did a lot of tests so, which was oral expression?' [Beatrice was in the reading course fall semester]. [The director and Ms. Roberts explained and then Dr. Martin said, 'just pick one student you did for the course' [There more table conversations]. Ms. Roberts reiterated, 'just pick one not all three.' (Field Notes, April 23, 2016)

Teacher frustrations were evident. Omar and Sarah made negative comments showing their frustration. The teachers were dissatisfied with the work after the courses were completed regarding the final grant requirements of the grant and they openly complained about the tasks.

While the collective participation was impacted due to the grant changes, it was also impacted by the district's decision to include teachers taking the course for university credit as part of the grant and those attending for regularly offered district PD. Grant teachers were penalized if they missed a day by being required to submit make up assignments to the instructors and Dr. Martin to report to the state grant coordinators. In addition, when the additional three-hour session and the additional April 23, 2016 date were added, only grant participant teachers were required to attend.

Only those teachers taking the reading course for university credit had to follow the grantor's demands and changes. As stated earlier, Ms. Roberts and Ms. Nichols were responsible for adding an additional three-hour after school session with short notice and all instructors were asked to attend an additional full day of PD. This change required the 30 grant teachers to attend. One teacher had a conflict with a previously scheduled trip and Ms. Nichols had a family event previously scheduled as well. The absences resulted with an additional

assignment for the absent teacher and with Ms. Smith and Ms. Roberts having to address teacher questions and concerns with Dr. Martin. Teachers showed frustration on the April 23, 2016; they asked for clarification about final grant requirements and submission of required materials (e.g. final lesson plans, scheduling a third observation, and completing a final running record for a student).

Teachers who attended the reading course as regular PD did not have the same assignments as the grant teachers to submit. While these teachers did not earn university credit, they were given a stipend by the district for attending PD on Saturdays. While grant teachers were working on an assignment in class, the instructors were collecting paperwork from the 12 non-grant teachers at the end of the winter semester cohort. Each person was paid over \$800 for attending the PD for the district. This was the opposite situation for the grant teachers who would have been forced to pay \$200 if they missed a day and did not do the make-up assignment.

The collective participation for the PD was impacted by external factors. Instructional time was lost discussing tuition, grant assignments, and data collection. Grant teachers were included in the same PD as non-grant teachers with differing expectations and assignments. These changes created frustrations for all of the participants of the grant. Additionally, the grant teacher selection process was also impacted by external factors.

***External factors impacted the PD teacher selection process.*** As discussed in the background, the district led the grant's teacher selection process, which included mostly newly hired teachers, many of whom were first year teachers. Both Ms. Roberts and Dr. Martin felt that the teacher selection was problematic and teachers showed some challenges with being part of the grant PD.

*The teacher selection process was problematic.* The teacher selection process did not follow PD best practices, which would expect participants to be volunteers interested in the PD content. Ms. Roberts specifically indicated the district's teacher selection process as an area of frustration. When I asked Ms. Roberts, "Did you have any aha moments or anything else you wanted to share on the coursework experience?" Ms. Roberts said that she was "a little bit disappointed in the quality of . . . some of the teachers who were selected" (Interview, 2016). She elaborated with:

I would think that the selection process for the 30 teachers was maybe not as . . . stringent as it could have been. There were some fabulous [teacher participants] in there. There were also a few teachers who maybe were not as fabulous. (Interview, 2016)

Another predicament with the teacher selection process was that it was inconsistent, with the majority of teachers being new hires and others selected for unknown reasons. When asked about the selection process, Ms. Roberts said that the teachers "were not ALL new hires" (Interview, 2016). She also shared that while she was not part of the teacher selection process she felt "that pretty much the district selected the teachers and they were assigned" (Interview, 2016). Ms. Roberts thought even though the teachers "had to agree" (Interview, 2016) to be part of the grant, the process was problematic because:

Teachers were invited from a list the district had of teachers who needed to get their ESL endorsement . . . and this was an attempt to help them get it. And that's fine, but I do think that having more buy-in from the teachers about it would have given more quality . . . of some of the candidates . . . in [the site district], when a teacher is hired you have to agree to get your ESL endorsement within three years I think and in the past . . . it's always been a requirement, but it was a pretty loose requirement.

She continued,

and nobody really followed up. That's not rule anymore. The last few years, . . . if you're not getting six credits a year, you can actually not come back . . . so I think that this was part of . . . making sure that teachers got their six hours so we didn't have to fire somebody. But, again, that's me being on fringes of it and not really knowing on how that happened. I do think that there were some teachers in this study . . . I mean I think here are some OTHER teachers [in the district] who may have benefited MORE maybe needed hours too, so I don't know what the selection process is . . . but I DO know that not ALL of the teachers were new teachers to [the district].

Due to the district's requirement for new hires to complete six credits towards their ESL endorsement, Ms. Roberts even thought that, "in some cases their arms were twisted a little to do this" (Interview, 2016). Because of this possible push to sign up for the grant, Ms. Roberts thought that "may have been some of the reluctance [of some of the grant teachers] to fully engage [in the reading course]" (Interview, 2016). She clarified,

But again, the majority of them were GREAT . . . but I do think there's something about choice--a conscious choice-- you know rather than arm twisting choice . . . that really leads to full engagement . . . in the process. (Interview, 2016)

While Ms. Roberts was the only instructor to discuss the teacher selection process, Dr. Martin also believes it was problematic. Dr. Martin said, "The other problem, that I think is a HUGE problem is . . . the thing about the original, the other [previous] grant, was we had principals nominate teachers and then the teachers had to apply." Dr. Martin continued, "It was an application process. They had to indicate on why they wanted to be in this grant and then they were selected. This didn't happen. They were just TOLD." Dr. Martin further explained

her thoughts:

And I think that was a big mistake, to be honest. And she thought she was selecting all teachers because they're doing so much their first year . . . Yeah, and so, my thinking is that if you use first year teachers who are struggling to get their feet wet, you know . . . the other problem is that [the district] has said to them, you need these six credit hours, if you don't get these, you don't keep your job--they had to sign contracts. So there were all of these sort of negative factors too . . . too . . . they didn't choose--they were happy, 'oh great' . . . Yeah, so I think it doesn't follow the model that I think is a good model for PD once it got in action. (Interview, 2016)

The pressure of the teachers to complete six credits a year may have resulted with teachers signing up for the grant to meet this requirement. The teachers had the responsibility to earn six credits each year when they signed their district contracts, and while the teachers were aware of this requirement, attending the PD was a commitment. Many new teachers became frustrated with keeping up with the PD course requirements while being a new classroom teacher.

*New teachers struggling due to being part of the grant.* New teachers struggled with balancing the grant work and teaching demands in the classroom. As mentioned by Dr. Martin, new teachers are often just “getting their feet wet” and taking two university courses for six credits can be overwhelming. Ms. Nichols and Ms. Smith both mentioned in their interviews about teachers describing lessons that did not go as well as they liked while teaching this year. The teachers themselves discussed with their peers about work concerns, time management, and mandates of the district during the PD sessions as well. For example, in a conversation with her partner in the reading course, Humaira, (a fourth grade teacher) reported just having had a meeting with her principal and was sharing her concerns:



[It's a] Big headache because we're supposed to do nonfiction, so my nonfiction scores are great but literature scores went down. Now I'm doing more literature and worried nonfiction scores will drop. (Field Notes, March 12, 2016)

Debbie [second grade teacher] responded to Humaira, saying it is a "lot of work" and "then Sundays are [for] doing work for here." She mentioned, "that last semester was every Saturday, but now it's spread out more" (Field Notes, March 12, 2016). Some side conversations of teachers discussing job-related items relating to their new teaching positions, such as: prep time, district requirements of posting content and language objectives, district and state assessments, principal observations, and balancing homework assignments from class with lesson planning and grading student work.

Teachers struggling to balance being new hires with the grant PD was also when some teachers brought student work to grade during the reading PD class. In particular, Ayesha (a first grade teacher) was grading a stack of student work and had her laptop open to input student grades rather than participating in group discussions on student WIDA scores. She was sitting across from me at the time. Ms. Roberts asked to speak with Ayesha privately in the hall and asked her to put her papers away. Ayesha sat down, packed up her pile of student work and laptop, and complained to another teacher that she was asked to put everything away. Teachers often discussed needing time to complete work tasks along with the grant requirements.

Even with the research on effective PD in mind when planning the grant, external factors caused changes: the PD courses counting as university credit, the delayed start caused scheduling changes to the PD, and grant requirements and subsequent changes impacted the best practices of the PD. Frustrations occurred while trying to meet the needs of the district, changes and demands of the state, while still following the university schedule. These changes resulted with

impacting the PD's reflection and evaluation system, the collective participation of the teachers, and the teacher selection process. While these characteristics are important to PD, effective PD also creates a strong coherence with the PD content and the participants' goals and needs for the classroom.

### **PD Activities and Coherence to Teachers' Goals and Practices**

Throughout the PD there were activities that showed coherence, i.e., alignment with teachers' goals, standards, and encouraged professional communication, for teachers as well as activities that lacked coherence. PD activities demonstrated coherence when teachers saw the value of the content and how it related to their classroom needs or interests. Both of the PD courses had various activities with coherence to the K-12 teachers' goals and practices; however, the ESL methods course had a clear relevance to all teachers' practices due to the district's requirement to use SIOP lesson plans and components.

The coherence of the PD activities varied among individuals and was course dependent based on the teachers' acceptance of the PD content being relevant to their classroom and teaching needs. While each teacher was required to implement strategies from both PD courses into their classrooms, the ESL methods course included strategies that were cross-curricular in design for EL students and the reading course literacy PD content was specific to the literacy strategies used in the five components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Evidence of coherence included: (a) teachers showed interest in learning about ELs and (b) teachers saw value in learning about strategies for teaching ELs. Conversely, coherence was not always obtained in the reading course activities with secondary teachers' goals and practices.

**Teachers had interest in learning about ELs.** Teachers expressed an interest to learn about ELs. Additionally the district determined that their teachers needed PD to improve instruction for ELs. Ms. Nichols explained,

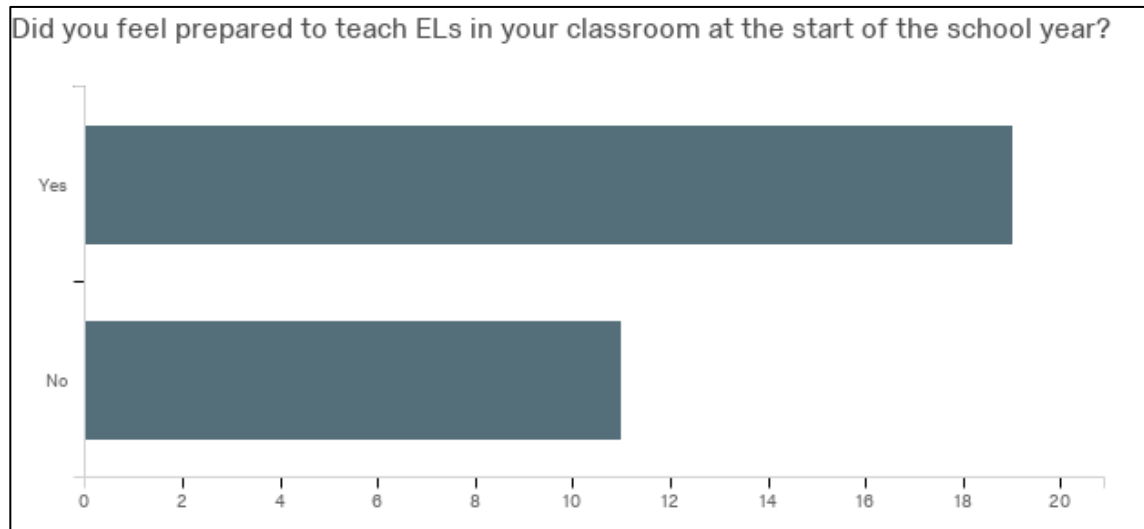
When the grant was being discussed and . . . endorsements were being talked about . . . it was [discussed], How can we expect teachers to teach our ELLs if we're not providing them with the information they need to truly understand. (Interview, 2016)

In addition to the PD about ELs aligning with the district's goals, coherence for PD that allowed for learning about ELs aligned with most grant teachers' needs, as 29 of the 30 participants responded to having ELs in their classrooms (Post Survey, 2016).

Teachers' interests in learning about ELs were evident in their perceptions of being prepared to teach ELs after the coursework and their expressions of concern for meeting the needs of ELs as indicated on the surveys. Their perceptions for being prepared to teach ELs also showed a need and value for the PD activities that provided guidance for EL students. Teacher responses connected to the PD activities, especially in the ESL methods course.

***Teachers' perceptions of being prepared to teach ELs became more confident Post PD.***

When surveyed about their preparedness to teach ELs, 19 of the 30 teachers (over 63%) indicated that they felt prepared to teach their ELs in the fall (Figure 4.1). However, when asked to explain why they answered "yes" or "no," many included statements indicating that they felt prepared to teach ELs having finished the grant PD coursework. This question developed over the course of the study and was not asked on the pre coursework survey.

Figure 4.1 *Teachers Feeling Prepared to Teach ELs (Post Survey)*

The follow up question on the post survey asked teachers to explain why they answered yes or no. The teachers' responses, summarized in Table 4.1, show that some teachers had prior experiences that influenced if they felt prepared or unprepared to teach ELs while others felt more prepared due to the PD coursework of the state-funded grant. Teachers' responses showed that the majority of teachers included coursework content as their explanation for being prepared to teach EL students.

Teachers' responses are in two categories: (a) participants who mentioned prior experiences and (b) those who explicitly mentioned strategies they learned from the PD. Nine teachers included prior experience to their explanations of being prepared or unprepared to teach ELs in their classrooms. Of the 19 teachers who said they felt prepared (Table 4.1), four specifically mentioned having previous experiences in teaching ELs or experience with teaching emergent literacy skills. Theresa, a first grade teacher responded, "Because this is my third year teaching ELs" and Whitney, a fourth grade teacher wrote, "My kindergarten [teaching] background helps start from the beginning and build the foundation of phonics." Beatrice, a high school social studies teacher, expressed, "My schooling I have taken this far has given me more

Table 4.1

*Teacher Perceptions for Feeling Prepared to Teach ELs (Post Survey)*

<b>Why Teachers Felt Prepared or Unprepared</b>	<b>Teacher Responses</b>
<b>Prior Experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Because this is my third year teaching ELs</li> <li>• My kindergarten background helps start from the beginning and build the foundation of phonics</li> <li>• My schooling I have taken this far has given me more knowledge then working three years directly with ELs</li> <li>• I had previous experience</li> <li>• No guidelines given to teach ESLs.</li> <li>• I hadn't taken ESL courses in undergrad</li> <li>• I was concerned about making sure all students were able to understand the expectations of the classroom and that the directions were clear and understood.</li> <li>• I am not an English teacher</li> <li>• I didn't have much background on teaching ELLs.</li> </ul>
<b>Strategies Learned from the PD Coursework</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SIOP strategies</li> <li>• I changed the way I taught my new comers. I make sure to build prior knowledge and background knowledge prior to teaching any lesson. Not only for my new comers but for all my students.</li> <li>• I now use many SIOP strategies in my lessons to help my English Language Learners.</li> <li>• Used different strategies in teaching reading and writing</li> <li>• ROCKING SIOP classes with Ms. Smith</li> <li>• The SIOP course has provided me with tools and skills in order to improve my teaching of EL students.</li> <li>• SIOP classes helped me</li> <li>• I am now better prepared</li> <li>• After taking ESL classes, I realized that I did not have all of the tools I needed to help them succeed.</li> <li>• I felt somewhat prepared to teach English Language Learners at the beginning of the year, but I feel much more prepared to teach these learners after taking the SIOP course this fall. I have learned so many effective strategies that allow students ample opportunities to practice the language. I feel that over the course of my first year of teaching, I have gained insight and knowledge on how to best meet the needs of my English Language Learners. I am becoming more prepared to teach these learners with each day of experience and with each graduate course that I take.</li> <li>• I learned to incorporate sentence stems, graphic organizers, clearer directions, group and partner work, allowing students to speak in front of others or with their peers.</li> <li>• My classes this semester really prepared me for attending to ELs in my classroom and differentiating to the highest degree.</li> <li>• Inclusion of SIOP strategies consistently</li> <li>• I am excited to start off the new year with all of the new things that I have learned</li> <li>• I have some approaches and strategies available to engage ELs in a meaningful way in my classroom. Let me add that I feel prepared to work with exited ELs, not new comers.</li> <li>• I have made my lessons more interactive by using SIOP.</li> <li>• My SIOP training this year has prepared me to better teach ELs next year.</li> </ul>

knowledge then [sic] working three years directly with ELs,” and Samar, a high school language arts teacher responded, “I had previous experience” not indicating if experience was through previous coursework or previous experience teaching ELs (Post Survey, 2016). Only four of the 30 teachers (about 13%) felt prepared to teach ELs prior to the grant based on previous educational and classroom experiences.

Teachers who indicated they did not feel prepared to teach ELs discussed having a lack of experience learning about teaching ELs during their teacher preparation programs or mentioned not having any classroom practice experience with EL students. Of the 11 who indicated “no” regarding not being prepared, one high school math teacher said, “I am not an English teacher,” and a world history high school teacher said she “didn’t have much background on teaching ELLs.” An elementary teacher said there were “no guidelines for teaching ESLs [ELs],” and a middle school teacher, Hannah, stated, “I was concerned about making sure all students were able to understand the expectations of the classroom and that the directions were clear and understood.” These teachers referred to their lack of prior experience with ELs as to why they did not feel prepared at the start of the school year.

Teacher responses indicated that the PD coursework helped the teachers feel prepared to teach ELs. Seventeen of 30 K-12 teachers (about 57%) included that they felt more prepared after taking the coursework and referred to the strategies and other course material. SIOP content was included in 11 of the teacher responses, including examples of “build prior knowledge and background knowledge prior to teaching any lesson” and “I learned to incorporate sentence stems, graphic organizers, clearer directions, group and partner work, allowing students to speak in front of others or with their peers” (Post Survey, 2016). Some teacher responses also showed a comparison of feeling more prepared after the PD coursework

than prior to the PD. One elementary teacher reflected on the learning about ELs by responding, “I am now better prepared” comparing herself from pre PD coursework to after coursework was completed. Lucy, a fifth grade teacher, responded, “After taking ESL classes, I realized that I did not have all of the tools I needed to help them [ELs] succeed” (Post Survey, 2016). Danielle, a first-year second grade teacher, explicitly described her interest in ELs and in the ESL PD content:

I felt somewhat prepared to teach English language learners at the beginning of the year, but I feel much more prepared to teach these learners after taking the SIOP course this fall. I have learned so many effective strategies that allow students ample opportunities to practice the language. I feel that over the course of my first year of teaching, I have gained insight and knowledge on how to best meet the needs of my English language learners. I am becoming more prepared to teach these learners with each day of experience and with each graduate course that I take. (Post Survey, 2016)

While some thought they were prepared in the fall, the majority of teachers’ responses included examples of their gaining knowledge about ELs through the state-funded grant PD coursework. The teacher responses demonstrated that the PD strategies for ELs obtained coherence with their goals and practices and showed that the teachers had an interest in learning about strategies for EL students. Teacher responses also included a concern for meeting the needs of ELs in their classrooms.

*Teachers expressed concern about meeting the needs of ELs.* Teachers expressed concerns for how to address their ELs’ language, literacy, and cultural needs. The first opportunity to express concerns was on the pre-survey when asked, “As a teacher of English, what language issues most concern you? What language issues least concern you?” Teacher

responses included general language concerns for teaching Standard English, English proficiency, and grammar concerns. Responses that related directly to ELs included: “Wanting my bilingual student to be successful in Standard English, reading and writing” (Madeline, 2015) and “Poor foundation in L1 to improve L2” (Omar, 2015). In addition, Omar specifically responded to the cultural needs of ELs on his pre survey, writing “Cultural background or country dialect” (Omar, 2015). While the question did not specifically ask about concerns for EL students, some teachers explicitly identified EL concerns.

When further analyzing the language concerns that teachers expressed on their pre-surveys, most identified specific literacy concerns (phonics, Standard English, grammar, etc.). Humaira, a fourth grade teacher, discussed language outside of the classroom needs and included ELs’ family dynamics with the response, “The language issue that concerns me is the language barrier that I face at times. Specifically with my communication with parents, I feel that it is hard to communicate with people when they do not speak any English” (Humaira, 2015). Only four teachers (about 13%) included concerns about ELs in their responses, including concerns about ELs that were beyond teaching language and related to cultural and family backgrounds.

Teachers were also asked about their language concerns on the post survey after completing the PD coursework. Ten teachers (about 33%) included concerns directly related to ELs in their post survey responses. Survey responses about ELs included responses such as: “not being able to communicate with student[s] in their language,” “transferring oral language into their writing,” “working with newcomers that have zero English,” and “ESL” (Post Surveys, 2016). Additionally, two teachers specifically mentioned a language rich classrooms from the ESL course, stating “The language issues that concern me the most is the determining the most effective way to engage the students in a language rich classroom” and ““incorporating enough



language driven activities in math” (Post Surveys, 2016). Two fifth grade teachers discussed the gap in language abilities ELs may have with the responses, “Lack of any recognition of English language at 5th grade level and the testing expectations” and “students coming in to fifth grade not knowing any English and trying to catch up at a late age” (Post Surveys, 2016).

Teacher responses also included classroom dynamics for ELs in their classrooms. Madeline, a sixth grade teacher, responded, “I do not like it when students make fun of the way others speak. . . I like to point out the differences between student's dialects and why they sound different and learn to appreciate that” (Post Survey, 2016). A kindergarten teacher stated, “The language issue that concerns me is my students’ dialect with their background knowledge. The language issue that least concerns me is their awareness to catch on and not lose their original language” (Post Survey, 2016). These two teachers began to also look beyond language instruction and included a concern for ELs’ dialects and cultural backgrounds within a supportive classroom environment. Interestingly, one teacher discussed not being able to communicate with students in Arabic in her response, sharing, “As a teacher of English, the language issues that concern me include EL students who speak a different Arabic dialect. Communicating with these students can be difficult at times” (Post Survey, 2016). Post surveys showed an increase in the number of teachers that included EL students specifically in their language concern responses.

Finally, teachers demonstrated a concern about EL students’ WIDA [English language proficiency] levels, which are assessed each year on the standardized WIDA assessment. Noelle, an eighth grade teacher responded, “Language issues that concern me are barriers between English language learners and being able to address students of all WIDA levels” (Pre Survey, 2015). WIDA data also came up in class discussions during the ESL methods PD course.

Teachers expressed their interests in using WIDA data to meet the needs of their ELs, in particular, gaining access to the scores. Sofia, a sixth grade teacher, expressed concern for not having access to her students' WIDA scores, saying she "had to ask . . . [her] literacy coach in . . . [her] building for scores" (Field Notes, January 16, 2016). Sarah, another middle school teacher, shared that "some teachers [at her building] were not allowed or given scores for students. Some [received] composite score [only but not the language domains: listening, reading, writing, or speaking.] I got [a] teacher report for one student" (Field Notes, January 17, 2016). In addition to gaining access to the WIDA score reports, Sarah also asked:

'Why aren't classroom teachers more involved with WIDA? I should be part of it! [I] come from a district where I administered the tests and was involved.' Ms. Smith shared that at the elementary classroom teachers administer [WIDA Access Assessment] but secondary [schools] have certain teachers do it for all ELLs. (Field Notes, January 17, 2016)

The teachers were gaining interest in knowing more about WIDA, when scores would be available for the 2016 assessment and what to look for when analyzing their students' scores for instructional use. Sarah restated, "we want to be more involved" (Field Notes, January 17, 2016). Secondary teachers showed concern for not being involved with the actual WIDA assessment as well as a concern for not being involved with analyzing and understanding the WIDA scores.

Teachers had an interest in learning about EL students and showed concern for meeting their language needs. Teachers included their learning from the coursework in their explanations for being more prepared to teach ELs in the future and demonstrated knowledge gained from the course in their concerns for meeting language needs of ELs. Few teachers discussed cultural and background needs of ELs in their responses. Teachers' concerns for ELs were generally about

language development and learning Standard English rules in the classroom, with many of these language concerns being addressed in the strategies taught in the PD courses.

**Teachers saw value in learning about strategies for teaching ELs.** Teachers saw value in learning about strategies for teaching ELs and expressed this interest on post surveys and in class discussions. Teachers expressed using specific strategies for their ELs in their classrooms during peer discussions in class and on their post surveys. PD strategies from the ESL methods course were more evident than those strategies taught in the reading course in the teacher survey responses (Table 4.2).

Twenty-nine of the 30 teachers indicated that they made changes in their teaching in regard to their EL students when asked, “Did you change anything in your teaching this year that was particular to the ELs in your class?”, The teacher who reported not making changes indicated that she did not have any ELs in her classroom. Explanations for the changes they made from the PD coursework showed that the teachers saw value in leaning about literacy strategies and strategies for ELs, as well as some cultural awareness responses.

The majority of teachers’ responses included changing their teaching to include SIOP components or strategies from the ESL methods PD course. Eighteen teachers (60%) provided examples of teaching changes using SIOP, directly showing coherence of the course content with teachers’ needs and practices, such as: “sentence stems,” “SIOP strategies,” “content and language objectives,” “turn and talks,” “the 8 pillars [of a language rich classroom],” and “building background” (Post Survey, 2016). In addition, Whitney, a fourth grade teacher, mentioned Ms. Smith’s name directly in her survey results, writing, “Rocking SIOP classes with Ms. Smith” and “everything Ms. Smith taught us” when answering questions about preparing for ELs and if she had any “aha moments” (Post Survey, 2016).

Table 4.2

*Teachers Changing their Classroom Practice for ELs (Post Survey)*

Teacher Changes	Teacher Responses
<b>Implementing Literacy Strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I focused on strategy groups and did more individualized instruction, we have portfolios and I keep reading records for all of my newcomers</li> </ul>
<b>Implementing ESL Strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More SIOP strategies, better objectives and alignment</li> <li>• Provided more sentence stems</li> <li>• Provided sentence stems to help students speak and write in complete sentences.</li> <li>• Pictures with words around the classroom, turn and talk, wait time, slow talking, visuals.</li> <li>• I have incorporated more SIOP Strategies.</li> <li>• The use of turn-and-talks, sentence stems, visuals, manipulatives.</li> <li>• Everything. I try to apply the 8 pillars as much as possible.</li> <li>• This year, I have implemented a variety of SIOP strategies that I have learned this fall in the SIOP course in which I was enrolled.</li> <li>• Language and content objectives</li> <li>• I have learned to incorporate more visuals, graphic organizers, slower talk, turn and talk, group work or partner work.</li> <li>• I used a LOT more visuals and manipulatives. I used sentence stems and SIOP strategies to attend to my ELs</li> <li>• I included more vocabulary and building background knowledge</li> <li>• I changed my objectives, the way I explained activities, and the type of activities that I used. I did this to engage my students in a different way.</li> <li>• How I structure my class due to students learn better and I enjoy teaching more.</li> <li>• SIOP</li> <li>• I only have a few ELs, so most of my changes were in personal, private attention to them. I am also using more written instructions in addition to verbal ones.</li> </ul>
<b>Cultural Awareness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural acceptance and diversity</li> <li>• Because of the multiple cultures in my classroom.</li> <li>• I have thought of my own cultural identity because my parents immigrated to the US and there is a difference between the American culture and my parents' original culture.</li> <li>• I relate to my students culture, which makes it easier to teach them because we share the same culture.</li> <li>• I have learned so much about the culture of my students, it make[s] me think about what my cultural identity is.</li> <li>• I don't know much about my ancestors or their cultural background</li> </ul>

Fewer teachers reported changing their teaching with strategies from the reading course. One of the 30 grant teachers (about 3%) mentioned reading course content on the teacher post-coursework survey (Table 4.2). When asked on the survey, “Did you change anything in your teaching this year that was particular to the ELs in your class?” Sofia answered, “I focused on strategy groups and did more individualized instruction, we have portfolios and I keep reading records for all of my newcomers.” In addition to the question about instructional change, a second grade teacher, Danielle, referred to the reading course content when describing an “aha” moment she had in her classroom. Danielle explained, “I noticed how much of an impact on comprehension I had when I started speaking in short, simple sentences rather than using complex syntax. My ELLs are able to process each sentence and understand more clearly” (Post Survey, 2016). Teacher responses of using literacy course strategies to change their teaching were less evident.

Cultural awareness was only evident in six of the 30 (20%) teacher responses. These teacher responses either mentioned having “cultural acceptance” or awareness of the “multiple cultures in my classroom” in regard to their teaching. Three teachers specifically mentioned becoming aware of their own cultural identity in regard to teaching EL students. One teacher did not identify a change in teacher practice but mentioned culture in her response, “I don’t know much about my ancestors or their cultural background” (Hannah, Post Survey, 2016). While cultural awareness was mentioned in how some of the teachers changed their teaching for ELs, specific ways they incorporated cultural awareness into their practices was not included in their responses.

Teacher survey responses demonstrated that the PD activities created change in their teaching. Most teachers included ESL strategies that had coherence with their goals and

practices for ELs, while one mentioned a literacy strategy, and six provided a response about culture. The majority of teacher responses demonstrated that teachers saw value in learning about strategies to use with EL students and believe the strategies aligned with their classroom needs and goals. This connection to the teachers created coherence to the PD activities in the ESL methods course.

*The ESL methods instructor designed course around teachers' interests.* Ms. Smith regularly changed her instruction to meet the teachers' grade level needs and interests. Ms. Smith designed her course to around teachers' content and pedagogical interests and teachers were expected to implement strategies from the PD course into their classrooms each week. Ms. Smith provided strategies that teachers could use with their ELs to improve learning. Teachers valued the strategies taught in the ESL methods PD course, which was evident in their survey responses (Table 4.1 and Table 4.2) and the implementation of the strategies with their students.

In addition to finding appropriate grade level examples for understanding the PD content, Ms. Smith incorporated individual teacher's classroom content when introducing SIOP components or strategies. Ms. Smith asked teachers to email her topics they were currently teaching; for example, when teaching about lesson preparation and building background, Ms. Smith introduced the anticipation guide strategy during the winter semester course using a teacher's high school history textbook vocabulary to create the anticipation guide example. She: took a lesson from Mary's [high school teacher] email she sent her and a section of the history book she uses in her classroom. She [Ms. Smith] made an anticipation guide on the Renaissance for her [Mary] to use in her own classroom. We used it as an activity in class to learn [and practice] the strategy. (Field Notes, January 30, 2016)

Using teachers' standards and current topics in her PD examples created coherence for the PD

activities to the teachers' needs and practices. Ms. Smith explicitly connected strategies and SIOP components to the teachers' content areas and standards.

When having teachers model a SIOP reading comprehension strategy, Ms. Smith had various grade level lesson plans and readings available. During the fall semester, there were teachers from K-12 so Ms. Smith usually had an example for K-1, 2-3, 4-5 and a secondary group for the middle school and high school teachers. During winter semester she used a middle school and a high school version, with the one elementary teacher (fifth grade) using the middle school text. Ms. Smith also incorporated the K-12 Common Core State Standards for each grade level when teaching about content and language objectives during both semesters (October 24, 2015; February 20, 2016). For example, she included various grade level science content for providing samples of how to use open and closed word sorts with vocabulary words and incorporated the new Next Generation Science Standards (November 21, 2015). Thus showing the relevance of the PD activities to the teachers' practices.

***ESL methods course content had coherence to the teachers' need to learn SIOP.***

Teachers showed an interest in the PD strategies from the ESL methods coursework, but also had job-embedded obligations that required them to use the SIOP model in their lesson plans. The district required teachers to use the SIOP model and its eight components in lesson plan design. Teachers gained understanding of the SIOP components presented weekly in Ms. Smith's course and used the strategies in their own classrooms. During the PD sessions, teachers discussed how they connected to their respective course content for their ELs or teaching.

Ms. Smith provided strategies for teachers to use to improve their ELs learning and reach their needs. The teachers were expected to implement strategies presented in the course. Some teachers began implementing strategies after the first week of the coursework. For example,

during a discussion on what strategies teachers tried from the previous week's PD session, the following was observed:

Fadia [middle school teacher] said she implemented the gallery walk . . . [She explained that her] students made a mini poster of the empire, chose two words to describe it and an image and then presented them . . . Beatrice, a high school teacher, said [she tried the] most important word [strategy]. 'This time I did it as bell work [as a] one word summary. I was really impressed. Some were insignificant words . . . Next time [I will] be more concrete [about giving directions on how to choose the important words].' The instructor had participants share out ideas [as a full group] to do in the classroom this week and then [had the expectation for the teachers to] report back next class [on the strategies they used in their lessons]. (Field Notes, January 16, 2016)

After the first week of class, Fadia and Beatrice were both able to implement a strategy with their students. Ms. Smith continued to expect the teachers to use the strategies and report back in the following class. The expectation to implement strategies was also evident in the exit tickets Ms. Smith asked each teacher to complete at the end of the course sessions that prompted the teachers to respond to three questions; for example, "Tickets out-wrote on index cards on the table: 3, 2, 1 format: 3 words that describe today's learning, 2 strategies I will try next week and 1 way I will use linguistic accommodations" (Field Notes, January 16, 2016). The exit ticket wording changed but always included what strategies the teachers would be implementing the next week in their classrooms. On October 10, 2015, the exit tickets included two responses that addressed language and literacy: "Two strategies I will try next week are:" and "One question I still have about SIOP with language and literacy is."



Teachers were also required to turn in reflection logs for each of the eight SIOP components and strategies in their classroom. On this assignment, the teachers had to indicate the specific component and name the strategy they implemented in class. The reflection log included five questions with three directly related to implementation: “Describe the successes and challenges of implementing this component”; “How did implementation of this component change your planning and/or teaching”; and, “Did using this strategy improve student learning How do you know?” The SIOP components from the course directly connected to the teachers’ classrooms as they were required to use SIOP in their lesson preparation and implementation as well as reflect on the actual implementation as part of the coursework.

During discussions on how they planned to use strategies and their reflections on the actual implementation of these strategies, the teachers revealed that they were gaining value in the strategies. Teachers referred to the strategies from the ESL methods course specifically in their post surveys) about feeling prepared to teach ELs (Table 4.1) and as examples of changing their teaching for the ELs in their classrooms (Table 4.2). Coherence was evident with the SIOP component activities to the teachers’ goals and practices due to their need to try new strategies for the course requirements and the district requirement to include SIOP lessons in their classrooms.

Ms. Smith believes that the teachers changed their instruction to incorporate more strategies from the ESL methods coursework, with many changing practices right away. In her interview, Ms. Smith shared,

I . . . was just reading some [reflection] logs this morning that this is one course that they felt they learned deeply and will APPLY their learning and many of them take it the next day . . . they learn it on Saturday and they try it on Monday. (Interview, 2016)

Ms. Smith also explained that when reading the teachers' reflection logs that "100% [of the teachers] always said, "It DID change my teaching, my thinking, [and] the way that I'm teaching students" (Interview, 2016).

Both elementary and secondary teachers changed their teaching practices to include the strategies from the ESL methods coursework. Ms. Smith explained, "Whether it's elementary or secondary [teachers] and, especially secondary. The secondary teachers [changed by] making their classrooms more interactive . . . and expecting more from the [EL] students" (Interview, 2016). Ms. Smith also believes teachers incorporated the SIOP component of lesson preparation by "always making sure that they have visible content and language objectives" (Interview, 2016). She also thought teachers were providing a language rich classroom while ensuring "their sentence stems are visible--not just saying it orally . . . [and by having] . . . [student] group interaction" (Interview, 2016). Ms. Smith commented on teachers sharing their implementation of strategies and SIOP components from her course.

Teachers also discussed changing their instruction using the strategies presented in the ESL methods course during class discussions. For example, during the final presentations on December 5, 2015,

Hoda and Humaira [both fourth grade teachers at same school] . . . were presenting on the carousel writing strategy. They put their objectives on the PowerPoint slide and asked us to read the objectives with them. They modeled what the instructor did and how it would be taught in a classroom. (Field Notes, 2015)

The teachers continued to share how they used group interaction with students and were strategic in their groupings. Hoda and Humaira shared that "the students in their class thought it was random with sticks but was strategic by teachers" (Field Notes, 2015). Hoda said, "The highest

readers were split up so could read the narrative piece [which was the] reader role.” Humaira explained “we wrote the prompts. Each group also got a color marker so we knew what each group was writing on the papers. We modeled first while students sat on carpet so they [the students] knew where each group was writing” (Field Notes, 2015). Hoda and Humaira’s presentation was one of many examples of teachers demonstrating how they implemented SIOP components and strategies from the ESL methods coursework into their teaching practices.

Throughout the final presentations, teachers demonstrated their own understandings of the SIOP components and shared with photographs, student work, video clips, or descriptions on how the strategies worked when they tried them out with their own students. The teachers often shared what they learned from trying the strategy and how they may change it for the next lesson or if they taught multiple classes at the secondary level, how the strategy had to be adjusted before the next class of students.

Teachers saw value in learning about strategies for teaching ELs in order to implement strategies from class and to meet the district requirement to include SIOP lesson plans. The PD activities gained coherence when the teachers saw they were relevant to their goals and practices. Ms. Smith incorporated teachers’ content and grade levels into her PD activities and connected the ESL methods course activities to the teachers’ requirement to use SIOP lesson plans. Evidence of PD activities gaining coherence to teachers’ goals was apparent for K-12 grant teachers; however, coherence of literacy strategies to teachers’ goals and practices was more difficult for secondary and non-English content area teachers.

**Coherence was not always obtained in the reading course activities.** It was challenging to obtain coherence with the reading course activities for some secondary teachers as they struggled to find value in the reading PD course content. The ESL methods course content

was found to be more relevant to the K-12 teachers' classroom needs due to the district requirement to use SIOP and its non-content specific design. While some teachers had a strong connection from the beginning, there was also evidence of a struggle to find coherence to PD activities for some secondary teachers in the reading course; however, the relevance of the course content developed for some participants once value was established.

***Evidence of the reading course having coherence with secondary teachers' needs.***

Some middle school language arts and English teachers saw purpose in learning about the foundations of reading. Teachers who connected to the reading course content often were English or Language Arts teachers. For example, Sofia, taught sixth grade English language arts which uses Daily Five for reading groups. Sofia teaches literacy and saw value in the coursework, saying she enjoyed "seeing what lower ele[mentary teachers] are doing and [she has] a lot of respect for teachers who are teaching the alphabet and chunking [words] because I have newcomers now" (Field Notes, March 12, 2016). Noelle, an eighth grade English teacher, often participated in the reading course discussions and activities. For example, during a discussion after the teachers watched a video using first and second time comprehension reading strategies, the instructors asked if anyone has tried this strategy with their students. Noelle shared that she uses, "Small articles [from] Newsela website and [it] helps get their interests, more buy-in otherwise not interested in reading it twice" (Field Notes, December 5, 2015). Noelle continued and said she also uses "Writing blast for articles . . . [the students complete their work and take it] to their [other] core teacher and [then bring back to me . . . so [they receive] exposure three times. Two days in class and one day in another class" (Field Notes, December 5, 2015). Comprehension activities aligned with Noelle's teaching practices and were relevant to her content area.

Like Noelle, other teachers connected the foundations of reading content to the secondary reading PD they were also attending in the district. Sarah, a middle school math and English teacher, said during the same discussion, “I vary . . . sometimes I do individual read first, sometimes I do peer read first because if [it is a] complex text, there’s too many road blocks to keep going [for struggling readers or ELs]” (Field Notes, December 5, 2015). Aaron, a ninth grade English teacher, also found the reading course content relevant during the same reading strategy discussion, he said the activity reminded him of something he did “five years ago, when [he] took a text that was rich in text features and removed all the text and gave students just the text features and asked if they could tell what the text would be about” (Field Notes, December 5, 2015). Noelle, Sarah, and Aaron all taught English and were able to apply the informational text strategies in class to their current classroom teaching needs and students.

While the English teachers described above had a direct connection to the reading foundation PD, another content area teacher saw relevance as well. Beatrice, a high school social studies teacher, felt that the reading foundation PD was useful to her as a social studies and economics teacher. Participatory observations during a lesson on narrative and informational text forms and features included Beatrice saying, “That’s great for non-English teachers. It’s hard to tell. I chose two [texts] for my homework [running record assignment] and accidentally chose two informational texts instead of one narrative-it sounded narrative by the title.” Beatrice continued to add to class discussions in both classes and felt the courses were useful to her teaching. On the last day of the course, Beatrice reflected that she made connection between the district’s high school reading PD and the reading course, stating, “[the high school reading PD] and this class connected and affirmed . . . [I am] able to this now in my class, have students do it, and then share with [other] students” (Field Notes, December 5, 2015).

The reading course activities had coherence to English teachers' content goals and needs. Activities that included strategies for understanding informational text were seen as relevant to other content areas as well. While some activities were relevant to teachers right away, other teachers demonstrated a lack of value for the reading course content.

***Evidence of reading course activities lacking coherence to secondary teachers' needs.***

Some of the secondary teachers did not initially see value or connect with the reading course activities. Non-English content area teachers struggled to find relevance in the activities from class. For example, when asked on the pre-course survey, "As a teacher of English, what language issue most concerns you?" Zenith, a high school math teacher, wrote, "I am a math teacher and I always focus on using math language in the class" (Pre Survey, 2015). Her response to the same question on the post survey was, "I do not teach English" (Post survey, 2016). Zenith's responses established that she identifies herself as a math teacher rather than a teacher of reading or English.

Teachers who did not directly teach an English class struggled to find value in the PD activities. Another secondary teacher Omar, who teaches a sheltered history class for ELs, did not find value in some of the reading course content. When learning about genres of narrative text, teachers were given time to explore the district's online curriculum using laptops to search for example of narrative genres in their grade level content areas. While the teachers worked in grade level teams to search for their pacing guides and curriculum, Omar said to his partner, Sofia and me, "None of this applies to me. I teach world history. There's nothing online for ELL" (Field Notes, February 27, 2016).

***The reading course content gained coherence as teachers understood relevance.*** As the teachers progressed through the reading course, they began to understand the relevance of the

reading course content. Teacher reflection conversations included evidence of their connecting the content to their teaching needs and demonstrated coherence of the PD activities to the teachers' practices. The final discussion of the reading PD course involved the teachers sharing a "ten second reflection" (Field Notes, December 5, 2015; March 12, 2016) about the course.

Secondary teachers gave positive feedback to the instructors and valued learning about reading foundations. Zenith, a secondary math teacher, gave positive feedback, saying she liked the opportunity to "Share ideas and experiences . . . and being math I learned a lot of strategies for my newcomers" (Field Notes, December 5, 2015). Ms. Nichols also mentioned Zenith's reflection in her interview. Ms. Nichols justified that the course material was helpful to all teachers and helped secondary teachers in all content areas, "[Foundations of reading] helps in content area--any content area--even math. She [a math content teacher] was wonderful, and she was like, 'oh my goodness, no WONDER my students are struggling. They can't read the questions'" (Interview, 2016). Ms. Nichols also paraphrased the math content teacher saying, "Maybe they [her students] can do the process, but they can't read the questions'" (Ms. Nichols, Interview, 2016). Zenith was able to align the PD as relevant to her content area.

Other teachers were able to gain understanding and found the PD content relevant as they learned about the reading content and showed gratitude. Aaron said, "I appreciate you two. [The PD is] not typically for secondary [teachers] so at first it was like 'when am I going to use this' but now I am so grateful" (Field Notes, December 5, 2015). Omar, who struggled with seeing value to the reading course content in earlier participatory observations, shared his reflection: "high school [teachers] should never talk down to lower ele[mentary] and now [I] know how hard it is [to teach students to read]" (Field Notes, March 12, 2016). Both Aaron and Omar developed an understanding to early literacy teachers and valued the teaching of reading.

Finally, on the final PD date on April 23, 2016, two secondary teachers made positive comments after the majority of teachers were complaining about grant requirements. Their comments demonstrated an interest in literacy tasks from the reading course. In particular, Beatrice, a high school social studies teacher, responded about the running record task as, “Ok, it’s easy, I have one [student] that come and visits me even though she is not in my class this semester.” A middle school English teacher, Noelle, shared that “actually, I wanna [sp] do that listening one [oral expression] again” (Field Notes, April 23, 2016). These two teachers gained value in these reading course activities while teaching at the secondary level.

Teachers who taught literacy were directly connected to the reading components and expressed interest in emergent language development that is usually taught in the primary K-2 grades. Other teachers who taught math and social studies content had to find a purpose to make the topics relevant to their content. The value of the course content was not as consistently high in the reading course observations and teacher survey results when compared to the ESL methods course.

PD activities had coherence when they were relevant to the teachers’ goals and practices. K-12 teachers had interest in learning about ELs and saw value in learning about strategies for teaching ELs; however, it was challenging to gain coherence for some of the reading course activities with secondary teachers’ goals and practices. Teachers showed an interest in learning about ELs. SIOP components and appropriate strategies seemed more relevant to K-12 teachers, while the foundations of reading content had a weaker connection for some secondary teachers who did not teach English content specifically. Teachers identified gaining knowledge about ELs through the PD coursework.



The three PD instructors' philosophies of teacher learning were evident in the PD design and the learning opportunities for new pedagogical knowledge to be constructed. They believe that teachers learn new knowledge through peer interaction; they valued and promoted personal reflection; they believe that learning of new content transpired through time for modeling and practicing; and, fostered a strong professional learning community among the teachers through their constructivist learning opportunities.

### **The PD Instructors' Philosophies Addressed Constructivist Learning in Certain Areas**

The three PD instructors included elements of the constructivist approach to learning in their PD planning and implementation. The instructors' philosophies of teacher learning were evident in the PD design and the learning opportunities for new pedagogical knowledge to be constructed. The PD instructors' believe that teachers learn new knowledge through peer interaction, valued and promoted personal reflection, that learning of new content transpired through time for modeling and practicing, and their constructivist learning opportunities fostered a strong professional learning community among the teachers.

**PD instructors' believe teachers learn new knowledge through peer interaction.** All three instructors believe that teachers learn through peer interaction. The instructors created opportunities for teacher interaction through their PD activities and discussed the importance of learning from peers. The PD instructors' believe that teachers learn new knowledge from their peers, that peer interaction promoted opportunities for personal reflection, and peer interaction provided an opportunity for teachers to discuss their learning with peers.

***Teachers learn new knowledge from their peers.*** When asked about how teachers learn new knowledge about teaching or new pedagogy, Ms. Roberts responded, "Well, I think the primary way they learn it all along is from each other" (Interview, 2016). She explained that she

and Ms. Nichols share their philosophy with the teachers they are instructing, stating, “We are very upfront about that every time we do [the reading PD] . . . but we ALWAYS tell them you are going to learn more from each other than you’re going to learn in class.” (Interview, 2016).

Ms. Roberts elaborated on how because of this philosophy,

[Ms. Nichols and I] saw ourselves as facilitating . . . setting up opportunities [for the teachers] to read and discuss and share practice . . . I continue to believe . . . how teachers learn is by sharing their experiences with each other through some guidance sessions and some readings. (Interview, 2016)

Ms. Roberts shared this philosophy on the last day of the winter semester as well when she said, “We hoped you’d learn more from each other than just us” (Field Notes, March 12, 2016). She shared how she thought teachers learned as a process:

Well, I think it’s a process when you learn something new, that you need to chew on it a little bit, and then you have to link it to what you already know and to your experiences. . . . And then have to have an opportunity to talk about it and try it . . . so . . . I mean, yeah I think it’s all very circular. It’s not lecture-based, so we were very careful to have lecture bursts and then opportunities to talk. (Interview, 2016)

Ms. Roberts’ belief in teacher learning was evident on the first day of the fall semester, when she told the teachers, “[you are] not going to sit and listen for eight hours with us” (Field Notes, October 17, 2015). She also explained to the teachers, “we think of that [time to think about new content] as ‘gum.’ We give you the gum but sometimes you need time to “chew it” or process it. Just let us know you need time to talk about it” (Field Notes, October 17, 2015). She also indicated her value in peer interaction and sharing of ideas when she said, “we want to learn from you as well . . . You bring the secondary perspective” (Field Notes, October 17, 2015).

Ms. Nichols also believes that peer learning is valuable in supporting the PD content. She said, “I think they [teachers] learn SOME through course work [readings and assignments]. I think they learn a TREMENDOUS amount from colleagues. I think they learn through meaningful professional development that they can then take back and implement in the classroom” (Interview, 2016). Ms. Nichols said “it was our goal” when I asked if “Do you think the way the course was designed helped achieve that learning experience for your teachers based on your experience with the grant?” Learning from other colleagues was valued and encouraged by the instructors.

Ms. Smith discussed teachers learning through peer interaction and included a generous amount of interaction in the PD coursework. Ms. Smith shared, “what I’ve noticed from reading the reflection logs from some of the teachers is they really VALUE the interaction” (Interview, 2016). The interaction mentioned by Ms. Smith was evident each week as the course agenda included several strategies for each session with teachers interacting with peers in order to learn those strategies. Ms. Smith continued to share her philosophy, “It shouldn’t be just sit and get. It should be doing research on the best strategies, in this case English Language Learners” (Interview, 2016).

Teacher interaction varied in both courses from working in grade level teams to cross-grade level table groupings. While grade level groupings were utilized with specific lesson plan examples by grade level clusters, cross grade-level conversations provided teachers an opportunity to hear different perspective. This cross-grade level interaction was valuable in the reading course as some of the higher elementary and secondary grade teachers saw connections to reading foundations normally established at the primary (K-2) grade levels. For example, a fifth grade teacher said, “[hearing the] reading perspective[s] from different grade levels was

refreshing” (Field Notes, December 5, 2015). In addition, Fadia, who switched from teaching elementary to middle school shared, “[this is the] second time I’m in [the reading PD] . . . [the] first [time I] was in elementary and second [time] I am in secondary now, so great across grade levels” (Field Notes, December 5, 2016). Other teacher remarks included, “[I] enjoyed cross-grade level collaboration and what’s going on at different levels” (and being about to “learn what lower ele[mentary] vs. upper ele[mentary] is doing [as reading instruction]” (Field Notes, March 12, 2016). Ms. Roberts commented on the value of the cross grade level interaction on the last day of the first semester, saying, “we were scared to death [of having secondary teachers] but now I have to say it’s been a great cross-collaboration” (Field Notes, 2015).

*PD instructors planned opportunities for teachers to discuss their learning with peers.*

Teachers were given time to interact and discuss their learning with their peers. One activity that promoted teacher reflection and learning from peers was table talk. Ms. Smith consistently asked the teachers, after they participated in SIOP activities, to relate the activity to ELs by having teachers participate in a table talk in their groups. She allowed for teachers to discuss their thoughts first at their tables and then she alternated between randomly choosing teachers to share out and having everyone share their thoughts. The table talk discussions were frequent practice in Ms. Smith’s course and occurred multiple times. The table talks generally allowed for one-two minute discussions at tables of three or four teachers before sharing out as a large group. Table talk questions usually included a specific strategy. Some examples were:

- “Why is this a good strategy and how can you adapt to your classroom?”;
- “What are these good strategies for newcomers?”;
- “Why is jigsaw and gallery walk a useful strategy for ELLs?”;
- “Did you implement any of them [strategies] into your classroom yet?”;

- “[Why are] sentence stems good for ELLs?”; [and,]
- “Why is this structure a good writing strategy of ELLs and struggling students?” (Ms. Smith, Field Notes, 2015-2016)

Teachers often used table talk opportunities to learn from the other teachers at their tables, which varied by grade level. For example, when discussing the building background strategies of anticipation guide and word splash, Ms. Smith asked the teachers, “Are these good strategies for newcomers?” (Field Notes, October 17, 2015). Teacher responses included:

‘I believe it is less of a struggle than this’ (pointing to word splash as less of a struggle). His partner jumped in, saying, ‘it’s good because it builds prior knowledge to see what they know and any misconceptions [they may have] . . . and they will remember it.’ [Others agreed]. Another volunteer [discussed the word splash strategy and said], ‘we thought that they might NOT have the prior knowledge for this but can build it and orally practice because talk[ing] with a partner the whole time.’ [The last] volunteer [stated], ‘We also think the word splash for newcomers because it has phrases and words and because not an entire sentence like the anticipation guide is.’ (Field Notes, October 17, 2015)

Each table talk discussion referred to the SIOP strategy that was just modeled and practiced. During these discussions, teachers were asked to reflect on how they could apply the strategies to their classrooms or with their specific students during these table talk discussions. Ms. Smith allowed for teachers to share ideas on how they would use the strategy with their ELs or newcomers as well as how they could adapt it to their specific students. The teachers often shared ideas with their peers and some wrote notes after the table talk was complete. At times,

teachers would continue their table talks even if the instructors were moving on to the next activity, showing a desire to expand these peer discussion opportunities.

*Teachers valued peer interaction opportunities.* Teachers expressed their enjoyment of having peer interaction: Maha said, “I loved being in a class with . . . fellow teachers and time to conversate [sic] with other teachers” (Field Notes, December 5, 2015). Whitney, a fourth grade teacher, said, “I agree with my colleagues; [I liked] the collaboration we got to have in class” (Field Notes, March 12, 2016). The teachers’ enjoyment of the peer interaction was evident in their participation during activities where they were given the opportunities to discuss with one another in both courses.

Peer interaction not only provided opportunities for teachers to discuss the new content, but also promoted teachers to be reflective in their understanding of the new knowledge and share how they could implement their new learning into their current classrooms. The three PD instructors believe in opportunities for peer interaction to promote teacher learning. Peer interaction was especially prominent in the ESL methods class. The teachers valued the interaction in class to discuss the how the PD content related to the ELs in their classrooms. It was through these interactions and discussions that teachers were able to gain a deeper understanding of how to use the strategies with their students through reflection.

**PD instructors’ philosophies valued and promoted personal reflection.** All three PD instructors saw importance in teacher reflection; providing teachers time to reflect on their own learning was important to the instructors as they designed their course instruction. The importance of personal reflection and its connection to teacher interaction was described by Ms. Nichols: she stated, “Our goal was to give it [new knowledge] to them in small pieces, use it in your classroom, come back, [and] let’s talk about it” (Interview, 2016). The teacher reflections

often occurred after learning a strategy to reflect on how it may work in the teachers' content areas and grade levels or included a reflection written piece on how the actual implementation went once introduced in their classroom with students.

Reflections were included in both courses through the peer interaction conversations and written reflection assignments. The three PD instructors required reflection assignments in their courses. The instructors discussed these assignments in their interviews when, I asked each instructor, "Did you feel that the teachers were reflective?" Each instructor responded differently to this question.

Ms. Nichols' thought that the teachers "were very honest . . . they were EXTREMELY honest" (Interview, 2016). She provided an example, sharing "I had one teacher say to me . . . 'Ugh, I never want to do that lesson again, the way that it was presented. This is what I would do differently'" (Interview, 2016). Additionally, Ms. Nichols believes, reflection is "the most important piece . . . to be able to look at it and be reflective about . . . WHATEVER we are doing" (Interview, 2016). Ms. Nichols expressed the value in that teacher's reflection because

that's where the impact on instruction comes from. I can tell you that that lesson went poorly as an administrator--I just had this conversation with one of my teachers--and I can tell you. . . you already KNOW it . . . didn't go well. So for me to tell you it didn't go well has no value unless you say, 'Alright, I am going to change this and this and this in the future because it didn't work well for me or it didn't work for my group of students.' And you might teach that lesson with a DIFFERENT group of students and it goes beautifully . . . sometimes it depends on your audience. (Interview, 2016)

Ms. Nichols' stressed the importance of the teacher being honest and realizing if a lesson did not go well versus an administrator telling the teacher the same thing. Ms. Nichols said she felt that

teachers were being reflective in their assignments because of their honesty. Ms. Smith also included teacher honesty in their reflections.

When Ms. Smith was also asked if she felt the teachers were reflective, she quickly responded, “Yes, very, very” (Interview, 2016). Ms. Smith shared that “They all were [reflective] and it was a joy to read their reflection papers” (Interview, 2016). Ms. Smith further explained her belief about reflection:

I think you need to be a reflective teacher no matter who you are teaching. ‘Well, did this go well?’ and reflect . . . in some of the reflection papers the teacher would say ‘Well that was a BOMB’ (laughing) ‘now I know what I should do.’ Or they would say the difference between their first hour class doing the same thing and difference between first and sixth hour and how they IMPROVED. (Interview, 2016)

Ms. Smith agreed with Ms. Nichols in that teachers were reflective with their learning. Ms. Smith’s response above also provides an example of a teacher being honest about a lesson that did not go as well as planned and learning from the opportunity. This idea of teachers’ changing instruction to meet student needs was shared in class discussions as well. For example, Vicky, a high school teacher shared during her lesson plan presentation using the A/B pyramid strategy that the lesson “went really well with her first, second, and fourth hour classes” (Field Notes, April 16, 2016) but there were issues that had to be addressed during fifth and sixth hour. Field note observations included:

Vicky said she had to redirect [the students]. She said in the end she was ‘very pleased with this activity because it generated great, deep conversations about advertising all around us and the different marketing of parents versus kids.’ She also [shared that] usually lessons improve over the day but issues came up in fifth and sixth [hour classes]



more so than morning. [Vicky said,] ‘I ran into problems later in the day which is different because usually gets better throughout the day.’ [She explained, when I said] ‘get up and face the wall. They actually went and faced the wall, but [the issue] didn’t come up until later [in the day]’ She also said some kids in fifth and sixth [hour classes] tried to ‘sneak their phones’ because it is a busy activity and a lot of movement. (Field Notes, April 16, 2016)

Vicky’s example showed reflection happening during the instructional day, which she felt resulted in a “very successful, very fun [lesson]” (Field Notes, April 16, 2016). Overall, Ms. Nichols and Ms. Smith had positive views about teachers being authentic with honest reflections of their learning of the new PD content.

When Ms. Roberts was asked if she felt that the participants were being reflective or showing some change over the coursework, she hesitated and said “Some of them.” Then she added,

I can think of probably three [teachers out of 30] that stick out in my mind that really seem to take the learning and it gave them a focus for changing their practice for working with individual students in their classroom . . . and there are probably more and I don’t mean to discount anybody . . . but three stand out in my mind as ‘oh my gosh’ they felt this was a missing piece of what they had been doing in their classroom and now they felt really prepared to go in and make a difference with these kids as far as mastering the components of English. (Interview, 2016)

All three instructors valued teacher reflection and included opportunities to be reflective into their PD coursework. While Ms. Nichols and Ms. Smith showed satisfaction with teachers’ reflections and honesty when implementing new strategies, Ms. Roberts mentioned only a few

teachers that she felt met her standard of being reflective. The peer interaction activities that supported teacher reflection were valued by the instructors as well as the teachers in the grant. Peer interaction and reflection also led to a better understanding of the teachers' new knowledge through modeling and practicing opportunities.

**PD instructors believe learning transpired through modeling and practicing.**

Another common characteristic of the PD instructors' philosophies was that they all believe that teachers gained knowledge through modeling and practicing new strategies. All three instructors provided opportunities for teachers to learn through observing the instructors modeling strategies, followed by the teachers either trying the strategy themselves or discussing how they could use the strategy with their own students. The instructors agreed that new learning needed to be implemented quickly in order to not "lose it." Ms. Nichols said, "If there's too much of a lag in between whatever the PD is and implementation . . . if you don't use it-it's gone, you lose it" (Interview, 2016). Modeling and practicing of the PD content provided opportunities time for teachers to experience the new content during the PD, role playing to understand the students' perspectives, and modeling through peer observations and sharing of materials.

***Modeling and practicing provided time for teachers to experience the new knowledge.***

Both PD courses provided modeling and practicing opportunities of the new strategies being presented to the teachers. The ESL methods course included multiple activities each week with modeling and practicing opportunities for the teachers to use the strategies with the different SIOP components. The reading course provided some modeling and practicing of reading strategies.

Each week Ms. Smith included multiple opportunities for the teachers to work together in various group configurations. Modeling and practicing was evident beginning on the first day of

the course. An example from the first day of the winter semester included the following observations:

When I walked in the course participants were going over the syllabus and course requirements for the new course and new semester . . . The first activity was to randomize and rotate. Ms. Smith turned off the lights and had four light choices (like four corners due to where plugs were located). There was a string of Christmas lights, battery-operated candle lights on a table, a flashlight, and a table lamp . . . There were seven participants and myself by the Christmas lights (the most), two people at the lamps, one person at the flashlight, and four teachers at the candle lights. We were told to discuss why we chose the lights we did to represent our teaching or our classrooms. Some shared out afterwards. (Field Notes, January 9, 2016)

The above example demonstrated teachers practicing a strategy of students choosing their corner based on interest. Ms. Smith modeled the randomize and rotate strategy, as well the procedure used throughout her course of modeling, practicing, and reflecting on the strategies. After this activity, Ms. Smith then had teachers return to their seats to write down their thoughts about second language acquisition before having two more group activities: a jigsaw reading activity with partners and a poster gallery walk activity in groups of three. Within the first thirty minutes of the course, Ms. Smith was observed modeling the randomize and rotate strategy and provided practice for the teachers to participate in others (four corners, jigsaw reading, and the gallery walk. Strategies that supported the SIOP components were modeled and practiced consistently each session.

Strategies were also modeled and practiced in the reading course. Reading strategies were modeled for teachers to replicate in their classrooms with their own students. Ms. Nichols

modeled inferencing and read alouds during the course. She read *Too Many Tamales*, a children's picture book, each semester when teaching about inference with narrative text. Ms. Nichols and Ms. Roberts shared the “about important of read alouds and hearing text out loud for comprehension” (Field Notes, November 14, 2016). Ms. Nichols modeled as

she held [the] book up as if reading to a class of children . . . the class was completely silent, eyes on Ms. Nichols as she read *Too Many Tamales* book to the class . . . even when the book ended the class was completely quiet. Ms. Nichols modeled what to do with students and asked ‘At your tables, how did the ring end up on her mom’s finger?’ [allowing teachers a chance to infer on their own based on the story they just heard]. (Field Notes, November 17, 2015)

Ms. Nichols took teachers’ answers just like she would in a classroom of students and then asked the teachers, “Do you teach inference in your classroom? Take a minute to discuss? Do you use it with literature or something else?” (Field Notes, November 17, 2015).

Another strategy modeled by Ms. Nichols and Ms. Roberts was the “Reading and Analyzing Nonfiction” (R.A.N.) strategy. This strategy was actually discussed in both of the courses. Ms. Nichols and Ms. Roberts used the strategy for building comprehension of informational text. Ms. Nichols explained to the teachers,

‘Even as adults, we need reminders of text features to point out to students. . . . [Ms. Nichols modeled] one of the ways you can use it [R.A.N. strategy] in the classroom’ (Field Notes, March 12, 2016). The teachers stood up and put their notes up on class size R.A.N chart and the instructors shared “a website called Myon® that has reading books on all levels that the district pays to have a subscription for” (Field Notes, March 12,

2016). Ms. Nichols continued, ‘use sticky notes for new facts while [you] listen to a book about sea turtles.’ (Field Notes, March 12, 2016)

The modeling and practicing opportunity continued while “the participants wrote notes and some got competitive trying to write more than everyone else, including Maha who had five notes just after just three ages from the book” (Field Notes, March 12, 2016). After the book was finished, “Ms. Nichols finished [teaching the] RAN strategy with [teachers] moving old facts to new confirmed [column on the chart] and then placing new facts with a few volunteers” (Field Notes, March 12, 2016).

Modeling and practicing opportunities were evident in both courses, which provided teachers with a hands-on PD atmosphere. The PD sessions were not structured as “sit and get” which aligned with the instructors’ philosophies of how teachers learn new knowledge. During the modeling and practicing activities, teachers were also able to participate in role-playing opportunities to gain the students’ perspective of the new strategy.

*Modeling as role-playing to understand the students’ perspectives.* Modeling as role-playing provided opportunities for teachers to gain the students’ perspectives of strategies and activities. Ms. Smith explained her philosophy of her modeling first through role play activities where the teachers participated as if they were the students. Then, she had teachers discuss how they could implement the strategy in their own classrooms. Ms. Smith believes, “If they [teachers] see it [SIOP] applied to the course at the content they are teaching. . . I believe if you DO it you will USE it. So it is always modeled and they then [the teachers] do it as if they are the students” (Interview, 2016).

Ms. Smith explained that she sets up her course to allow for teachers to watch her model

the strategy “and they then do it as if they are the students” (Interview, 2016). Teachers participating as if they were students occurred frequently throughout each course session as new strategies were introduced. Ms. Smith also indicated that the teachers learned from modeling and practice:

how to RUN your class. [For example,] the randomize and rotate with peer rehearsal [strategy]. . . I did [randomize and rotate] with the teachers so they would do it that exact same way and then know how to do it in their own classrooms. (Interview, 2016)

Ms. Smith felt the PD provided modeling for classroom management and environment with using groupings with the randomize and rotate strategy and modeled a variety of student groupings through her instruction.

Another example of modeling for teachers from the students’ perspectives included using a variety of groupings during lessons. Each PD session of the ESL methods course included various groupings of teachers. Ms. Smith began each class with the teachers sitting at table groups, sometimes with assigned seating, and teachers consistently used the randomize and rotate strategy at their tables by assigning each person a letter or number. In addition, Ms. Smith also provided a lesson on groupings during one of the sessions called “Desk Olympics” (Field Notes, March 12, 2016). Ms. Smith gave different pairings for groups and timed the teachers on how quickly they could form the groupings. “She said that ‘research suggests two types of groupings per lesson,’ not including whole group” (Field Notes, March 12, 2016). After modeling several scenarios for teachers to form groups, Aaron volunteered to practice the activity with the group; he “tried giving the commands as well and timed us himself. Some examples included groups of three sitting, groups of two standing, etc.” (Field Notes, March 12, 2016). After Aaron was finished with his directions,

Ms. Smith played a video of a teacher modeling groupings during a science lesson. Ms. Smith asked them to pay attention to the groupings and what they noticed, good and bad [referring to student active or inactive engagement and participation] in the video. (Field Notes, March 12, 2016)

The modeling and practicing of groupings provided teachers the students' perspectives of the activity as well as the student benefits of forming different groupings for learning in class. The research examples and video supported the importance of forming students into a variety of groups. Groupings continued to be modeled each PD session for the teachers through the PD activities. Modeling continued during the PD coursework with teachers observing their peers and sharing materials with each other.

***Modeling through peer observations and sharing of materials.*** The instructors also supported the idea of modeling through peer observations and sharing materials to promote implementation. Peer observations were provided in Ms. Smith's course during teacher lesson presentations and sharing their learning during interactive activities.

Teachers learned from their peers in sidebar conversations as well. For example, when participating in the activities from Ms. Smith's course, the teachers often discussed how they could implement a specific strategy or ask about managing the students when trying it out. The following was observed between two fifth grade teachers who work at different buildings:

Hailey [an elementary teacher] gave an example to Lucy [elementary teacher] what she did with her fifth grade students. [Lucy] discussed applying it to her teaching partner who has a long-term sub in her room. Lucy seemed very excited about the idea and the fact that [it would be] better for her students; she said 'Yeah, she said she has too many (taking) notes' [referring to the long-term sub using more whole group, direct instruction].

This conversation grew organically from the reading and the teachers sharing and reflecting their practices with each other. Lucy [said] ‘I told her I’m doing a lot of word sorts and I told her they are really easy to make.’ (Field Notes, November 14, 2015)

These discussions occurred frequently as teachers interacted with each other in the ESL methods course. Teachers felt safe to openly share ideas with their colleagues in the PD courses. The teachers shared both teaching activities that were going well and searched for suggestions for areas that were more challenging.

In addition to the modeling and practice, Ms. Smith provided ready-to-use materials to promote instant implementation for the teachers. She explained that for teachers to learn they need

takeaways . . . so if it's the PowerPoint [with the strategies and student instructions included] so they can do it in their own classroom, any materials that they need, and then there is lots of discussion from their colleagues [about the strategy they just were introduced to]. (Interview, 2016)

Ms. Smith also asked teachers to share with their colleagues and to model for each other; for example, when Beatrice discussed an A/B pyramid activity she created on the 1950s for her high school students, explaining how she included words to connect to student interests as well, such as “cruising, batman, superman, baby boom, baseball . . . so . . . got them hooked [into the lesson]” (Field Notes, April 23, 2016). Ms. Smith asked, “Can you send me a model for other people?” (Field Notes, April 23, 2016) and Beatrice agreed to email it to be shared with the others. Teachers often took photos or videos of their work and emailed it to Ms. Smith, who then included it into her PowerPoint slides the following week.

Classroom observations provided modeling from district teacher colleagues who were



considered leaders in reading instruction. Ms. Nichols and Ms. Roberts' scheduled observations with classrooms with students to provide exemplar examples of effective reading instruction. Ms. Roberts discussed how having an opportunity for effective teachers to model for a novice teacher was valuable. Rather than only providing the modeling themselves, Ms. Roberts and Ms. Nichols scheduled an observation day for the teachers to watch another teacher during reading instruction. Ms. Roberts explained that teachers learned during the observation day:

That has ALWAYS been a part of the course [and] was something Ms. Nichols and I both felt VERY strongly about . . . that teachers also needed to SEE what [effective reading] teachers we were discussing in class. (Interview, 2016)

She continued:

We fought to continue to have it in the course and every single time, all seven times, the final course evaluations have indicated that that was the most VALUABLE part. The teachers thought that actually going into a classroom to see instruction in action and then having an opportunity to talk with the teacher. (Interview, 2016)

Teachers expressed learning from the observation day and enjoying watching another teacher; they, “commented on the classroom management tips they learned from watching another teacher during guided reading and daily 5 on top of watching the reading instruction” (Field Notes, February 27, 2016). Sofia shared she “got to observe [a] same building colleague . . . [it was] great because we work together but never get to see him teach” (Field Notes, February 27, 2016). The observation day was also mentioned during the teachers' “ten second reflection” on the last day. A secondary teacher shared, “I really enjoyed going to observe the elementary reading lesson. It was eye opening!” Another said, “I loved the observation [day]” and Aaron said, “[the] observation was amazing to see what pieces they're

doing that I also can do [as a high school ELA teacher]" (Field Notes, December 5, 2015).

Another teacher elaborated on the observation day and how it allowed her to "see how to practice first here and then take right into the classroom" (Field Notes, December, 5, 2015).

The PD instructors believe that modeling and practicing experiences in class allowed for teachers to gain knowledge. Teachers were given opportunities to try the strategies in class, gaining both the pedagogical knowledge needed to implement the strategy as well as the student perspectives through the PD experience. Modeling of other teachers also provided practical examples for implementation. The constructivist learning opportunities from the peer interaction and modeling and practicing allowed for teachers to create relationships with one another resulting in a professional learning community.

**Constructivist opportunities fostered a strong professional learning community.** The constructivist opportunities provided during the PD fostered a strong professional learning community (PLC) among the grant teachers. The teachers formed relationships with their peers and solicited feedback from peers and professional support.

*The teachers formed relationships with their peers.* The teachers formed relationships with their peers during the grant PD coursework. The professional community established by the teachers was mentioned in Ms. Nichols' and Ms. Roberts' interviews when they mentioned the teachers working together and learning from each other. In particular, Ms. Nichols said,

I think they formed a strong cohort. I think they formed relationships and formed relationships with people within the district. For us, it was all district people, that they may have never had that opportunity to do before this grant and they went through class together and they may be at different buildings and they may be at different grade levels, but I think that they formed relationships and contact one another. I just got an email

from one of the teachers, saying she had borrowed books and I can't remember what building so and so is at so can you help me with this? What building? I want to send her back her books but I'd kind of like to take her books back to her [in person] so we can have a conversation. So it's those kind of things. (Interview, 2016)

Ms. Nichols provided another example of the strong cohort comforting teachers who may have been struggling, sharing:

There was one teacher in the group who was a first year teacher and she said 'when I started this, I thought, I can't do this. This is crazy. I'm taking two classes and it's my first year teaching' . . . and all of that . . . and she said 'as we moved along, I realized I could ask my colleagues.' And I think that, that's . . . when you can go for help and say 'I'm struggling with this' and be honest about it, without any kind of negative impact. (Interview, 2016)

Ms. Roberts felt very similar about this relationship that formed among the teachers. She said, "Well, I think they got the sense that they weren't alone in their struggles . . . with the students." She elaborated, "that the issues that they were facing were common issues and . . . they weren't just left to deal with them by themselves. There were other people that had the same issues" (Interview, 2016).

The constructivist learning opportunities in the PD courses helped foster a professional learning community. The teachers built relationships and turned to their peers to share successes and failures with the PD content. In addition, the teachers began seeking feedback and suggestions from their peers for support.

***The teachers solicited feedback from peers and professional support.*** The grant teachers began soliciting feedback from one another and asking for support with the PD

coursework. This support system was also evident to the course instructors. Ms. Roberts' shared, "I think they made some friends that will be a network of support as far as when they come across something, I hope that that happened and it seemed that that happened in several cases" (Interview, 2016). Ms. Smith also commented that the teachers saw the "value . . . of the camaraderie of their colleagues and learning from them . . . as it should be as they get to know each other" (Interview, 2016). The teachers created a cohort in which they felt comfortable discussing their concerns and classroom needs.

The teachers discussed with each other how to implement the PD content into their classrooms or when to practice the strategies in class. Ms. Smith highlighted this stating, "when something didn't work . . . they would contribute as a group. 'Well . . . why don't you try this? Or how about this?'" (Interview, 2016). Peer support occurred when teachers needed help with managing the implementation of strategies in the classroom, how to write strong content and language objectives, and the instructors supported the teachers learning from their peers.

Peer support occurred when Ms. Smith had the teachers work on writing content and language objectives, a SIOP component with which the teachers struggled, using the district's flow chart to model how to write an appropriate objective. Cristina, a fifth grade teacher, volunteered to read her content objectives; Ms. Smith asked the teachers to "listen for the cognitive domain" and provide feedback. Cristina read her content objective, "I can understand the speakers' point of view and the inferences the author of the story by describing the differences" (Field Notes, February 20, 2016). Peer support was evident while Cristina solicited advice on how to include all three elements from the flow chart when phrasing her content objective. The following moment was observed:

The participant questioned if she hit the objectives' three [required] areas [from the flow chart]. She realized she was missing the task [for students to complete]. As a group, the other participants gave suggestions and she re-wrote and re-stated out loud new ideas for her content objective. The participants discussed as a class what could be possible tasks to fit the standard. [After the peer suggestions,] Cristina [said] 'Ok, got it.' (Field Notes, February 20, 2016)

Cristina was able to improve her content objective from peer suggestions during the discussion, which continued into more peer support opportunities for other teachers. After the class helped Cristina with her content objectives, another volunteer shared her middle school content objective. Again, the class began supporting each other and asked for suggestions.

Noelle volunteered to share hers next. She read her content objectives in the front of the room. She then said 'but language objectives precedes the content objective.' . . . She then constructed the language objective with the instructor using the yellow card [flow chart provided by Ms. Smith to help construct objectives.] Sarah, a middle school teacher [stated], 'I'm learning more with practice.' [while listening to Noelle and Ms. Smith talk out how to write the language objective.] Ms. Smith [commented,] 'Yes and helps practicing with your colleagues!' (Field Notes, February 20, 2016)

Teachers were comfortable within the cohort to ask for feedback before implementing lessons. This occurred during Aaron's lesson presentation, when he searched for peer feedback with his lesson plan:

[Aaron] was doing a human timeline activity. He announced he is teaching it on Tuesday so would appreciate any feedback before he does it with his students. 'So any feedback on this is great.' . . . He started with a quick write for prior knowledge [and] he

also had a [PowerPoint slide with a] picture of a shoe and then a crayon and said ‘shoe crayon,’ which was a tease for ‘shukraan’ meaning thank you in Arabic. . . He had us number off at tables [the randomize and rotate strategy]. . . We were given one event on a piece of half paper and had to place [the events] in order chronologically as a team. He said he was ‘trouble shooting this with us.’ (Field Notes, April 16, 2016)

After the activity was over, Aaron asked for suggestions from his peers. The other students provided suggestions and helped problem solve any foreseen trouble students may have with the lesson. Some peers suggested using “two colored papers: one for animal farm and one for Russian history” (Field Notes, April 16, 2016). While peers provided ideas, Aaron asked:

If he should take off the chapters and years on the fact sheets. The instructor and I both said ‘no.’ Ms. Smith said ‘not for your ELs.’ I said ‘It is about your purpose . . . is your purpose they can recall the facts and connect them? Or is it to test the years/chapters? Keep the info there so they can focus on the connections.’ When we returned to the table he said ‘thank you’ to the class and wrote down suggestions. He said ‘that made sense, asking ‘what’s the purpose?’ (Field Notes, April 16, 2016)

In the example above, Aaron felt comfortable enough to trouble shoot his lesson with his classmates, even when it was a graded assignment by the instructor and each table had a rubric to give feedback on as well. He asked his peers to help him with his lesson plan before implementation. Aaron was honest with his peers and instructors about needing support with lesson planning.

By providing opportunities for the teachers to learn through peer interaction, the instructors also promoted teacher reflection, provided modeling and practicing opportunities, and supported the development of a professional learning community among the teachers in both

cohorts. The instructors' believe teachers needed these opportunities to learn new pedagogy and content. The constructivist learning opportunities of the PD coursework supported teachers learning new strategies for ELs through peer discussions and support. While the teachers continued to learn about EL students, the focus of the PD pertained to strategies rather than cultural awareness.

### **Inclusion of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy: Limited and Underdeveloped**

While the PD course content had relevance to EL students' background experiences and culture, neither course had a strong focus on cultural awareness—neither for the teachers themselves nor for their students. However, both courses had elements that could have potentially connected to EL students' background experiences and culture. Instead, the focus was on language: vocabulary and sentence stems in the ESL course and in the foundations of literacy in the reading course. Discussions relevant to culturally responsive teaching were limited to the language and literacy backgrounds of ELs. In particular, (a) the ELs' backgrounds were addressed through strategies to teach language background with minimal consideration of cultural experiences, (b) the development teachers' conceptual understandings of language usage were not evident in the PD, (c) cultural awareness was not the focus of the PD yet instructors believe it is important; and (d) teachers' cultural awareness varied by individuals.

**ELs' backgrounds limited to strategies to teach language.** When PD content focused on ELs' backgrounds, it was often about language background and language needed to understand academic content. Opportunities of cultural responsiveness teachable moments were not developed. This was particularly evident in the ESL course where building background was covered explicitly. In the ESL course, the focus was on strategies for teaching academic language and vocabulary. Teachers' reflection logs reflected course work, which included

strategies that offered opportunities for students to learn and use vocabulary in sentence stems. When reporting student outcomes in their logs, the focus was on the vocabulary learned or the students' abilities to participate with comprehension.

During one session Ms. Smith discussed activities and strategies that provided opportunities to build vocabulary and language, for the building background component, which according to Ms. Smith were not always evident in lessons "when the district did observations for SIOP lessons in the classrooms" (Field Notes, January 30, 2016). However, the discussions remained focused on language and vocabulary, missing opportunities to explore cultural backgrounds. Barbara, a first year sixth grade teacher English teacher shared her experience with building background:

This is my first year teaching. As I teach more, we learn we can't assume. We were reading *Prince and the Pauper* so I shared that I would want to change lives with Princess Kate and one of my sixth graders said, 'She's not real.' He thought princesses were not real. He's above grade level in reading and he still didn't know. (Field Notes, January 30, 2016)

Another example of a teacher beginning to think of students prior knowledge was when Cristina shared a lesson she had completed on cause and effect. Cristina, who spent time in Florida, explained that she used building background for her reflection log with a lesson on the Florida Keys: "I was mad at myself for taking for granted of thinking they knew [the vocabulary of coral and kelp]. The students did not know what they were or what coral was and the lesson lost its meaning" (Field Notes, January 30, 2016). Ms. Smith commented that "I wouldn't have picked cause and effect for Florida Keys" (Field Notes, January 30, 2016) and the class continued discussing the vocabulary background that would have been needed for the students in



that lesson. Cristina's aha moment was not expanded upon in regard to cultural background or cultural knowledge, but rather the discussion returned to what vocabulary background may be lacking for ELs.

At other times, teachers showed their concerns about language and assessments. For example, Whitney, a fourth grade teacher, expressed concern about how to choose appropriate language functions based on the students' proficiency levels using examples from assessment; she stated "So on the [district] common assessment, [for example,] the social studies [common assessment] from the district wouldn't it be productive to see these SIOP stems on them? . . . "I didn't know if I could give any stems" (Field Notes, October 31, 2015). Ms. Smith replied, "I encourage you to get on district's committees" and then further explained, "[teachers] have to teach kids on how to take an assessment" (Field Notes, October 31, 2015). The discussion did not pursue Whitney's concern for teaching the language of assessment so that language barriers and potential inequities in standardized assessment could be addressed. Instead, the discussion continued on the activity for creating language objectives.

The focus on ELs' backgrounds often turned to language and literacy concerns with discussions on developing language taking precedence over cultural awareness. While teachers began initiating culturally responsive discussions, their questions were often left unanswered by the instructors. Because PD content was heavily focused on classroom application of strategies, conceptual knowledge about language usage was not evident.

**Development of conceptual understandings of language usage were not evident.**

Teachers' conceptual understanding of language usage did not change from completing the two PD courses not did they agree with the opinions of the PD professionals. Teachers answered questions regarding their views of language in the pre and post survey. Table 4.3 shows the

mean of the pre and post surveys on the questions regarding standard and nonstandard English in the classrooms. The three PD instructors and the project director also completed the survey and their perceptions are included for comparison. The means represent the responses of “strongly agree” as a value of one and “strongly disagree” as a value of four. Teacher means for each question stayed relatively consistent at the end of the coursework but also created larger distance from the view of the teachers to those of the PD instructors and project director.

Table 4.3

*Pre and Post Survey Results of Teachers Compared to PD Professionals<sup>5</sup>*

Question	Teacher Pre Survey Mean	Teacher Post Survey Mean	PD Professional Mean
1. A student whose primary language is not English should be taught solely in English	2.79	2.77	3.75
2. Students need to master standard English for upward mobility	1.90	2.13	1.50
3. In the home, students should be exposed to standard English only	3.00	2.80	3.75
4. Students who use nonstandard dialects should be taught in standard English	2.31	2.33	2.50
5. There are valid reasons for using nonstandard dialects	1.97	2.07	1.00
6. There are valid reasons for using languages other than English	1.72	1.83	1.00
7. Students should learn grammar rules to improve their ability to understand and communicate concept and information	1.59	1.90	3.00

While teachers’ responses did not show a substantial change in their mean scores for these seven questions, when compared to the three PD instructors’ and the project director’s views there are differences between the teachers’ beliefs and the professionals. The PD professionals held a stronger stance on six of the seven questions. The PD professionals strongly

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<sup>5</sup> Scores ranged from 1-4 with one being “strongly agree” and four being “strongly disagree”

disagreed with questions one and three, disagreed with question seven, and strongly agreed with questions five and six. The PD professionals felt strongly that there were “valid reasons for using nonstandard dialects” and for using “languages other than English” (Survey, 2015). PD professionals and teachers were close in their responses for question four, “Students who use nonstandard dialects should be taught in standard English” with means of 2.33 on the teacher post survey versus 2.50 on the PD professional survey.

Language diversity was also incorporated into the pre and post survey questions and did show an increase in teachers discussing language diversity with their students. The surveys asked participants “To what extent do you discuss language diversity with your students?” Teacher pre survey responses included 18 teachers who answered “a lot” or “moderately”, seven teachers responded with “a little” and two responded with “not at all” (Pre Survey, 2015). This changed to 24 teachers answering “a lot” or “moderately”, five responded with “a little” and one with “not at all” (Post Survey, 2016). When compared to the PD professionals, all four included language diversity with their students with two answering “a lot” and two answering “moderately” (Survey, 2015). This showed an increase in teachers including language diversity in their classrooms, which aligned with the PD professionals’ views about the topic. Interestingly, the following question on the survey asked, “Which approaches do you use in discussing language diversity with your students?” and four teachers on the pre survey and two teachers on the post survey responding with “I do not discuss language diversity in my classroom” (Pre Survey, 2015; Post Survey, 2016).

Language diversity is not always a focus for teachers in general. When asked to “List the most important issues or topics about language diversity that your students raise with you,” two of the four PD professionals responded with “My students do not raise issues about language

diversity” (Survey, 2015). In this case, the PD professionals’ students are either preservice or in-service teachers not raising questions about language diversity. All four PD professionals work with adults who currently or will potentially teach EL students. The concept of language diversity appeared to be underdeveloped among educators.

Teachers’ conceptual understandings about language usage did not show an increase in knowledge from attending the PD courses. Data analysis revealed that teachers did not have significant change in their responses about Standard English and nonstandard dialects, but did show some change in their responses to discuss language diversity with their students. The pre and post survey results did not show a significant change in the means from the teachers from completing the PD coursework. When compared to the PD professionals, the teachers’ conceptual understanding of language usage for students varied from the professionals’ viewpoints. Teachers’ responses on language diversity did show an increase in potential in discussing language issues in their classrooms.

Overall teachers’ conceptual knowledge about language usage did not change from attending the PD courses focused on ESL and reading strategies. Additionally, cultural responsive teaching was not the focus of the PD sessions. The PD instructors viewed cultural awareness as important for teaching students but did not include culture as a main focus in their PD coursework.

**Cultural awareness was not the focus of the PD.** While cultural awareness was not the focus of the courses, the instructors felt it was important for teachers to be aware of the complexity of culture, including the teachers’ own cultures and the cultures of their students. However, when opportunities arose to discuss culturally responsive teaching, they were often under utilized. The PD instructors kept PD discussions in line with their prepared PowerPoint

slides and agenda topics, focusing on strategies and the SIOP components in the ESL methods course and reading strategies in the reading course. Neither course dedicated a large amount of time to specific culturally responsive teaching topics.

When cultural questions emerged, they were often diverted with language discussions rather than being fully developed. One example occurred when Ms. Smith asked the teachers, to “individually write down on your handout three things you think are factors that affect second language acquisition (SLA)” (Field Notes, January 9, 2016). When teachers shared out at each table, they included:

Support at home, exposure to reading, speaking in fragments versus complete sentences . . . fear of failure [and] learned helplessness . . . confidence and security and [lack of] focus, learned helplessness and if they fluently speak English at home or not. [Another teacher added] ‘security-need to feel safe’ and ‘lack of proficiency of native language.’ The presenter said this will be explained more when [the SLA expert] comes at 12pm. (Field Notes, January 9, 2016)

Teachers showed an interest in learning more about students’ language development, but were uncertain on how the ELs’ native language impacted their learning of English. During a discussion of a SLA factor, Ms. Smith presented the research indicating that the following factors impact SLA:

1. Motivation
2. First language development
3. Language distance and attitude “what’s that mean?”
4. Access to language
5. Age

6. Personality and learning style
7. Peers or role models
8. Quality of instruction
9. Cultural backgrounds and goals (Field Notes, January 9, 2016)

As the conversation developed, Ms. Smith focused on language development and teachers began to ask questions about first language interfering with second language development. Fadia, a middle school teacher asked, “Is it ruined because [a student] has to go to Arabic school? [The student is] learning to read and write it because only knows how to speak. Is it counter-active to what [the student is] learning in my classroom?” (Field Notes, January 9, 2016). Zenith, responded, “It’s [the] traditional way of teaching because from [the teachers are from] over seas” explaining how Arabic school is set up. Teachers began to debate the role of L1 and L2 with language development:

A debate began on what the participants thought if it was helpful or not to have school in native language while learning English. Someone asked if over reacting [by thinking the Arabic school interfered with English learning.] [Another teacher asked,] ‘is it better if they watch TV [shows in English]? Should they watch TV in first language or English?’ Fadia said, ‘[it is] not just second language acquisition but language acquisition . . . like toddlers, and how we learned language.’ Ms. Smith [commented], ‘you guys are very interesting. Not shy, either.’ This was her first day with them. Ms. Smith did not give any input on what research says is true or not true at this point for SLA. She said ‘[the SLA expert] will be discussing this topic after lunch’ and started the next activity at this point, which was a jigsaw strategy on the SLA factors listed from the research. (Field Notes, January 9, 2016)

Ms. Smith continued using strategies to teach SLA factors and concepts, but the table talk discussion after each activity focused on the strategy rather than SLA concepts. Yet, teachers continued to show interest in cultural backgrounds and experiences of ELs. For example, one teacher said, “personal experience, [you] have to have background in own language or [at their English proficiency] level of difficulty” (Field Notes, January 9, 2015). Noelle, added, “especially native language proficiency if you’re comfortable with [the] ins and outs and rules of your own language then adds more difficulty.” Samar, who speaks Arabic as her native language, interrupted and said, “[it is] easier to learn [Arabic first, then] English than English to Arabic. Distance can be different depending on the direction” (Field Notes, January 9, 2016). When the discussion ended, Ms. Smith said, “Table talk: Why is jigsaw and gallery walk a useful strategy for ELLs?” and teachers responded. The focus became on the strategy rather than the conceptual factors that teachers began constructing about ELs’ language and experiences.

During the reading course when teachers were working in small groups on formative and summative assessment examples, the following conversation was observed:

Aaron said, ‘Why is text is so biased for ELLs?’ [Cristina responded,] ‘[It’s] not far I get so angry (pounds table) why these kids are getting judged. [For example,] Baseball, they don’t know what that is’ Aaron [interrupted,] ‘Or revolutionary war.’ (Field Notes, December 5, 2015)

When Cristina shared their discussion to the whole group, she added that not only are ELs lacking vocabulary background, but they could be behind because “they missed a year due to war or whatever” (Field Notes, December 5, 2015). The conversation then turned to Ms. Nichols who offered that they should use a book they already know as it “sets the background,” which seems to have ignored Cristina’s point. Zenith, a math teacher shared, “[teachers] have to start

with prior knowledge with ELLs just to see what they know before you start and [include missing] vocabulary” (Field Notes, December 5, 2015). The discussion eventually returned back to the activity, which was focused on context needed for comprehension. There was no further discussion about ELs experiences or backgrounds; instead the instructors continued with the planned agenda.

Each instructor believes that culture plays a role in teaching and learning. In the interviews, they identified ways to learn about cultural awareness, including: the importance to understand the complexity of culture, cultural understanding is constructed through experiences and exposure, and implementing cultural awareness explicit activities. Yet, observations did not yield evidence of these being specifically included. Details of the instructors’ views on culture are described below.

***Instructor interviews expressed the importance to understand the complexity of culture.***

All three instructors expressed the need to understand their own cultures and the complexities of culture in their interviews. Culture first came up when I asked Ms. Roberts, “Do you recommend anything in particular for teachers to do to get to know their ELs in the classroom?” Ms. Roberts responded:

I would say this about ANY student . . . knowing their cultural history . . . getting to know their families, getting to know their particular needs . . . They need to understand where their children are coming from and what their background is and also come at it from these children have knowledge and have experiences, it may not be in English, but they still they are coming to us with something, but they are not blank slates . . . That understanding and that mindset is so important, for any children. (Interview, 2016)

When asked, ‘Do you think culture plays a role in teaching and learning?’, Ms. Roberts



elaborated on her thoughts about culture:

Our role as educators is to meet children where they are and take them farther. . . and . . . you have to UNDERSTAND where they are. You have to know what's important to them, what's important to their families, what experiences they've had, how they interact with others in their families: the whole cultural piece. And it's NOT just English learners, it really is everybody . . . it's adapting too. Our cultural norms are not necessarily the cultural norms of the teaching demographics. (Interview, 2016)

Ms. Roberts' response listed some of the complexities of culture and how it relates the students' backgrounds, families, and interactions. Ms. Smith also expressed her understanding of culture, explaining:

Because we ALL come from a cultural background . . . so nobody is culture free . . . you bring your own set of values and how we see the world so your students do and for you as a teacher to know that background and value and celebrate everything about the child-the language; the cultures. (Interview, 2016)

When asked, "If culture was included in your course for the grant?", Ms. Smith used the WIDA English proficiency levels as an example:

Well, through the WIDA training we did background . . . explorations of our students . . . always to make sure that, especially if teachers are working with new comers, that they include the first language . . . even if they don't' speak it. [Teachers can] set the students close to somebody who does because the kids . . . KNOW things. So FIND out what they KNOW and stress that kind of background, so that they can bring it to whatever you are teaching. (Interview, 2016)

The instructors were also asked, "Do you think the teachers are aware of their own

cultural beliefs?” Ms. Smith answered about herself and explained that teachers need time to reflect on their own cultures and relate their cultures to their students:

You know, that's a good question . . . I don't think that. And . . . I myself included, until you think of what your own background is . . . you really need to REFLECT on that . . . because you do bring . . . [for example,] I wasn't born in [state]. I was born on a farm so . . . there's some similarities to the students who are coming from Yemen to myself. I came from a large family, which many of our students do . . . A lot of similarities between the religions. I am not Muslim, but very . . . spiritual . . . as it is in Islam.

(Interview, 2016)

Ms. Nichols also recognized the “huge” role culture plays in teaching and learning. She answered:

I think culture plays a HUGE part in our learning . . . in the way that we VIEW things, I think it's got a lot to do with that cultural filter that we ALL have. I am ALWAYS going to have my cultural filter. (Interview, 2016)

Ms. Nichols continued to talk about her own kids and the role of cultural and their learning. She said she grew up bilingual and spoke Arabic, but she didn't realize she was passing some of her cultural practices on to her children. She did not realize she was doing that—it was a natural part of her culture. Ms. Nichols gave the example of how she naturally stands up when someone older enters a room and she notices now that her two daughters do that every time as well.

Ms. Roberts explained that understanding culture is something the teachers at her building “still struggle with” (Interview, 2016). She further explained:

It's a process and it takes awhile to get there and . . . the teachers here I know, some of

them have never taught anywhere else and I think they've had more difficulty adapting to the changing populations and the changing needs. Now teachers, in general, I think the schools on the East side of the district, they've been working with English Language Learners a lot longer and so in a sense, they're further ahead in their mind shifts and in their teaching practices than I think some of us on the west side are. (Interview, 2016)

When asked, "Do you think that the coursework helped any of the participants identify their own culture or cultural identity?" Ms. Roberts shared that it was not their focus, but rather explained that the course allowed teachers to think about another complexity of culture, sharing:

I think that we focused on their culture as LEARNERS because we start out PD as them thinking about themselves as READERS, and so that is them getting to know their own culture, but its not culture in the sense are they Arabic, are they from Lebanon . . . It's more their individual cultures and thoughts about learning and reading. So I think . . . they did. That was an 'aha' for some of them when thinking back about . . . reading when they were the age of their students. (Interview, 2016)

Ms. Nichols and Ms. Roberts were not confident if the teachers in the grant PD were aware of their own cultures. Ms. Nichols said "possibly in their discussions with colleagues," but she was unsure (Interview, 2016). Ms. Roberts also agreed that "some of their [the teachers'] conversations may have allowed them to dive into [cultural awareness] (cut herself off) . . . I don't know, that wasn't something we spent much time on" (Interview, 2016). The three instructors agreed that the focus of their PD did not include activities for teachers to discover their own cultural awareness.

*Cultural understanding is constructed through experiences and exposure.* Cultural understanding for teachers is constructed with experiences and exposure to the ELs. Ms. Nichols

suggested pairing up ELs with another student for support and that knowing the same language can sometimes help culturally, but even then culture is never the same, “we are all different” (Interview, 2016). Ms. Smith agreed that pairing ELs with other students can help them make connections, especially if the students speak the same language. The instructors gave suggestions for helping students who may speak the same language but have different cultural backgrounds; however the conversations focused on experiences for students in the classroom.

Opportunities to construct understanding of teachers’ own cultural awareness were discussed in great detail by the project director. Dr. Martin shared her belief about cultural awareness needing to come from experiences while describing her own definition of culture from individual experience. When I asked Dr. Martin “if culture plays a role in teaching and learning?” She replied “HUGE” and explained:

I can only describe it from a personal experience. So I grew up in, even though I had lived in cities and I went to school in cities, . . . my community was my White middle class family and you know, that was my life experience. I didn't really know any people of color, anything like that. And then, . . . I taught for a year and then I joined the Peace Corps--and I think this is where my ‘you have to get out of your comfort zone’ [philosophy comes from] and suddenly I was surrounded by people who didn’t look like me, people who didn't talk like me, and nothing worked that I thought should work. (Interview, 2016)

Dr. Martin continued to discuss how her experience in the Peace Corps and doing her doctoral research in the Philippines all contributed to her own cultural awareness. Dr. Martin said, “I realized . . . that I needed to acculturate so I could connect with them [the people in the Philippines]” (Interview, 2016). This experience allowed Dr. Martin to begin to acculturate and

she further understood the need to acculturate to the cultures of others when she taught in an inner city, high poverty school. She realized “there was another acculturation process that needed to take place. And I was now in a culture that was COMPLETELY unfamiliar to me. And I was at risk of doing really stupid things and making really stupid mistakes” (Dr. Martin, Interview, 2016). Dr. Martin shared:

I think the combination of those two experiences made me very, very aware of how much culture plays into [actions and beliefs] I knew, I could see what I was doing that was a product of MY culture, but I could also now see that didn't mean that my way was not the right way or the only way. So . . . I was very fortunate. (Interview, 2016)

Dr. Martin believes that teachers needed similar experiences to understand their EL students in the classroom, which she felt this was not always true for teachers. She said, “In my years of experience of doing equity work and some of it to raise awareness of your own culture . . . most people are not [aware of their own cultural beliefs]. They don't think about it” (Interview, 2016).

While the importance of culture was briefly discussed by the instructors, Dr. Martin explained the need for teachers to understand their own cultural awareness when interacting with those from other cultures. While the interviews continued, the instructors did discuss activities that would explicitly focus on culture. Ms. Nichols discussed her own experience and Ms. Smith suggested how she could include cultural awareness in future PD.

***Implementing cultural awareness explicit activities in future PD.*** When the instructors were asked about including cultural discussions in the PD course, there was a mix of responses. Ms. Smith explained how she “wished I could have put MORE in [to the PD] and shared an idea to explicitly include cultural discussions in future PD, stating, “that’s a good point for next time . . . Actually put in a task where you . . . FOCUS on . . . what . . . cultural things you bring

to the teaching” (Interview, 2016). She explained further, “like an inventory of yourself and realize what DO you bring . . . as a person to this role” (Interview, 2016).

Like Ms. Smith, Ms. Nichols also believes that explicit activities help teachers focus on their own culture. Ms. Nichols shared that she never thought about her own culture until she took an elective course as part of her graduate studies, called “cultural bias” (Interview, 2016). She read about a cultural filter and had to analyze her own cultural norms and reflect on them during this course. Ms. Nichols said it was “the best experience” and opened her eyes to how culture is huge part of everyone, no matter your background (Interview, 2016).

Dr. Martin also discussed having activities in PD that created opportunities “with some experiential learning that put everybody out of their comfort zone” (Interview, 2016). She would then explain to the PD participants “how do we connect this to what’s happening in schools today” (Interview, 2016). One example Dr. Martin provided was:

So you’re walking past a 7-11. Somebody from 7-11 walks out and shouts ‘Stop, stop, thief’ quickly write down what’s the race/gender of the person yelling and the person running away. And what happens is 9 times out of 10, the person running away is Black and male and depending on where you do it, the owner is somebody else. So then we deconstruct that about why did you think that? What was that about? So I learned a LOT in those 10 years at the equity center . . . [including] great ideas learned form other people about how to create these stimulations to get people outside their comfort zone but also to have them react spontaneously. (Interview, 2016)

Dr. Martin’s description provided an example of how including conversations or experiences about cultural differences may be uncomfortable, but can be included in PD. She explained that having people participate in conversations or experiences outside of their comfort zone created

an opportunity to learn about your own beliefs and others.

There were teachable moments where student cultural/personal experiences could have been explored, such as during the ESL course in the fall semester when teachers used photographs to develop activities to practice strategies (e.g., role play, create a “frozen moment”). A group of fourth grade teachers chose the photograph of two Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers at someone’s front door. They role played an interview between the ICE officers and the person answering the door:

A teacher who spoke Arabic asked a question in Arabic. [The other responded as the officer,] ‘Are you speaking Arabic?’ [The other teacher] responded ‘she asked me when did I come here and I said I don’t speak English.’ [The partner said,] ‘So I asked her in Arabic.’ (Field Notes, October 31, 2015)

The interview focused on language. Yet, during their planning, Dr. Martin, who was observing that day, had joined the group; she brought up the fact that the officer was from ICE (written on the back of his jacket), and asked if they thought it might have particular meaning for their students. There was a brief discussion at their table and Whitney mentioned that their students could have anxiety over this picture because they have gone through or know someone who went through something similar. Prior to this discussion, neither the PD instructor nor the teachers had considered how the people answering the door might feel with an ICE officer at their door. However, the discussion and final activity did not go beyond the strategy of role-playing with photographs to provide oral language practice.

Cultural awareness was not the focus of the PD, yet the instructors believe it is important for teachers. The instructors and Dr. Martin expressed the importance of cultural understanding in their interviews, believe cultural understanding is constructed through experiences, and felt

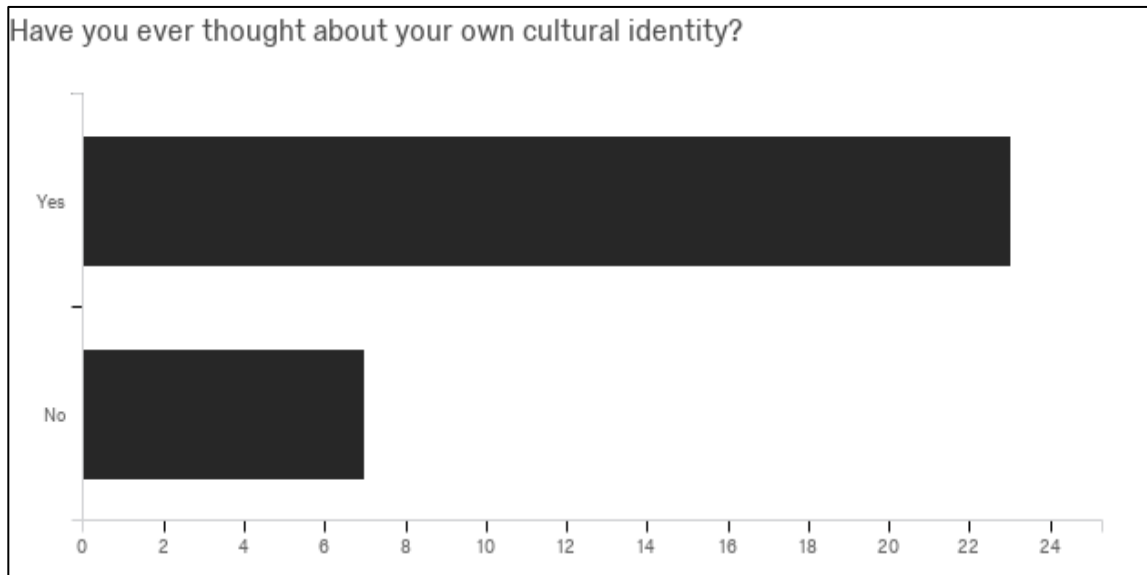
that cultural awareness comes from an explicit focus on culture. Despite these understandings, the grant PD courses did not include explicit activities on cultural awareness.

**Teachers' cultural awareness varied in understanding.** As a whole, teachers' cultural awareness varied with some being very broad with a lack of understanding, while others began to show some awareness. Survey results showed that while some teachers began to think about their own cultural identities, their explanations did not always align with true understanding. Some teachers expressed an unclear understanding of the role of culture, while others began to see the significant role culture plays in teaching and learning.

*Some teachers expressed an unclear understanding of the role of culture.* The teachers expressed unclear understanding of culture and some teachers did not individualize culture for the students. When asked about culture on the post survey, teachers' responses demonstrated a broad view without deep understanding of the complexities of culture for students, in particular, ELs. To begin having teachers think about culture, the post survey asked, "Have you ever thought about your own cultural identity?" (Figure 4.2). Twenty-three (over 76%) of the teachers answered "yes" and seventeen (over 13%) answered "no" (Post Survey, 2016). Responses identified that teachers thought about their own culture, but did not fully understand the role culture played in teaching and learning.

Those twenty-three teachers who answered "yes" were then asked to identify their own culture (Table 4.4). Teachers' responses about their own cultures demonstrated a broad and unclear understanding. Some responses related to cultural identity, some mentioned religion, while others included language.



Figure 4.2 *Have you ever Thought about your Own Cultural Identity? (Post Survey)*

Teachers' responses were categorized into three themes: teachers who identified culture with their race, ethnicity or native language; teachers who connected culture to family ties or beliefs; teachers who implied culture as being diverse, complex, or multi-dimensional; and teachers who mentioned teaching in their response. Nine teachers related culture to their race, ethnicity, or being bilingual with examples of "Arab," "Arabic," and "White" (Post Survey, 2106). Six teachers related culture to their families beliefs or traditions, using explanations like "Strict and conservative," "My culture takes pride in education and believes it is the only way for us to have an advantage in life and to one day gain our freedom," "I identify with my family cultural traditions" or "traditional" (Post Survey, 2016). Six teachers responded with explanations showing some complexity of culture but with some answers being more specific than others. For example, one answer aligned with cultural being individualized through experiences, stating, "I identify my own culture based on my experiences," while other responses were very broad such as "Diverse" (Post Survey, 2016). Teachers had a variety of understandings of culture based on their responses.

Table 4.4

*How Teachers Identify their Own Cultures (Post Survey)*

	<b>If yes, how do you identify your own culture?</b>
<b>Culture seen as Race/Ethnicity/Native Language</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arab</li> <li>• Arabic</li> <li>• Italian American</li> <li>• I identify my culture as white, European, American, Midwestern.</li> <li>• White</li> <li>• I am an American mongrel, with a combination of cultures in my family history.</li> <li>• I am 100% Hungarian, however, I never learned the language, but was a Hungarian dancer for about 15 years.</li> <li>• My culture is multi-background Italian Christian and Muslim Arab plays a role in being tolerant.</li> <li>• Bilingual</li> </ul>
<b>Culture seen as family ties or beliefs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strict and conservative</li> <li>• My culture takes pride in education and believes it is the only way for us to have an advantage in life and to one day gain our freedom.</li> <li>• I identify with my family cultural traditions</li> <li>• Traditional, close-knit, Arab-American, values education</li> <li>• Familial ties</li> <li>• My culture is very traditional.</li> </ul>
<b>Culture is Diverse/Complex/multi-dimensional</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My culture is very easy but if you do not know it will be difficult to understand and follow. People need to understand the difference between culture and religion. They are not the same.</li> <li>• I can not find a word to classify my identity. I think I am more of a mix of things.</li> <li>• Diverse</li> <li>• Diverse</li> <li>• I identify my own culture based on my experiences.</li> <li>• Everyone's culture is beautiful</li> </ul>
<b>Connecting Culture to teaching</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Just relate how I grew up to my students and try to relate to them</li> <li>• My culture is diverse and colorful. I accept and consider myself a part of many different traditions and keep an open mind in the classroom.</li> </ul>

Regardless of how a teacher identified his/her culture, the majority of teachers believe culture played a role in their teaching with 25 teachers providing a reason that demonstrated the role of culture. Teachers were asked, “Do you think your cultural identity plays a role in how you teach your students? Please explain” (Post Survey, 2016). Eighteen teachers responded with “yes” with some providing further explanation, while two teachers simply wrote “no” for their responses (Post Survey, 2016). Table 4.5 consists of teacher results, which were analyzed by

Table 4.5

*Teacher Responses about the Role of Cultural Identity in Teaching (Post Survey)*

	<p><b>Do you think your cultural identity plays a role in how you teach your students? If Yes, please explain.</b></p>
<p><b>Teachers who identified themselves as Multilingual or Multi-dialectal</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, I can relate to my students' cultural identity because our students in [District] are predominantly of Arab decent.</li> <li>• Due to the fact that I have a similar culture like my students, I make several connections with them. These real world examples help them understand concepts.</li> <li>• Yes . . . allows me to make connections with students</li> <li>• Yes. You have to help a wide variety</li> <li>• Yes, because I understand that everyone has a culture and something more to them.</li> <li>• I teach my students the importance of education and instill the passion for mastering the language.</li> <li>• Yes, I bring my cultural identity as an example</li> <li>• Yeah because their culture is similar to mine</li> <li>• Yes, we all teach through our own cultural lens either explicitly or implicitly.</li> <li>• Yes</li> <li>• Yes, probably</li> <li>• Yes, because I can relate to the students</li> <li>• No</li> </ul>
<p><b>Teachers who identified themselves as speaking only Standard American English</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes. Understanding their background their level of education and their family dynamics makes me understand how to better accommodate for them.</li> <li>• My cultural identity plays a role in how I teach because I am familiar with the students' culture and can relate to some of their obstacles.</li> <li>• I believe it does. My cultural identity is more of a mix which makes me more open minded.</li> <li>• Yes, it is difficult to connect at times.</li> <li>• My cultural identity plays a role because it is different than that of my students. I strive to learn more about them and to keep in mind that while we come from different backgrounds, we ultimately have more similarities than differences.</li> <li>• Yes, I believe it does. I am all for having students learn about each other's cultures like having a culture day.</li> <li>• I believe so, more than anything because I genuinely keep an open mind and WANT to understand other cultures and identities.</li> <li>• Yes</li> <li>• Yes, understanding we all have different backgrounds that affect our thinking.</li> <li>• Yes. I was born and raised in America. Sometimes I assume everyone has had the same experiences that I have had. I now realize that is not true. That is why I try to assess background knowledge when I teach.</li> <li>• Yes. My dad and his family immigrated here almost 60 years ago, I am a first generation on my dad's side. I can relate to many of my students. I also know what it is like to be told not to speak your family's language.</li> <li>• I think your family and how they speak plays the biggest role.</li> <li>• I think my cultural identity plays a role in how I teach my students because I do not have the same experiences and backgrounds that they do.</li> <li>• No</li> <li>• No</li> <li>• NA</li> <li>• I never really thought of it because my students and I share the same culture but it really does play a role.</li> </ul>

how they identified their own language use on the survey: 13 teachers who identified themselves as being “multilingual or multidialectal” and 17 teachers who only identified as speaking “Standard American English” (Post Survey, 2016). While most teachers described a way culture influenced their teaching, approximately 92% of the multilingual/multidialectal teachers provided a yes response in comparison to approximately 76% majority of teachers who considered themselves speaking Standard American English.

Teacher responses showed that some teachers did not think about students having individual cultures. For example, Hannah responded, “I never really thought of it because my students and I share the same culture but it really does play a role” (Post Survey, 2016). Hannah identified herself as speaking Standard American English on the post survey. Charlotte, who identified herself as multilingual and multidialectal, said she had a similar culture to her students that played a role in teaching and learning: “Yeah because their culture is similar to mine (Post Survey, 2016).

Assuming one has the same, not individualized, culture as others was included in Ms. Roberts’ and Dr. Martin’s interviews. Ms. Roberts said:

The teachers that we worked with for the grant . . . English was a [second] language for some or they were bilingual, so they may appear to have the same culture but culture is so individual that you can’t ASSUME that just because they’re Arabic that they share the same culture. (Interview, 2016)

Ms. Roberts’ statement demonstrated the importance to not assume similar ethnic backgrounds or those who speak the same language have exactly the same culture. During both PD courses and the teacher surveys, newcomers came up as a concern. The teachers, and the district as a whole, were receiving many new students in their classes from overseas, including

Syrian refugees. Dr. Martin also warned about teachers assuming they know the cultures of their students. When asked about teachers in general, not the grant teachers specifically, Dr. Martin replied:

They have to do is they have to assume nothing. They have to assume they know nothing and they have to be curious. So for me, one of the strongest qualities of a good teacher is curiosity. And curiosity about the people you teach. And this is a difference of what I've found with people who are COMPLETELY ESL teachers versus regular teachers . . .

ESL teachers seem to have a curiosity about their kids, their country, what was their life like before they came. My experience of working with ESL teachers has been that.

That's not the case with gen[eral] ed[ucation] teachers, who then get ESL added on. . . I hate to say this, but I think teachers in general aren't curious about their kids.

***Some teachers began to see the significant role culture plays in teaching and learning.***

While some responses lacked a deep understanding of culture, other teachers began to have a better understanding of the role of culture in teaching. While none of the teachers provided a well-defined or complex definition of their own cultures, they did seem to begin to understand the role culture plays in our lives. Seven responses provided evidence that teacher understanding of culture may be emerging.

There were six teachers whose responses connected to the significant role culture plays in teaching and learning. Ayesha, who identified her culture as "Arabic" said "Yes, because I understand that everyone has a culture and something more to them" (Post Survey, 2016). Ayesha's response shows that she sees culture as individualized. Hannah, who identified herself as speaking Standard American English, wrote, "Yes, understanding we all have different backgrounds that affect our thinking" (Post Survey, 2016). Lucy, who described her culture as

“Italian American” and speaking Standard English, began to understand of the role of culture with, “Yes. I was born and raised in America. Sometimes I assume everyone has had the same experiences that I have had. I now realize that is not true. That is why I try to assess background knowledge when I teach (Post Survey, 2016). Lucy did not speak Arabic, but understood that students may not have the same experiences as she had in her childhood and referred to how background knowledge of students has a cultural connection.

Some teacher responses related to the cultural lens described in the instructor interviews. Aaron, a native English speaker, demonstrated understanding of the role of culture with his response, “Yes, we all teach through our own cultural lens either explicitly or implicitly” (Post Survey, 2016). Aaron described his culture as “I identify my culture as white, European, American, Midwestern” (Post Survey, 2016) which is a different ethnic background than his EL students. Beatrice also showed understanding with her responses, “Yes. Understanding their background, their level of education and their family dynamics makes me understand how to better accommodate for them” (Post Survey, 2016). Beatrice described her culture as “My culture is multi-background Italian, Christian and Muslim Arab plays a role in being tolerant” (Post Survey, 2016).

Other teachers highlighted the importance of understanding cultural differences between themselves and their students. Vicky described her own cultural identify as “I am an American mongrel, with a combination of cultures in my family history” (Post Survey, 2016). Vicky described the role culture plays in teaching and learning as:

My cultural identity plays a role because it is different than that of my students. I strive to learn more about them and to keep in mind that while we come from different backgrounds, we ultimately have more similarities than differences. (Post Survey, 2016)

Finally some teachers answered No to the first question but gave a reason that did show a connection to culture and teaching. Whitney, a fourth grade teacher of non-Arabic descent and Danielle, a second grade teacher who does speak Arabic and practices Islam, both answered “no” but provided explanations with knowledge of cultural understanding. Whitney answered:

Yes. My dad and his family immigrated here almost 60 years ago. I am a first generation on my dad's side. I can relate to many of my students. I also know what it is like to be told not to speak your family's language. (Post Survey, 2016)

Interestingly, Danielle responded, “I think my cultural identity plays a role in how I teach my students because I do not have the same experiences and backgrounds that they do” (Post Survey, 2016). Danielle’s response differs from many other teachers who implied they had the same culture of their students due to speaking the same language or having similar ethnic backgrounds. Her response shows a deeper understanding of cultural identity, although she answered “no” for if it played a role in her teaching.

The role of culturally responsiveness was limited to language background and was underdeveloped in the PD courses. The focus of the PD was on strategies for ELs in the ESL methods course and on reading foundations in the reading course. Due to the PD course content, ELs’ backgrounds were discussed mostly in relation to language background rather than cultural experiences, teachers’ conceptual understanding of language usage did not change from the PD, cultural awareness was not the focus of the PD yet instructors believe it is important; and teachers’ cultural awareness was varied in understanding. Teachers showed an interest in cultural responsive topics, but cultural awareness was not the focus of the PD nor strongly developed over the course of the grant.

### Summary

The case study was designed to answer the driving question of “How can professional development foster culturally responsive teachers?” Data analysis revealed that: (a) external factors impacted the potential for the PD to include all research-based best practices, (b) PD activities had coherence when they were relevant to teachers’ goals and practices (c) the PD instructors’ philosophies of teacher learning addressed constructivist learning opportunities in certain areas, and (d) the inclusion of culturally responsive pedagogy was limited to language background and was underdeveloped. Furthermore, the state-funded grant PD courses were examined to determine:

1. Can participating in a reform type of professional development influence a teacher’s understanding for teaching ELs?
2. Can the integration of constructivist activities in professional development help teachers transfer pedagogical and conceptual knowledge into their own classroom practice?
3. What connections are teachers making from the professional development strategies and coursework about language learning to their specific classroom population of ELs?

While the reform type PD influenced the grant teachers’ understanding of ELs’, it did so at a surface level of providing teachers strategies to help teach ELs rather than providing substantial conceptual understanding of second language acquisition for ELs. Teachers were able to implement various strategies for the SIOP components and some literacy strategies into their classroom practice. The constructivist learning opportunities helped foster a PLC among the teachers as they formed relationships with their colleagues and allowed for modeling and practicing of the new strategies. Additionally, teacher reflection strengthened the teachers’ understanding of the strategies for EL students. Teachers were able to connect ESL strategies to



their content areas for implementation with EL students, but lacked the opportunity to construct understanding of cultural responsive pedagogy and gain knowledge about language learning from the PD coursework.

Chapter 5 follows with interpretations for these findings within the existing literature. Recommendations for implications to professional development and educational policy will also be discussed. Finally, potential next steps in research are advised based upon the findings.

## Chapter 5: Interpretations and Recommendations

### Introduction

The study looked at professional development (PD) as a vehicle to improve teacher knowledge of English Learners (ELs). The study was based on the fundamental problem in today's schools in which the EL population of students is rising in U.S. classrooms with achievement data showing ELs not achieving at the same rates as their native English-speaking peers and teachers not being prepared to teach ELs appropriately. This case study examined how PD can foster culturally responsive teachers, specifically asking:

1. Can participating in a reform type of professional development influence a teacher's understanding of teaching ELs?
2. Can the integration of constructivist activities in professional development help teachers transfer pedagogical and conceptual knowledge into their own classroom practice?
3. What connections are teachers making from the professional development strategies and coursework about language learning to their specific classroom population of ELs?

Because the PD coursework in the study represented a reform type model in its schedule and activities, there were expectations that the learning would be more effective than traditional workshops and allow for learning opportunities from peers and colleagues (Desimone et al., 2002; Desimone, 2009; Garet et al., 2001; Pianta, 2011; Darling-Hammond, 2008). The PD's design and implementation included characteristics of a reform model: (a) duration, PD spread over seven months; (b) collective participation, expected of the teachers; (c) active learning, opportunities provided; (d) coherence, activities provided to address needs; and, (e) content focus,

teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) and reading foundations (Desimone et al., 2002). The study found that having these components alone did not ensure an extensive understanding of conceptual knowledge of EL students by the participants. The findings indicated that: (a) the reform PD allowed teachers to develop knowledge of strategies, but not theory for teaching ELs; (b) active learning and collective participation were supported by constructivist activities but were focused on pedagogical knowledge of implementing classroom strategies; (c) the connections the teachers made between the PD and their ELs were limited to language background needs with minimal inclusion of culturally responsive pedagogy and second language acquisition (SLA) theory in PD discussions; and (d) external factors impacted the duration and the content focus of the PD. Each finding is discussed below.

### **The PD Allowed Teachers to Develop Knowledge of Strategies, but not Theory**

The PD allowed for teachers to develop knowledge of strategies for best teaching EL students, but did not provide an in-depth understanding of SLA theory. In order to be effective, PD should result in teacher outcomes and classroom change (Shulman, 2005; Guskey, 2002a; Pianta, 2011; Darling-Hammond, 2008; Borko, 2004; Hawley & Valli, 1999). When exploring if participation in a reform type of professional development can influence a teacher's understanding of teaching ELs, each reform type attribute was considered.

The ESL methods course focused on content that addressed the eight SIOP components (lesson preparation, interaction, building background, practice and application, comprehensible input, lesson delivery, strategies, and review and assessment). The reading course content focused on literacy foundations for all students without specifically targeting ELs' needs. While the PD aligned with elements of a reform type PD, the results showed a minimum understanding of teaching ELs, limited to using strategies to promote language rich classrooms rather than

deeper understanding of the language and cultural needs of ELs. Implementation of strategies kept teacher learning at an action level (Piaget, 1978; Ammon & Kroll, 2002) of understanding through pedagogical practices without necessarily including conceptual knowledge.

Collective participation and active learning (Desimone et al., 2002) were evident in both PD courses, aligned with constructivism, and supported teachers building relationships among their peers. The opportunity to understand how the strategies would look within their own classroom empowered teachers to implement strategies for instructional change, which supports effective PD (Farmer et al., 2005; Darling-Hammond, 2008). Teachers were given time to learn through collective participation with peers and were active in learning the new strategies through modeling and practicing in the PD sessions. This hands-on approach provided teachers opportunities to construct their own understandings of the pedagogical strategies through the SIOP component lens being emphasized in the PD session each week.

The characteristic of coherence was evident in the PD activities in the ESL methods course and the teachers were able to engage in collective participation during each PD session, which also promoted active learning. PD activities had coherence for the teachers because they were required to use SIOP components in their lesson plans and were able to replicate the PD strategies into their classrooms. The connection to teachers' goals supports the work of constructivism (Rainer, 2002; Kroll & Ammon, 2002). Similar to what Desimone et al. (2002) found, the PD activities had coherence when the teachers saw value in the content being presented, i.e., instructional strategies for ELs. The content of the ESL methods course aligned directly with the district's requirement for implementing SIOP components. The teachers viewed the strategies that supported the SIOP components as relevant to their classroom needs and implemented them with students. The instructor's and district's explicit direction to use

SIOP components in the classrooms resulted in effective learning of the strategies. The inclusion of effective PD characteristics and the constructivist learning opportunities for the teachers resulted in learning outcomes that reflected the PD. Reinforcing SIOP implementation in the classroom provided teachers with a direct way to apply their learning (Holland, 2005; Desimone et al., 2002; Guskey, 2002a) and reinforced the construction of pedagogical (procedural) knowledge.

While the ESL methods course did not develop conceptual knowledge of culturally responsive teaching or SLA, the evidence of pedagogical knowledge through strategies for SIOP components was apparent. Teachers provided clear examples of not only implementing the SIOP components and strategies from the ESL methods course, but also continuing to change their practices to include the PD strategies after the course completed. Evaluating the outcomes of the PD for change aligns with Guskey's (2002a) first four levels for evaluating PD: (a) teachers' reactions, (b) learning, (c) district (organization) support and change, and (d) the use and implementation of new knowledge and skills (Guskey, 2002a).

Contrastingly, teachers' comments, questions, and post survey responses showed some discrepancies in their understandings and valuing of the reading course in regard to making connections between the PD content and their ELs and classroom content areas. These discrepancies were particularly true for some secondary teachers who did not find relevance in the literacy content to the ELs in their classrooms. The content focus of the reading course included general literacy foundations, but without a specific focus on ELs in particular. The reading course instructors included metacognition discussions and viewed the teachers as learners while providing activities on the conceptual knowledge of literacy. However, the teachers did not consistently relate to the reading PD content nor demonstrate their continued

implementation of the reading course strategies in their post survey responses.

Post survey results for reading course strategies were less evident in the findings than those who implemented the strategies from the ESL methods course. District support in grades K-12 was evident for the ESL methods course content with a SIOP focus, whereas the reading PD was only supported across the district in grades K-6 where guided reading was a required piece of the curriculum. However, even with an alignment to the teachers' classroom needs and goals, the majority of teachers only included strategies from the ESL methods course as examples of changing their instruction based on the post survey results. Reasons for the disconnect to the reading course may be due to the class focusing on literacy foundations in general rather than specifically designing the content to align with ELs' unique learning needs. The reading course incorporated theoretical background of how the brain develops literacy skills, which allowed the course to include more theory than the ESL methods course; however, the reading course did not include as many opportunities for teachers to practice their learning in class. Modeling and practicing of the PD's strategies occurred more often in the ESL methods course than the reading course.

Teachers' discussions on changing practice occurred more often in the ESL methods course as they discussed implementing strategies; in contrast, they spent more time clarifying assignments in the reading course. Also, the reading course included non-grant teachers; the differences in assignments in the reading course between grant and non-grant teachers demonstrate the inconsistencies between expectations for traditional PD learning and the university's expectation for rigor. Thus, the instructors were required to include more rigorous assignments for the teachers taking the PD for course credit while the non-grant teachers participated in the PD through its original design. The grant assignments to further develop

understanding emphasized the difference in expectations of teacher learning through traditional PD without the same level of accountability that comes from completing required rigorous assignments. Reform type PD may include more rigorous opportunities for teachers to analyze their understanding of the PD content for deeper conceptual understanding (Shulman, 2005) rather than more traditional PD where learning stops at the end of the workshop (Pianta, 2011; Desimone et al., 2002).

The reform PD allowed teachers to develop knowledge of strategies, but not necessarily a strong theoretical understanding for teaching ELs. The PD provided opportunities for teachers to learn classroom strategies and activities to implement in their classroom practices. The active learning opportunities and collective participation opportunities provided by the instructors allowed for teachers to construct understanding of the PD content. Planning and implementing effective PD must not only include the characteristics described in the literature (Desimone et al., 2002), but the content focus must provide the necessary conceptual knowledge teachers need to know in order to support academic learning and language development for their EL students (Lucas et al., 2008; Fillmore & Snow, 2000). Promoting PD heavily focused on classroom practices diminishes the importance of teachers understanding the impact classroom practices have on language development and success for ELs and minimizes the need for having purposeful intentions when implementing strategies for ELs in the classroom.

### **Active Learning and Collective Participation were Supported by Constructivist Activities**

The integration of constructivist activities helped teachers transfer pedagogical knowledge from the PD to classroom practice through constructivist activities, i.e., active learning and collective participation. The PD offered opportunities for collaboration, participation, encouraged teachers to learn from each other (Desimone et al., 2002; Garet et al.,

2001; Rainer, 2002; Vygotsky, 1987) and focused on improving academic learning for an under-represented population of students (Kose & Lim, 2011). Teachers were able to collaborate with peers, reflect on their learning with peers, and use modeling and practicing within each PD session to learn new knowledge. The new knowledge, which focused on pedagogical strategies rather than conceptual knowledge, learned through constructivist activities led to teachers being able to immediately implement the strategies in their classrooms.

The instructors' constructivist philosophies guided the PD as they structured their sessions to include active learning and collective participation from the participants. The inclusion of peer discussions increased the learning of the content as teachers extended their discussions about implementation ideas for strategies throughout the course, creating a pedagogical focus of action. The PD design also included constructivist theory as the instructors included opportunities for the teachers to construct pedagogical knowledge through peer interaction, and teacher reflection (Vygotsky, 1987; Fosnot, 2005; Farmer et al., 2005; Kroll & Ammon, 2002; Keiny, 1994; Johnson, 2006). The reflection opportunities, however, did not push for teachers to construct new conceptual knowledge about ELs from the PD content.

In addition to the constructivist activities alignment with effective PD opportunities for collective participation and active learning (Desimone et al., 2002), the PD design also helped form relationships to create Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) for peer learning (Borko, 2004; Schneider, Huss-Lederman, & Sherlock, 2012). Modeling and practicing in both courses gave teachers opportunities to try the strategies first themselves and construct knowledge on how the strategies could work in their own classrooms as they learned to use them from the student perspective. The ESL methods course provided scaffolding for teachers as they learned each step to the strategies, which supports the literature on effective transformative PD (Pelayo et al.,



2012).

The ESL course also provided information on using various groupings of students within lessons in ways to engage students in all language domains (speaking, listening, reading and writing). While changing group configurations and focusing on using all domains can benefit EL students, the activities did not lead to teachers' developing deeper understandings about why group variation or engagement with different activities can lead to academic learning and ultimately achievement. Thus, the focus became more about the strategy of grouping students rather than the theory, or conceptual knowledge, supporting the strategy.

The constructivist opportunities fostered PLCs among the teachers, which is also supported by the research on effective PD (Borko, 2004; Schneider et al., 2012). The teachers demonstrated a desire for peer interaction and turned to their peers for feedback on lesson ideas for implementing the PD coursework. Teachers learned new knowledge from their peers and the instructors believed that teachers learning from each other was important. Peer learning was valued and implemented into the PD coursework in both courses. The teachers formed relationships with their peers as they turned to each other for feedback and support. Teachers reflected on their learning of strategies during peer discussions. Additionally, the PLCs that resulted from the constructivist connections allowed for learning to continue each week, creating a longer duration of time spent on specific components or strategies. While teacher reflections demonstrated learning, the reflection questions and discussions often concentrated on why the strategies were useful for ELs in regard to their language (mostly vocabulary) needs rather than relating to the students' cultural backgrounds and experiences. This limitation sustained knowledge at the action level of consciousness rather than conceptualization, which is described in the work of Piaget (1987) and Ammon and Kroll (2002).

The constructivist approach allowed the teachers to see coherence in the strategies to their own instructional practices, learn from the PD activities and their peers, which ultimately led to the strategies being implemented in their classrooms. However, because the constructivist opportunities and teacher reflections stayed at the surface level (Shulman, 2005), i.e., on strategies, the teachers were limited to constructing knowledge exclusively about the activities rather than SLA and culturally responsive concepts. Having opportunities to support active learning and collective participation through constructivist activities allowed for effective learning of strategies, but were focused on learning classroom activities. Effective PD should also provide opportunities for conceptual change and transformative learning for educators to improve learning environments for the ELs in their classrooms (Pelayo et al., 2012; Darling-Hammond, 2008; Johnson, 2006; Howard, 2007).

### **Teacher Connections were Limited to Language Background Needs**

The third research question searched for teacher connections from the PD strategies and coursework about language learning to their specific classroom population of ELs. This study found that while teachers' were able to change their instruction (pedagogical knowledge) by learning strategies that support best practices, the lack of focus on SLA theory impeded the opportunity for teachers' to change their beliefs (conceptual knowledge) about ELs in regard to language development. Additionally, the underdeveloped role of culturally responsive teaching left teachers without a deep understanding of the role of culture in teaching and learning. Teachers related to the PD content they constructed and were able to implement various strategies in their own instructional practices but were not able to demonstrate an increase in language awareness or a deeper cultural understanding due to the activities only focusing on language needs or the language background needed to complete the activities.

Teachers made connections from the PD instructional strategies and coursework about language learning to their specific classroom population of ELs, but the connection varied by teacher and by strategy topics. For example, the strategies for implementing the SIOP components were more universally accepted than the literacy strategies. The theory behind language learning itself was given a minor role in the PD rather than the content focus, which impacted opportunities for the teachers to improve their knowledge of SLA and language development topics from the pre survey to the post. Unfortunately, language development and concepts were limited to the SLA expert's presentations and were not consistently included within the PD sessions. Teachers did not improve their conceptual understandings of language learning on their post survey responses, but rather built their pedagogical knowledge on how to include building vocabulary background activities using the SIOP components in their classroom practices.

The implementation of language strategies overpowered the development of culturally responsive teaching in the PD coursework. The PD demonstrated success in teachers' learning strategies, but not necessarily in their beliefs of culturally responsive teaching nor their understandings of SLA for EL students. Furthermore, changes in teacher beliefs about language knowledge and awareness were not apparent in the PD's focus. Because the content focused on strategies, when concerns about cultural issues or moments of cultural awareness occurred, the discussions often returned back to the scheduled agenda items. There appeared to be a resistance with the "authority and facilitation" (Rainer, 2002) dimension of constructivism to allow teacher discussions to guide the PD agenda, particularly with authentic questions regarding cultural understanding of ELs. Thus, the PD instructors' philosophies influenced the content focus of the PD and the PD activities they included. Similar to Kose and Lim (2011), this study found that

constructivist activities are needed to gain teacher understanding about students, specifically under-represented ELs. However, opportunities to relate the strategies to cultural responsive pedagogy with personal reflection were underdeveloped without intentionally proposing new conceptual beliefs about ELs. The philosophies and values of the PD instructors guided what was considered valuable content to include in the PD coursework and discussions. Even with a well-designed reform model of PD, the PD instructors' beliefs will influence the content that is included and emphasized for teacher learning.

As discussed earlier, the PD's focus on pedagogy resulted with effective instructional changes but lacked evidence of deeper cultural understanding. While teachers gained surface level knowledge about language learning for ELs, the inclusion of SLA research was isolated to when the SLA expert was a guest lecturer. The new pedagogical knowledge, unfortunately, focused on the language the students would need to complete the strategies rather than the background experiences and cultural perspectives of the EL students and their impact on student learning. For example, the PD sessions on language development included background language knowledge needed and the SIOP requirement to include language objectives, but teachers did not gain conceptual knowledge or new awareness at a deeper level of understanding SLA according to their post survey results. Their reflection logs and surveys continued to include strategies for including language instruction, which aligned to the instructor's course design and agenda items.

Additionally, SLA and culturally responsive teaching were given less importance in the reflection activities for collective participation where questions also targeted the strategy used to teach the concept rather than having critical reflection on the concept itself. The SLA instruction was only explicitly included during the hour that an SLA expert from the university served as a guest lecturer for the courses. The PD did not include critical reflection for changing

understandings toward cultural awareness or about how the new knowledge from the PD might have changed their beliefs about their students (Giroux, 2009; Shestok, 2013). While the reflection activities supported the teacher learning of the new strategies, reflection practices can also potentially alter teacher beliefs (Shestok, 2013; Giroux, 2009; Piaget, 1978; McIntyre, 2002; Schon, 1987). In this study, the teacher written reflections and peer discussions focused on the strategies themselves rather than ELs' language development and/or the cultural awareness of the teachers. Furthermore, if PD discussions emphasize strategies then the outcomes will also emphasize classroom strategies and practices rather than teachers' conceptual beliefs about why the strategies are beneficial for ELs. While language learning is needed, especially for general education teachers without ESL backgrounds (Karabenick & Noda, 2004; Ballantyne et al., 2008; García-Nevarez et al., 2005), there was no evidence of deep understandings or changes in language beliefs for the teachers in this study.

Deeper discussions of the complexities of culture were not present and opportunities for teachers to analyze their own cultural beliefs and the role their beliefs have in their teaching and learning were not included. Explicit instruction on cultural awareness was needed in order for teachers to connect their own culture to the PD content (Kose & Lim, 2011; Colombo, 2007). In addition, having a critical self-analysis (Giroux, 2009) was not evident in the PD even though the instructors believe teachers did not naturally think about their own cultural awareness (Darling-Hammond, 2006) without having an explicit opportunity. Furthermore, when teachers began having discussions that included cultural awareness topics, particularly when a disequilibrium was constructed, they were often left unanswered and the conversations and activities went back to the planned agenda activities. The constructivist opportunity became limited to constructing pedagogical knowledge rather than conceptual. The PD instructors' remained focused on their

predetermined PD agendas of reading foundations and SIOP components rather than evolving the PD content to include teacher-constructed concerns or questions.

The constructivist activities were influenced by what the instructors valued, rather than allowing for the learners to guide the PD based on their own perceptions and interests (Vygotsky, 1987; Piaget, 1978). If more organically constructed discussions from teachers about language acquisition and cultural responsiveness were better utilized, a deeper conceptual understanding had the potential to take place. The instructors left the SLA theoretical conversations to the expert due to her extensive knowledge of language development and linguistics (Clair, 2000). It is possible that because the instructors were experts in their PD content areas (ESL methods including SIOP components and foundations of reading) may have caused the hesitance to include deeper conversations about SLA or cultural appropriate practices when teacher discussions arose.

Without including activities that allowed for teachers to critically reflect on their own cultural beliefs (Giroux, 2009; Nieto, 2013, Kose & Lim, 2011, Howard, 2007, Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 2014) the concept of cultural responsive teaching was not fully implemented, resulting with an unclear and inconsistent understanding of culture from teachers on their surveys and in their assumptions of grouping students' cultures together as homogenous. Researchers in the field of culturally responsive teaching (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2014; Gay, 2002) would agree that the consequences of not including cultural discussions can hinder teachers in understanding their marginalized students. However, infusing cultural responsive teaching in PD for teachers of ELs affirms the importance of understanding culturally and linguistically diverse students (Nieto, 2009).

While the reform type PD allowed teachers to develop understandings of instructional strategies for best practices of teaching ELs, the theoretical understandings were not developed. The PD courses included characteristics of effective PD, but did so while having a pedagogical content focus. The PD resulted in teachers changing their practices to include strategies that support SIOP components. The teachers' learning of language development remained at the surface level without having results that indicated that the teachers produced more culturally appropriate classrooms, which is problematic in creating sustained improvement in the learning opportunities for EL students and the construction of multiple perspectives in teacher learning.

**External factors impacted the effectiveness of the PD.**

As previously discussed, the simple inclusion of the elements of effective PD may not guarantee sustained improvement in the learning opportunities for EL students with teacher learning resuming at a surface, or superficial, level. This study found that some characteristics of effective PD were compromised due to the external factors. External factors impacted the effectiveness of the PD due to meeting the needs of the multiple stakeholders (i.e. the district, university, and the state). When working with multiple stakeholders to implement PD, one must examine how the needs and requirements of the stakeholders can impact the effective characteristics of the PD implementation. External factors impacted the effectiveness of the PD opportunity in regard to: the duration being shortened during the first semester due to the late approval by the state and managing the needs of all the stakeholders also compromised some of the characteristics of effective PD for the study.

While the school district and university were able to compromise on having PD count for coursework, the state's late approval and demands created unforeseen issues. In addition, the goals of the stakeholders played a role in what was given importance in the design and

implementation of the PD, including the content-focus on strategies for the teachers. The external factors impacted the evaluation process of the PD, the collective participation of the grant participants, and the teacher selection process, which determined which teachers volunteered for the grant coursework. These issues caused frustrations for the PD project director, instructors, and the teachers, which may have contributed to some teachers feeling overwhelmed with the changes and assignments. Even with a well-developed reform model of PD, external factors can influence the effectiveness of the PD and impact the best practices unintentionally.

The content focus for the courses determined what topics were emphasized and given value during the PD. Effective content focus should include instructional methods (Desimone et al., 2002), but also be linked to “specific changes in teaching practice” (Desimone et al., 2002, p. 86). The content of the ESL methods course was more focused on pedagogical practices than theory. Pedagogy includes the profession (the art and science) of teaching, the ideologies and methods for instruction, the process and practices to teach content knowledge or skills to learners, and validating the learners’ knowledge ([www.vocabulary.com](http://www.vocabulary.com); Luke, 2010). The PD coursework focused on activities for the teachers to use with EL students and explained their connection to each SIOP component, but lacked in providing the principles, or science, behind why the strategies benefited ELs. Research explains that teachers lack knowledge of language learning and that second language development is conceptual knowledge teachers must know to support ELs at a deeper level (Lucas et al., 2008; Fillmore & Snow, 2000). While the focus turned to highlight strategies that supported the SIOP components more so than concepts of SLA or culturally responsive teaching, the instruction of SIOP supported strategies for ELs was implemented effectively within the reform PD structure.



The findings demonstrated that the PD instructors' design of the agenda items and activities were not necessarily impacted by the external factors (the state and university requirements), but rather the content valued by PD instructors from the district was implemented throughout the PD coursework and taught to the teachers. The external factors from the university to have a more rigorous curriculum and the need to meet state requirements did not interfere with the course instructors' abilities to develop courses with their preference of content. In other words, even while working with the district, state, and university demands, the instructors designed and implemented a PD course that included the instructional strategies they felt necessary for teachers to learn.

Because the instructors designed their coursework and also worked for the district, they determined what content they felt was essential to include, what activities to use to teach the content, and structured the assignments to meet their own preferences. The instructors were consistent in keeping the content they valued and structure that supported their beliefs about teacher learning. The PD included constructivist activities for teachers to learn the PD content; however, these activities were limited to learning strategies. The PD did not have an explicit focus on the language development knowledge for teaching linguistically and culturally diverse students that teachers need to know when planning appropriate opportunities for language development within the context of the classroom (Lucas et al., 2008; Snow & Fillmore, 2000). Without a strong understanding of language learning and SLA, even the most well designed reform type PD has the potential risk of not meeting expected learning outcomes. In other words, ELs will not improve academically if their teachers are unable to implement instruction and assessment that is informed by their knowledge of both content and language development needs.

## Conclusion

The findings of the study led to the following conclusions: (a) the reform PD allowed teachers to develop knowledge of strategies, but not theory for teaching ELs; (b) active learning and collective participation were supported by constructivist activities but were focused on learning classroom activities; (c) the connections the teachers made between the PD and their ELs were limited to language background needs with minimal inclusion of culturally responsive pedagogy and second language acquisition (SLA) theory in PD discussions; and (d) external factors impacted the duration and the content focus of the PD. While the reform model of PD consisted of the elements of effective PD, the components alone did not result with a deep understanding about ELs' language development or more culturally responsive teachers.

The PD content resulted with the teachers implementing strategies that aligned with SIOP components and identifying how they have and will continue to use the PD strategies from the course in their classroom instruction. The ESL methods course had the most evidence of teacher change in classroom practices based on the effective characteristics (Desimone et al., 2002; Pianta, 2011) implemented in the PD coursework by the instructors, especially the strategies introduced to support each SIOP component. While the PD was effective in the implementation of new strategies through constructivist activities, by having the PD emphasize SIOP components and strategies, the effectiveness of the PD stayed at the surface level (Shulman, 2005). Thus, teachers understood concrete examples of strategies with some exposure to the concepts shaping the researched-based strategies, but the focus remained on classroom implementation rather than theoretical understanding. Shulman (2005) would agree that the focus on strategies allowed for evidence of surface level learning, an introduction to the implicit beliefs, but deep structure was underdeveloped. Therefore, in order for effective PD to sustain a

deeper level of learning, there must be explicit opportunities to incorporate the theory with the practice. This is important due to general education teachers having insufficient background knowledge on the importance of language development for EL students (Karabenick & Noda, 2004; Nieto, 2013). Intentional PD that focused on language development can potentially create a deeper understanding for teachers.

While the PD was effective in changing teacher practices, the focus on strategies left teachers without a foundational understanding of second language development or an improved cultural awareness for teaching ELs. Findings from this study indicate that participating in a reform type of professional development can influence a teacher's understanding for teaching ELs; however, the content focus of the PD sessions, along with the coherence of the PD activities with the teachers' goals and classroom needs will determine the type of influence. Additionally, having a PD that was influenced by multiple stakeholders provided challenges with aligning the needs of all the parties involved. In the end, the district's desire for the PD to include the literacy coursework and SIOP components and the instructors' beliefs on learning shaped the PD implementation. The focus of strategies, especially those that were presented to align with the district-mandated SIOP components, became the focus of the reform type PD and had the most influence with the K-12 teachers.

With reform PD being a potential agent for change, it is crucial to include both theory and practice in PD design. Teachers' showed interest in learning more about SLA but the inquiries were often left unanswered to return to the PD's planned agendas, which halted constructivist learning opportunities. Teachers' interests need to be included in PD so that the coherence from the PD can influence not only classroom practices, but also teacher beliefs.

While a reform PD allows for effective change in the classroom, one must be cautious of how the

PD's activities are designed so that the focus is not limited to surface level strategy understanding and the potential for changing beliefs towards ELs and cultural awareness can be further developed.

### **Significance of the Study**

Outside of the work of Shestok (2013) and Colombo (2007) there is little research that examines the literature on effective PD with a focus on culturally responsive teaching of ELs. This study not only provided a literature review that expands on the literature by Gay (2002) and Ladson-Billings (1995, 2004, 2014), it also examines the characteristics of effective PD from the work of Desimone et al. (2002). The study analyzes PD through the lens of aspects critical to the academic success of ELs, namely, awareness of culture, culturally responsive pedagogy, and the role of language. Additionally, the study includes the role of constructivism within the literature of effective PD and culturally responsive teaching. The study adds to the literature on constructivist teacher education (Ammon & Kroll, 2002; Harris, 2002; Kroll & Ammon, 2002; McIntyre, 2002) and constructivist PD for teachers (Kose & Lim, 2011). This work argues that without attention to these constructs, even the most well designed PD is at risk of missing key conceptual knowledge or understandings teachers need to be successful with ELs.

### **Implications and Recommendations**

This research study's findings support my suggested recommendations in the educational field. Due to the importance of culturally responsive pedagogy and the continued increase of ELs in our nation's schools, implications have the potential to benefit ELs and influence current in-service teachers and educational policy.

**In-service teacher PD.** The study demonstrated that whatever content the PD instructors highlighted as valuable produced stronger outcomes, i.e. learning strategies effectively rather than developing conceptual understandings. When addressing the problem of EL students not achieving at the same rate as their peers, it is critical for teachers to have PD that addresses not only best practices, but also how culture plays a role in teaching and learning. The PD lacked in developing more culturally responsive teachers by not addressing the cultural views of the teachers and the cultural experiences of students. Thus, in order to promote more culturally responsive teachers in today's classrooms, PD needs to explicitly include conceptual content of culturally responsive pedagogy to nurture change for social justice and educational reform for EL students (Colombo, 2007; Kose & Lim, 2011; Howard, 2007). Constructivist supported activities resulted with implementation, however PD must focus on both conceptual and pedagogical knowledge of teacher learners.

It is important for PD instructors and districts to understand the larger conceptual connections research-based strategies have in the field so that empowering discussions can create change and reform for teachers. In this study, neither course adapted their agenda items when cultural responsive opportunities arose, which inadvertently emphasized the strategies and practice rather than conceptual theories. When designing reform type of PD explicit opportunities for teachers to reflect on their own cultural beliefs and how those beliefs may influence their classrooms should be included. Likewise, teachers should be exposed to the concepts of culturally responsive teaching in order to examine how their curriculum and lesson plans address or exclude the cultural beliefs of their students in order to create pedagogical change.

Additionally, districts cannot assume that teachers understand and relate to students, even when they may have similar cultures and language (Pelayo et al., 2012). One cannot expect PD that focuses solely on pedagogical strategies to produce culturally relevant teachers without activities that include critical self-analysis (Giroux, 2009), which was not evident in the study's coursework specifically designed for ESL pedagogy. It is recommended that PD instructors need to be aware of the impact of their PD design and to not emphasize surface level strategies more than deeper level philosophies that can result in change of beliefs systems. Rather than focusing on new pedagogical strategies for the classroom, PD needs to include a balance of theory and practice. Otherwise teachers may successfully change practices with strategies but not fully understand the concepts of why the strategies are helpful for ELs and lose the potential of having opportunities to gain intercultural competency and cultural awareness. ELs, especially newly arrived immigrants and refugee students, need teachers who understand their learning needs as they encounter U.S. school curriculum and practices.

School district personnel need to acknowledge the importance of cultural awareness and commit to shifting mindsets rather than changing classroom strategies alone. While this is no easy task, consistent and explicit PD instruction for teachers can provide an avenue for such discussions and beliefs to take place. If we desire teachers who effectively teach ELs in our classrooms, then we must have teachers who holistically understand the cultural awareness and the rich experiences ELs can bring to the classroom. Appropriate language instruction provides a step in the right direction, but merely brushes the surface of the knowledge needed to understand culturally responsive teaching for ELs. Furthermore, one must be cognizant of the PD instructors' views on including cultural awareness opportunities when focusing on pedagogy for teaching of ELs in district PD.

**Educational Policy.** Given the impact of external factors on the effectiveness of the PD coursework, one must look at educational policy changes. First, when working with multiple stakeholders, it is important to discuss each other's needs and requirements prior to designing the PD opportunities to ensure best practices for effective PD remain central to the PD implementation. The stakeholders involved need to share the same beliefs and have mutual understandings about effective PD to ensure its success with effective planning (Guskey, 2002a; Guskey, 2002b; Pianta, 2011). Second, those designing PD for educators must value the conceptual frameworks and not only pedagogical practices. Without emphasizing new conceptual knowledge in PD, teachers are given a limited and diluted overview of changes in practice rather than truly embracing a paradigm shift in their belief systems. Third, teachers need to have ownership of the PD topics and content. While the district in this study choose what they feel was needed for their teachers, teacher input should be considered in order to gain buy-in, commitment, and achieve coherence of the PD activities with teachers seeing the relevance in the PD content. Fourth, educational policy needs to stop searching for surface level change of the newest strategies, which while proven effective for student learning, lack in providing conceptual understanding for educators.

### **Next Steps for Future Research**

Future research should continue to look for successful implementation of culturally responsive teaching through PD for teachers. Such PD should include: explicit activities that allow for cultural awareness conversations (Kose & Lim, 2011; Colombo, 2007; Giroux, 2009), provide the conceptual understanding behind culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2004) and opportunities for teachers to understand the SLA process for their EL students. These suggestions must continue to encourage effective PD characteristics (duration,

collective participation, active learning, coherence, and content focus) while using a reform model rather than the traditional one-time workshop to encourage stronger outcomes (Desimone et al., 2002; Pianta, 2011; Darling-Hammond, 2008; Guskey, 2002a). Having a study that focuses on culturally responsive teaching with a similar reform model and constructivist opportunities would be valuable to discover how teacher outcomes may or may not have aligned with the current study. While teachers were given open response post survey questions about their learning, it would be interesting to interview a selection of teachers on their own view of culturally responsive teaching, if they consider cultural beliefs in their lesson planning, and if they feel their practices support their perception of the concept. There are challenges for assessing culturally responsiveness, or cultural awareness, however some tools are available, such as the Implicit Association Test (Project Implicit, 2011). Additionally, further researching the viewpoints of those teachers who consider themselves multilingual or multi-dialectal in comparison to those who do not may lead to contributions in the field.

In addition to further research on the study's topic, it would be valuable to include student learning outcomes for future PD of ELs. Designing a longitudinal experimental study that can demonstrate how student learning can be improved if teachers have conceptual understandings of the implications for language and culture in teaching ELs would benefit the research field. Because the PD resulted with a focus on pedagogical practices rather than conceptual theories, it is necessary to create research opportunities on explicit culturally responsive and intercultural competency focused PD for teachers of ELs. Research endeavors should include underrepresented populations of ELs similar to those from this study who were primarily Arabic-speaking students from the Middle East, as well as refugees with interrupted schooling. Within this needed research, student views of their teachers' cultural awareness and



perspectives on if teachers are including culturally responsive activities into the curriculum would be valuable to the current research literature.

In regard to effective PD in general, studies examining PD should continue to include constructivist learning opportunities with teacher reflections and peer collaboration (e.g. peers soliciting help from others, peers providing coaching to each other with suggestions when lesson planning, forming a PLC among peers, peer lesson planning and peer presenting of PD learning) as avenues of research exploration. The constructivist approach to learning, including teacher learning, can be explored in isolation as well. For example, examining districts that utilize a reform type PD design and those who continue to use one-time workshops but include constructivist opportunities.

### **Limitations**

The limitations of this study include, but may not be limited to, the selection of participants, time frame for collecting data, and the content focus of the PD. The study represented the new hires who volunteered in the district to earn their required six credit hours of ESL instruction through the state-funded grant. Having a more representative population of teachers from the district may have changed the study's outcomes. Student outcomes were not included in this study; it would be beneficial to know if student assessment outcomes for learning changed with the implementation of the SIOP or reading strategies from the PD courses. The study was not an experimental design that included a control and experimental group of participants, nor was the researcher one of the PD instructors. Furthermore, a similar PD with a different survey tool that included direct questions about cultural awareness would be valuable to examine as the change in teachers' results were not significant using the survey tool of this study.

### **Final Reflection**

Reflecting back to the problem that initiated this research study, it is valuable to connect the study's findings to the current situation in schools. School districts continue to spend time and money implementing PD, but it is often not effective with classroom change (Darling-Hammond, 2008; Pianta, 2011). With the findings in this study that utilized a PD reform model resulting with change in classroom practices, it is important to use the findings as a guide for the future when considering what PD to provide to teachers about their EL students. As research continues to show the increase in ELs in schools (Kena, et al., 2016; National Center for Statistics, 2014; Nieto, 2013) and teachers unprepared to teach these students (Ballantyne et al., 2008; Nieto, 2009, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 2004; Gay, 2002, Banks, 1989; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Ladson-Billings & Tate IV, 2009; Durden, 2008), the findings show a need to provide reform PD to create conceptual change in teacher beliefs towards EL students. Additionally with the current situation of many states without a requirement to include ESL coursework in teacher preparation (Samson & Collins, 2012), it is necessary to continue to strive for teaching preservice and in-service teachers about the ELs they will encounter in their classrooms. Such PD should include both theoretical and pedagogical concepts to increase teacher awareness of best practices for ELs while also fostering culturally responsive teaching.

The study provided research in a district with a high population of ELs, most of which came from Middle Eastern cultural backgrounds and adds to the literature as most studies continue to include Spanish-speaking ELs or culturally responsive teaching for other minorities. While effective teaching strategies were implemented due to the reform type of PD, there were still areas of concern that did not show change for teachers of ELs. The findings from this study will continue to shape my future research and guide the implementation of PD for the teachers in my own school district moving forward to improve teacher pedagogical knowledge for not only

teaching ELs, but their conceptual understanding of SLA and valuing the individual cultural backgrounds and experiences their EL students bring to the classroom.

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## Appendix A

### Consent to Participate in a Research Study

#### Improving Teacher Quality: Academic Competence and Language Proficiency for ALL

Dear Teacher:

You are invited to participate in a study that investigates your development of understandings about building academic literacy and language for English language learners. You have been asked to participate because you are part of a professional development project that has been designed to prepare you with the conceptual framework and strategies for effective instruction in academic language and literacy for English language learners.

Data to be collected will include: Structured Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) lesson plans, reading lesson plans, reading assessment reports, reflection logs; assessment data: student oral language expression and reading fluency/comprehension; and classroom observation data. Once all identifiers are removed and coded, data will be scanned and electronically uploaded to a secure website, to which only the project team will have access. All original documents will be returned to you.

[Names omitted for anonymity], and a graduate research assistant will work with your course instructors and [Name omitted for anonymity], to collect the data. There is no foreseeable risk to your participation in this study. All data will be assigned codes/pseudonyms so as to assure your and your students' anonymity. At any time in the study, you may refuse to participate and/or discontinue your involvement. Your non-participation will have no effect on your participation in the courses.

If you have questions about this research study, please contact

[Name omitted for anonymity],

[The University's] Institutional Review Board has determined that this study is exempt from IRB oversight. *I confirm that I am 18 years old or older and agree to participate in the study.*

---

Signature [optional]

---

Date

## Appendix B

### Consent to be Interviewed

#### The Use of Professional Development to Promote Culturally Responsive Teaching

You have been invited to participate in a research study that will be looking at teachers' learning about working with English Learners while attending the [names omitted for anonymity] collaboration professional development series during the 2015-2016 school year.

If you agree to be part of the research study, you will be asked to complete a survey and a short interview. The Interviews will not interfere with workshop, instructional, or planning time. Interviews will take place at a convenient time and place chosen by you as the participant. The potential benefits may include, but are not limited to, understanding about the needs of English learners (ELs) and teacher preparation regarding ELs. If you choose to be interviewed, then you may also be asked about your opinions for some of the observations seen in this study in regard to professional development and instruction.

There are no foreseeable risks involved with this case study. All data will be coded for anonymity. At any time in the study, you may refuse to participate, discontinue your involvement. The data will be stored electronically on a password-protected Cloud software throughout the duration of the study. Individual identification is not required and no data will be directly linked to any one individual. You are encouraged to ask me questions about the research project at any time.

Participating in this study is completely voluntary. Even if you decide to participate now, you may change your mind and stop at any time.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this case study, please feel free to contact:  
[omitted for anonymity]

If you agree to participate in this study, please sign your name in the space provided below; you will be given a copy of this consent form. If you would like to know about the findings of this study, please email me at [omitted for anonymity]. Thank you for your participation.

*I confirm that I am 18 years old or older and agree to participate in the study.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature for Audio-Recording

## Appendix C

### Reading Course

**Course Description:** This course covers current theory and research-based pedagogy for reading instruction and assessment for teaching all learners. This course takes a team approach wherein teachers will collaborate with instructional coaches/resource teachers and/or administrators in their grade level groups. Sessions will be interactive with opportunities for hands-on practice and application in areas of assessment, strategy-instruction and whole group/small group instruction.

The course is specifically designed to provide teachers with the knowledge and skills to effectively teach literacy to all learners, including those who are non-native speakers of English.

**Program Goals:** The goals for all programs at the [University] can be found on the HUB for Teaching and Learning webpage.

**Course Objectives:** At the end of the course students will be able to

- Demonstrate an understanding of the current theories and research on reading instruction and assessment;
- Work collaboratively in grade level teams for lesson/unit planning;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the role of assessment in teaching reading;
- Implement lessons that employ strategies effective for all learners;
- Identify materials for differentiated reading instruction;
- Demonstrate and understanding the challenges for English language learners in acquiring literacy in English; and,
- Demonstrate and understanding of how to adapt instruction and assessment for English language learners.

**Materials:**

Gersten, R., Baker, S.K., Shanahan, T., Linan-Thompson, S., Collins, P., & Scarcella, R. (2007). *Effective literacy and English language instruction for English learners in the elementary grades: A practice guide* (NCEE 2007-4011). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee>.

Boushey, G., & Moser, J. (2006). *The daily 5: Fostering literacy independence in the elementary grades*. Stenhouse Publishers.

Moats, L. (2004). *LETRS, Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling*. Sopris West Educational Services.

National Reading Panel (US), National Institute of Child Health, & Human Development (US). (2000). *Report of the national reading panel: Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction: Reports of the subgroups*. National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, National Institutes of Health.

Stanovich, P. J., & Stanovich, K. E. (2003). *Using Research and Reason in Education: How Teachers Can Use Scientifically Based Research To Make Curricular & Instructional Decisions*.

Snow, C. (2002). *Reading for understanding: Toward an R&D program in reading comprehension*. Rand Corporation.

Vaughn, S., & Ortiz, A. (2008). *Response to intervention in reading for English language learners*. Washington, DC: *RtI Action Network*. Retrieved September 29, 2008.

Additional Course Readings Course PowerPoint Slides on course website

Other Resource Material (e.g., Curriculum Standards)

**Professional Website Resources:** (SBE Professional Learning Outcomes 7A-C)

<http://www.ciera.org/library/reports/index.html> Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement <http://www.ncte.org/> National Council for Teachers of English

<http://www.reading.org/> International Reading Association

<http://www.michiganreading.org/> Michigan Reading Association

<http://www.nrconline.org/> National Reading Conference

<http://www.fcrr.org/> Florida Center for Reading Research

<http://reading.uoregon.edu/> Institute for the Development of Educational Achievement, University of Oregon

<http://www.ed.gov/index.jhtml> U.S. Department of Education

<http://www.michigan.gov/mde> Michigan Department of Education

### **Assignments:**

**Participation (30%):** You are expected to attend all classes and participate in all class activities. There will be no exceptions. If an absence is unavoidable, it is your responsibility to notify the instructor ASAP (email or phone) and to get handouts, notes, and assignments from another member of the class.

**Assessment Documentation (20%):** You will be expected to provide documentation of having administered and analyzed a reading assessment with recommendations for instruction (e.g., Running Records).

**Strategies/Activities Binder (30%):** You will be expected to compile a binder (virtual and/or print) of grade level strategies/activities for teaching key reading components for your grade level that is differentiated for ranges in students' reading levels. This binder should also include strategies and activities developed to support your English language learners' language and literacy development.

**Assessment Report (20%):** You will identify two students in your classroom as your focus students. One student should be a below-grade level reader and the other an English language learner. This report should include documentation of all of the assessments carried out, instructional strategies used with each student, and recommendations for future assessment and/or instruction. Be sure to include in your final report other information available that has relevance to your instructional plans for each student (e.g., student's schooling history (if known), any specialized instruction (e.g., Title I, Bilingual/ESL), retention, absences, instructional materials used).

### **Grading Scale:**

100-94 A

89-87 B+

93-90 A-

86-84 B

83-80 B-

### **Course Outline:**

**Workshop One:** Research on Reading Practices, Common Core State Standards, ELD Standards, WIDA English Proficiency Levels, Phonemic Awareness, Reading Frameworks: Daily 5/CAFÉ, Reading Apprenticeship ([State] NS Standards: 1.2, 3.5, 5.2, 5.8; [State] BT Standards: 3.4.4, 3.4.5, 5.2, 5.5, 5.8; SBE Professional Learning Outcomes: 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, 3A-D, 4A-B, 5A-B, 6A-B)

### *Content Objectives:*

1. *Participants will understand phonemic awareness as distinguished from phonics.*
2. *Participants will understand the principles of brain-based learning in assessment and instruction of phonemic awareness strategies and activities*
3. *Participants will apply their understandings within the Common Core State Standards and their reading instructional framework (Daily 5/CAFÉ or Reading Apprenticeship)*

4. *Participants will understand the linguistic challenges for ELLs when learning English (e.g., phonemic awareness)*
5. *Participants will understand the WIDA language levels of their ELLs in order to plan for instruction that addresses individual student needs Language Objective*
6. *Participants will discuss and model the teaching of phonemic awareness strategies and activities*
7. *Participants will discuss and model strategies for addressing phonemic awareness with ELLs.*
8. *Participants will write reflections of literacy theory and practice. **Workshop Two:** Assessment, Phonics, Instructional Strategies/Activities ([State] NS Standards: 1.2, 3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 5.2, 5.8; [State] BT Standards: 3.4.4, 4.2.1-3, 4.2.5; SBE Professional Learning Outcomes: 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, 3A-D, 4A-B, 5A-B, 6A-B)*

*Content Objectives:*

1. *Participants will understand the principles of brain-based learning in assessment and instruction of phonics strategies and activities.*
2. *Participants will analyze their assessment data to develop differentiated instruction for their students.*
3. *Participants will apply their understandings within the Common Core State Standards and their reading instructional framework (Daily 5/CAFÉ or Reading Apprenticeship)*
4. *Participants will understand the linguistic challenges for ELLs when learning English (e.g., phonics) Language Objective:*
5. *Participants will discuss and model the teaching of phonics strategies and activities.*
6. *Participants will discuss and model strategies for addressing phonics with ELLs.*
7. *Participants will orally formulate an action plan for the identification and assessment of students.*
8. *Participants will write reflections of literacy theory and practice. **Workshop Three:** Assessment, Fluency, Running Records, Observation Protocol, Elements of Effective Lessons [State] NS Standards: 1.2, 3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 5.8; [State] BT Standards: 4.2.1-3, 4.2.5, 4.2.2.3; SBE Professional Learning Outcomes: 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, 3A-D, 4A-B, 5A-B, 6A-B) Content Objective:*
9. *Participants will understand the principles of brain-based learning in assessment and instruction of fluency strategies and activities.*

10. *Participants will analyze their assessment data to develop differentiated instruction for their students.*
11. *Participants will apply their understandings within the Common Core State Standards and their reading instructional framework (Daily 5/CAFÉ or Reading Apprenticeship)*
12. *Participants will understand the linguistic challenges for ELLs when learning English (e.g., reading connected text for fluency)*
13. *Participants will adapt their instructional strategies for teaching fluency to ELLs.*
14. *Participants will apply their knowledge of student WIDA levels for assessment and instruction. Language Objective:*
15. *Participants will discuss and model the teaching of fluency activities and strategies.*
16. *Participants will discuss and model the teaching of fluency for ELLs.*
17. *Participants will orally formulate an action plan for the identification and assessment of students.*
18. *Participants will write reflections of literacy theory and practice, including the elements of effective lesson planning. **Workshop Four:** Assessment, Vocabulary, Using Data to Plan Small Group Instruction [State] NS Standards: 3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 5.8; [State] BT Standards: 3.4.6, 4.1.2.3, 4.1.2, 4.2.2.3; SBE Professional Learning Outcomes: 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, 3A-D, 4A-B, 5A-B, 6A-B) Content Objectives:*
19. *Participants will understand the principles of brain-based learning in assessment and instruction of vocabulary strategies and activities.*
20. *Participants will analyze their assessment data to develop differentiated instruction for their students.*
21. *Participants will apply their understandings within the Common Core State Standards and their reading instructional framework (Daily 5/CAFÉ or Reading Apprenticeship)*
22. *Participants will understand the challenges for ELLs English vocabulary development*
23. *Participants will learn strategies for supporting ELLs in their English vocabulary development.*

*Language Objectives:*

1. *Participants will discuss and model the teaching of vocabulary activities and strategies.*

2. *Participants will discuss and model strategies for teaching vocabulary to ELLs.*
3. *Participants will orally formulate an action plan for the identification and assessment of students.*
4. *Participants will write reflections of literacy theory and practice, including using data to design small group instruction. **Workshop Five:** Classroom Observations (visit same grade level teacher in a school/observe literacy instruction as a team), Assessment, Comprehension, Instructional Strategies/Activities [State] NS Standards: 3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 3.8, 5.5, 5.8; [State] BT Standards: ; SBE Professional Learning Outcomes: 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, 3A-D, 4A-B, 5A-B, 6A-B) *Content Observations:**
5. *Participants will understand the principles of brain-based learning in assessment and instruction of comprehension strategies and activities with narrative texts*
6. *Participants will apply their understandings within the Common Core State Standards and their reading instructional framework (Daily 5/CAFÉ or Reading Apprenticeship)*
7. *Participants will apply their understandings of the ELD standards and student WIDA Levels for aligning lessons for their ELLs. Language Objectives*
8. *Participants will discuss and model the teaching of comprehension and comprehension activities and strategies.*
9. *Participants will discuss and model teaching comprehension strategies for ELLs.*
10. *Participants will record strategies used in the model classroom.*
11. *Participants will discuss the instructional decisions made by the model teacher during their observation.*
12. *Participants will write reflections of literacy theory and practice. **Workshop Six:** Putting It All Together, [District] Curriculum, Effective Lesson Planning, Writing [State] NS Standards: 3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 4.5-6; [State] BT Standards: 3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 3.6; SBE Professional Learning Outcomes: 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, 3A-D, 4A-B, 5A-B, 6A-B)*

*Content Observations:*

- *Participants will understand the principles of brain-based learning in assessment and instruction of comprehension strategies and activities with informational texts.*
- *Participants will apply their understandings within the Common Core State Standards and their reading instructional framework (Daily 5/CAFÉ or Reading Apprenticeship).*
- *Participants will apply their understandings of how to address the language and literacy needs of their ELLs so as to provide instruction that promotes learning. Language Objectives:*
- *Participants will discuss elements of effective reading instruction within the framework of*



*literacy instruction. Participants will discuss elements of effective reading instruction for their ELLs.*

- *Participants will discuss how to organize their classrooms for differentiating instruction.*
- *Participants will write plan of action for literacy instruction in their classrooms that includes differentiation for their ELLs. [State] STANDARDS: [State] SBE NS Standards that this course covers include:*

**1.2 Standard:** Knowledge of the linguistic elements (such as phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, and discourse) to develop literacy skills of English.

**3.2 Standard:** An ability to use language acquisition knowledge to create a supportive classroom- learning environment that includes opportunities for interaction in English.

**3.3 Standard:** A variety of instructional practices that produce language outcomes through articulated program models that address the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse learners.

**3.5 Standard:** Knowledge of individual learner variables (e.g., linguistic, cognitive, affective, social) in the second language acquisition process.

**3.6 Standard:** Knowledge and use of a variety of strategies to promote full participation of limited English proficient students in classrooms.

**3.8 Standard:** A high level of competency in teaching limited English proficient students to acquire and use English in listening, speaking, reading and writing for social and academic purposes.

**4.5 Standard:** An ability to manage and implement standards-based content instruction to support limited-English proficient students in accessing the core curriculum as they learn language and academic content.

**4.6 Standard:** A high level of competency in teaching limited-English proficient students to acquire and use English in listening, speaking, reading, and writing for academic and social purposes

**5.2 Standard:** Reflective assessment practices including: analysis of assessment results, adjustment of instruction based on assessment results, and use of success and failure to determine the direction of instruction.

**5.5 Standard:** Knowledge and use of various standards-based language proficiency instruments to inform instruction and the value of data for identification, placement, and demonstration of language proficiency and academic achievement of limited-English proficient students.

**5.8 Standard:** Knowledge and use of a variety of performance-based assessment tools and techniques to inform instruction.

**[State] SBE BT Standards** that this course covers include: Teachers will be able to

**3.4.4. Standard:** “explain that readers need to have and use a variety of word identification approaches and strategies involving phonemic awareness, phonics, sight words, spelling, structural analysis, context clues, and prior knowledge.”

**3.4.5 Standard:** “articulate the relationships among print-sound code, word identification, fluency, and comprehension; and describe characteristics of fluent readers.”

**3.4.6 Standard:** “list and describe a variety of strategies for learning vocabulary for various types of text materials.”

**4.2.1.1 Standard:** “apply current principles of assessment and evaluation that include: using assessment practices based on learning theories and research in literacy.”

**4.2.1.2 Standard:** employ assessment practices that are aligned with literacy goals, curriculum, and instruction.

**4.2.1.3 Standard:** use a variety of classroom assessment techniques in planning for and supporting instruction, such as performance assessment, portfolios, rubrics, checklists, anecdotal records, and projects.

**4.2.1.5 Standard:** select, create, and correctly interpreting results of developmentally appropriate tools and various measurements used for assessment and evaluation.

**4.2.2.3 Standard:** evaluate “students’ ability to use the print-sound code to decode and recognize words; to read with accuracy and fluency; to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words and concepts; to construct meaning from a variety of texts; and to use monitoring and fix-up strategies to overcome difficulties when constructing and conveying meaning across a wide range of situations as appropriate for different developmental levels.”

[State] SBE Professional Learning Standards that this course covers include:

**INDICATOR 1:** Build upon learning goals and objectives developed throughout the educator’s career and aligned to the educator certification process;

**Outcome: 1.A.** Develop an individual development plan aligned with student needs and improvement plans. **Outcome: 1.B.** Support and engage in professional learning consistent with research and best practice.

**INDICATOR 2:** Align with [State’s] Standards for Professional Learning, rigorous student content standards, and educator performance standards and with local school improvement plans to improve job performance and student growth and proficiency;

**Outcome 2.A.** Align improvement plans with student content standards and adult performance standards in order to improve job performance and student proficiency and growth. **Outcome 2.B.** Align professional learning with standards for adult learning in order to improve job performance and student proficiency and growth.

**INDICATOR 3:** Engage personnel in a process of continuous improvement, in which evidence

and data are used to assess needs, define learning goals, design learning opportunities, and evaluate the effectiveness of professional learning on job performance and student growth and proficiency.

**Outcome 3.A.** Utilize multiple types of evidence and data for decision-making. **Outcome 3.B.** Design and provide professional learning consistent with data analysis. **Outcome 3.C.** Evaluate and reflect on the effectiveness of professional learning on job performance and student proficiency and growth **Outcome 3.D.** Support the continuous improvement process.

**INDICATOR 4:** Facilitate sustained, collaborative, job-embedded professional learning, including opportunities to participate in communities of practice.

**Outcome 4.A.** Create the conditions to support ongoing, collaborative, job-embedded professional learning for continuous improvement. **Outcome 4.B.** Engage in job-embedded professional learning in order to establish collective responsibility for job performance and student proficiency and growth.

**INDICATOR 5:** Provide continuous learning to support and sustain the transfer of new knowledge and skills to the work place.

**Outcome 5A:** Engage in and provide opportunities for follow-up, feedback, and reflection to support transfer of knowledge and skills into practice as part of ongoing professional learning.

**Outcome 5B:** Share knowledge, skills, and resources acquired from professional learning in order to improve and sustain job performance and student proficiency and growth.

**INDICATOR 6:** Provide increased opportunities among stakeholder organizations for collaboration and collective support for the learning of children, youth, and adults.

**Outcome 6.A.** Collaborate regularly with education stakeholders and organizations to support professional learning to improve job performance and student proficiency and growth. **Outcome 6.B.** Establish collective responsibility for leadership in support of professional learning to improve job performance and student proficiency and growth.

**INDICATOR 7:** Utilize and leverage the necessary resources for continuous professional learning, ensuring that local, state, and federal funds are aligned and in compliance with professional learning policy.

**Outcome 7.A.** Support the use of resources to maintain continuous professional learning. **Outcome 7.B.** Collaborate with stakeholders to identify and provide resources. **Outcome 7.C.** Align and use local, state and federal resources to support continuous professional learning.

## **English as a Second Language (ESL) Teaching: K-12**

**Course Description:** This course examines current methodologies and theories for English as a second language learning and instruction. Emphasis will be placed on a standards-based curriculum for English language learners. The use of communicative activities and strategies for developing English language skills in the elementary grades will be emphasized. Official admission to and good standing in a teacher certification program are required.

### **Required text:**

Echevarria, J., Short, D., & Vogt, M. (2014). *Making Content Comprehensible for English Learners, The SIOP Model—4<sup>th</sup> Edition*. Boston: Pearson Education, Inc.

### **Recommended:**

Seidlitz, J & Perryman, Bill (2013). *7 Steps to a Language-Rich Interactive Classroom—Research-Based Strategies for Engaging All Students*. Seidlitz Education

### **Materials on CANVAS:**

Additional Course Readings  
 Course PowerPoint Slides  
 CCSS K-12 Standards: English Language Arts  
 ELD WIDA Standards

### **Professional Website Resources:** (SBE Professional Learning Outcomes 7A-C)

[www.tesol.org](http://www.tesol.org) (TESOL, Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages)  
[www.ncte.org](http://www.ncte.org) (NTCE, National Council of Teachers of English)  
<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/index.html> (OELA, Office of English Language Acquisition, U.S. Department of Education)  
[www.nabe.org](http://www.nabe.org) (NABE, National Association for Bilingual Education)  
<http://www.cal.org/resources/publications.html> (Center for Applied Linguistics)  
<http://www.siopinstitute.net/> (SIOP<sup>®</sup> Institute)

### **Class Policies and Professional Learning:**

The course will be taught in a learning community workshop format, meaning that each session will be in the form of active participation, including hands-on practice and discussions centered on the 8 components of SIOP, and the 7 Steps to a Language Rich Interactive Classroom. This course embodies the Principles of Universal Design for Learning, where students have the collective responsibility to participate actively in strategy practice with partners and engage in active discussions with table teams. Students must come to each workshop session prepared to thoughtfully present ideas, reactions, comments, etc. about each topic. By defining learning goals and objectives in light of the language and academic needs of English Learners, teachers in this course will experience a community of practice and be equipped to transfer their new knowledge and skills to their own classroom.

**Class Procedures and Activities:**

Since this class is designated a series of workshops, it maximizes discussion and active participation, including:

- analysis, synthesis, and discussion of key concepts
- identification, discussion and application of SIOP to participants' classrooms
- hands-on practice with strategies presented—SIOP modeled and practiced

**Required Assignments:** (Evidence of Professional Learning Indicators and Outcomes)

- Actively participate in workshop series (90 points)
- Write student friendly content and language objectives (4 points)
- Simplified Text using SIOP guidelines and Lexile Analyzer (6 points)
- 8 SIOP logs or assignment—one for each SIOP component (80 points)
- Student Work submission—evidence of a SIOP strategy in practice (10 points)
- SIOP lesson plan using template provided (10 points)
- Presentation of a SIOP strategy live or a video of classroom application (10 points)
- SIOP reflection paper using template provided—3-5 pages (10 points)

**Grading System** [rubric for final grades, e.g. points, etc.]: Grading of this course will consider the following: Active Participation in workshop sessions (10 points for each session)

- A = 220 points
- A- = 215 points
- B+ =210 points
- B =205 points
- B- =200 points
- C+ =195 points
- C =190 points
- F = not actively participating

**The course meets the following Standards for the Preparation of Teachers of English as a Second Language (NS)** NS Standard indicated by # in each workshop:

- 2.5 Integration of knowledge of other disciplines into English Language Instruction.
- 3.2 An ability to use language acquisition knowledge to create a supportive classroom-learning environment that includes opportunities for interaction in English.
- 3.3 A variety of instructional practices that produce language outcomes through articulated program models that address the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse learners.

- 3.4 Knowledge and use of second language acquisition theories and research in classroom organization, developing teaching strategies, and choosing and adapting classroom instructional resources.
- 3.5 Knowledge of individual learner variables (e.g., linguistic, cognitive, affective, social) in the second language acquisition process.
- 3.6 Knowledge and use of a variety of strategies to promote full participation of limited-English proficient students in classrooms.
- 3.7 Knowledge and use of a wide range of materials, resources, and technologies in effective content teaching for limited-English proficient students.
- 3.8 A high level of competency in teaching limited-English proficient students to acquire and use English in listening, speaking, reading, and writing for social and academic purposes.
- 4.1 An understanding of the standards and benchmarks of the *[State's] English Language Proficiency Standards*, (WIDA Standards adopted in 2012), *[State's] Curriculum Framework*, (Common Core State Standards adopted in 2010), and *ESL Standards for Pre-K-12 Students* in curricular planning.
- 4.2 Ability to integrate ESL Standards for PreK-12 Students, [State] Curriculum Framework (now CCSS), and [State] English Language Proficiency Standards (now WIDA Standards) into instruction with appropriate strategies and techniques that support students in accessing the core curriculum as they learn both language and academic content.
- 4.3 Ability to use standards and benchmarks to evaluate, select, design, and adapt instructional resources by connecting curriculum to students' experiences and skills of home and community.
- 4.4 An understanding and use of strategies that promote student competence in using critical thinking skills in concert with learning English.
- 4.5 An ability to manage and implement standards-based content instruction to support limited-English proficient students in accessing the core curriculum as they learn language and academic content.
- 4.6 A high level of competency in teaching limited-English proficient students to acquire and use English in listening, speaking, reading, and writing for academic and social purposes.
- 4.7 Knowledge, understanding, and use of standards-based practices and strategies related to planning, implementing, and managing content instruction for limited-English proficient students.
- 5.8 Knowledge and use of a variety of performance-based assessment tools and techniques to inform instruction.
- 6.1 Linguistic and cultural competence through reflective practices.

**The Course also meets the [State] SBE Professional Learning Indicators and Outcomes.** Specific Indicators are addressed in each workshop.

**INDICATOR 1:** Build upon learning goals and objectives developed throughout the educator's career and aligned to the educator certification process;

**Outcome: 1.A.** Develop an individual development plan aligned with student needs and improvement plans.

**Outcome: 1.B.** Support and engage in professional learning consistent with research and best practice.

**Outcome: 1.C.** Maintain certification through continuous professional learning.

**INDICATOR 2:** Align with [State’s] Standards for Professional Learning, rigorous student content standards, and educator performance standards and with local school improvement plans to improve job performance and student growth and proficiency;

**Outcome 2.A.** Align improvement plans with student content standards and adult performance standards in order to improve job performance and student proficiency and growth.

**Outcome 2.B.** Align professional learning with standards for adult learning in order to improve job performance and student proficiency and growth.

**INDICATOR 3:** Engage personnel in a process of continuous improvement, in which evidence and data are used to assess needs, define learning goals, design learning opportunities, and evaluate the effectiveness of professional learning on job performance and student growth and proficiency.

**Outcome 3.A.** Utilize multiple types of evidence and data for decision-making.

**Outcome 3.B.** Design and provide professional learning consistent with data analysis.

**Outcome 3.C.** Evaluate and reflect on the effectiveness of professional learning on job performance and student proficiency and growth

**Outcome 3.D.** Support the continuous improvement process.

**INDICATOR 4:** Facilitate sustained, collaborative, job-embedded professional learning, including opportunities to participate in communities of practice.

**Outcome 4.A.** Create the conditions to support ongoing, collaborative, job-embedded professional learning for continuous improvement.

**Outcome 4.B.** Engage in job-embedded professional learning in order to establish collective responsibility for job performance and student proficiency and growth.

**INDICATOR 5:** Provide continuous learning to support and sustain the transfer of new knowledge and skills to the work place.

**Outcome 5A:** Engage in and provide opportunities for follow-up, feedback, and reflection to support transfer of knowledge and skills into practice as part of ongoing professional learning.

**Outcome 5B:** Share knowledge, skills, and resources acquired from professional learning in order to improve and sustain job performance and student proficiency and growth.

**INDICATOR 6:** Provide increased opportunities among stakeholder organizations for collaboration and collective support for the learning of children, youth, and adults.

**Outcome 6.A.** Collaborate regularly with education stakeholders and organizations to support professional learning to improve job performance and student proficiency and growth.

**Outcome 6.B.** Establish collective responsibility for leadership in support of professional learning to improve job performance and student proficiency and growth.

**INDICATOR 7:** Utilize and leverage the necessary resources for continuous professional learning, ensuring that local, state, and federal funds are aligned and in compliance with professional learning policy.

**Outcome 7.A.** Support the use of resources to maintain continuous professional learning.

**Outcome 7.B.** Collaborate with stakeholders to identify and provide resources.

**Outcome 7.C.** Align and use local, state and federal resources to support continuous professional learning.

### **Course Objectives and Schedule:**

#### **Workshop 1 –Overview, Second Language Acquisition Theory, SIOP Component: Lesson Preparation**

#### **Content Objectives:**

- Students will demonstrate comprehension of second language acquisition by explaining current methodologies and theories on a graphic organizer.
- Students will demonstrate evaluation the 8 Components of SIOP by defending one component orally and in writing.
- Students will demonstrate application of SIOP Lesson Preparation and Steps 1 through 4 of a Language Rich Interactive Classroom by practicing each with partners or small groups.
- Students will demonstrate comprehension of WIDA proficiency levels by interpreting students' WIDA or W-APT scores and connecting linguistic accommodations to Can Do descriptors at each proficiency level.

#### **Language Objectives:**

- Students will orally justify a position using sentence stems.
- Students will orally answer questions and retell information about steps 1-4 of a Language-Rich Interactive Classroom using complete sentences.
- Students will orally plan for WIDA proficiency levels in their classroom using the stem: "One accommodation that I will try is..." "This will work for students at the \_\_\_\_\_ proficiency level."
- Students will write to adapt text using a Simplified Text Approach.

<b>Workshop #1</b>	<b>Saturday, January 9, 2016 8:15-1:45</b>
Professional Learning Indicator: Outcome 1.B—Support and engage in professional learning consistent with research and best practice. -- SIOP Research for ELs and 7 Steps for a Language-Rich Interactive Classroom reviewed and analyzed Outcome 3.B—Design and provide professional learning consistent with data analysis. – SIOP self assessment given	
<b>NS Standards</b>	<b>Workshop Structures and Tasks</b>
2.5	<b>Second Language Acquisition—an overview</b>
3.4	<b>The SIOP Model</b>



3.7 4.1 4.2 4.3 4.5	<p>Introductions; go over syllabus; discuss requirements</p> <p>Most Important Word strategy—SIOP Model of Lesson Planning and Delivery</p> <p>SIOP components—highest impact on student achievement and language proficiency</p> <p>Background on Second Language Acquisition</p> <p>Factors that affect Second Language Acquisition</p> <p>BICS and CALP</p>
3.2 3.3 3.4 3.5 3.7 4.1	<p><b>7 Steps to Creating a Language-Rich Interactive Classroom</b></p> <p><b>TIPS--Principles of a Language-Rich Interactive Classroom</b></p> <p>Total Participation, Incorporate Academic Vocabulary, Promote Literacy and Language Development, and Scaffolding for all Language Levels</p> <p>Connections between SIOP and TIPS</p>
3.3 3.7 4.5 3.4 3.7	<p><b>Comprehensible Output—Steps to a Language Rich Interactive Classroom</b></p> <p>Step 1: Teach students strategies and language to use when they don't know what to do.</p> <p>Step 2: Speak in complete sentences.</p> <p>Step 3: Randomize and rotate when calling on students.</p> <p>Step 4: Use total response signals to check for understanding.</p> <p>Demonstrating understanding by moving—Agree/Disagree about the Myths and Misconceptions about Second Language Learning</p>
3.2 3.5 4.1 4.2	<p><b>WIDA Standards, Can Do Descriptors and Linguistic Accommodations</b></p> <p>Review WIDA Standards; analyze WIDA ACCESS Teacher Report; Plot students on Can Do Name Charts; Select appropriate Linguistic Accommodations</p>
3.7 4.3	<p><b>SIOP Component—Lesson Preparation: Adapting Content for all levels of proficiency</b></p> <p>--Simplify text selection with a grade level partner, using guidelines and Lexile Analyzer</p>
Assignment:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. List all students under appropriate “Can Do” Name Charts</li> <li>2. List at least one Linguistic Accommodation you will try for each language proficiency level</li> <li>3. Read SIOP Chapter—Lesson Preparation—highlight one page you want to discuss at next workshop</li> </ol>

## Workshop 2—SIOP Component: Building Background

### Content Objectives:

- Students will demonstrate application of SIOP Component Building Background by participating in a variety of word work tasks with partners or small groups.
- Students will demonstrate Evaluation of Building Background in a SIOP lesson by determining the SIOP features present and missing.

**Language Objectives:**

- Students will orally reflect on the relevance of the various Building Background tasks using the stem: “I can definitely use this in (content area) because ....”.
- Students will take notes on SIOP Video and discuss ways teacher linked concepts to students’ background and past learning.

<b>Workshop #2</b>	<b>Saturday, January 16, 2016 8:15-1:45</b>
<u>Professional Learning Indicator: Outcome 2.B</u> —Align professional learning with standards for adult learning in order to improve job performance and student proficiency and growth. –How to specifically and consistently accelerate students’ academic language and vocabulary will be the focus.	
<b>NS Standards</b>	<b>Workshop Structures and Tasks</b>
3.4	<b>Review SIOP Components and Steps 1-4</b> of a Language Rich Interactive Classroom A-B Pyramid Review format
3.5 4.3 6.1	<b>Building Background—Component 2 of SIOP</b> --Academic Language and access to prior knowledge techniques Concepts explicitly linked to students’ background Links explicitly between past learning and new concepts Video Lesson Critique —Building Background
3.4 4.5	<b>Building Background and Incorporating Academic Vocabulary</b> revisited Review TIPS—focus on Promoting Language and Literacy
	<b>Key vocabulary emphasized—</b> ABC Brainstorming and Word Sorts
Assignment:	1. Submit log of classroom application—one Building Background task 2. Read SIOP Chapter—Building Background—highlight one teaching strategy you want to discuss at next workshop

**Workshop 3—SIOP Component: Comprehensible Input****SIOP Component: Lesson Preparation—Content and Language Objectives****Step 5: Set Clear Content and Language Objectives****Content Objectives:**

- Students will demonstrate Analysis of the features of Comprehensible Input by comparing two different SIOP lessons.
- Students will demonstrate comprehension of measurable objectives by comparing and contrasting content and language objectives and identifying the features of a measurable objective.

**Language Objectives:**

- Students will read to identify the features of Comprehensible Input in two scenarios and respond orally using the frame: “One effective technique the teacher used was...” .
- Students will discuss the features of measurable objectives using the frame: “The features of this objective are...”.

<b>Workshop #3</b>	<b>Saturday, January 30, 2016 8:15-1:45</b>
<u>Professional Learning Indicator: Outcome 3.C</u> —Evaluate and reflect on the effectiveness of professional learning on job performance and student proficiency and growth –Teachers will review SIOP Components in an active manner, write measurable content and language objectives and evaluate their success in the classroom.	
<b>NS Standards</b>	<b>Workshop Structures and Tasks</b>
3.7	<b>Review SIOP Components</b> —Lesson Preparation and Building Background and Steps 1-4 of a Language Rich Interactive Classroom Give one-Get One
3.8 4.4	<b>Comprehensible Input—Component 3 of SIOP—</b> Component Features Comprehensible Input self-assessment Review SIOP Lessons—who was the more effective teacher? Cut-up Sentences Clearly explained academic tasks Variety of techniques to make content concepts clear
4.1 4.2 4.6	<b>Lesson Preparation—Component 1 of SIOP and Step 5</b> --Writing appropriate Content and Language Objectives <b>Step 5: Developing clear content and language objectives</b> Include the 4 features of a measurable objective
Assignment	1. Submit 4 content and language objectives used during the week 2. Read SIOP Chapter—Comprehensible Input—be prepared to discuss the three Teaching Scenarios at next workshop

**Workshop 4— SIOP Component Strategies****Content Objectives:**

- Students will demonstrate Analysis of SIOP Component Strategies by distinguishing between instructional strategies and learning strategies.
- Students will demonstrate Application of asking and answering questions by constructing a Question Cube Recording Sheet.

**Language Objectives:**

- Students will orally reflect on how the scaffolding strategies and structures can be adapted to use in their classrooms by completing the sentence stems....
  - “\_\_\_\_\_ is a good strategy for ELLs because...”
  - “I can adapt it to use in my classroom by...”
- Students will write to answer questions in complete sentences using the Question Cube Recording Sheet.

<b>Workshop #4</b>	<b>Saturday, February 20, 2016 8:15-1:45</b>
Professional Learning Indicator: Outcome 4.A --Create the conditions to support ongoing, collaborative, job-embedded professional learning for continuous improvement. –Teachers will “learn by doing” strategies in class emulating a real classroom setting—partner work, table talk, using classroom texts, etc.	
<b>NS Standards</b>	<b>Workshop Structures and Tasks</b>
3.6	<b>Strategies—Component 4 of SIOP</b> Distinguishing between instructional strategies and learning strategies
4.4	
4.5	
4.6	Asking questions—research on types and frequency Asking questions that promote thinking—Question Cubes
4.6	Strategies within SIOP Lessons: SQP2RS, THIEVES, GIST
Assignment	1. Bring student work from one SIOPized strategy used with your class. 2. Read SIOP chapter Strategies and be prepared to discuss teaching scenarios.

**Workshop 5—SIOP Component Interaction****Step 6: Have students participate in structured conversations****Content Objective:**

- Students will demonstrate Application of the features of SIOP Component Interaction by participating actively in various interactive tasks.

**Language Objectives:**

- Students will orally explain the purpose and benefits of student-student interaction for language development.
- Students will write structured conversations using the QSSSA structure.

<b>Workshop #5</b>	<b>Saturday, February 27, 2016 8:15-1:45</b>
Professional Learning Indicator: Outcome 4.B –Engage in job-embedded professional learning in order to establish collective responsibility for job performance and student proficiency and growth. –Interaction tasks performed in class are cooperative in nature and emulate what needs to happen in the teachers’ classrooms in order to promote students’ academic language proficiency.	
<b>NS Standards</b>	<b>Workshop Structures and Tasks</b>
3.7	<b>Review</b> of SIOP Components, Steps to Language Rich Classroom, Writing

4.4 4.6	measurable and observable Language Objectives tied to measurable and observable Content Objectives --Find a Partner Review
3.2 4.3 4.4 4.5	<b>Interaction—Component 5 of SIOP</b> Benefits of having students actively engaged in interaction around content Various ways of grouping students—Desk Olympics, Differentiated Wait Time; Clarification of key concepts in the native language
4.6	Interaction Tasks: Running Dictation with a partner
3.2 4.6 4.7 4.8	<b>Step 6: Have students participate in structured conversations</b> Strategies practiced: Structured conversations—Musical Chairs, Talking Pencils Social language and academic language
Assignment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Submit log of classroom application—one Interaction—grouping configuration example used during the week</li> <li>2. Read SIOP chapter Interaction and be prepared to talk about where you have included 3 different grouping configurations into your lessons</li> </ol>

## Workshop 6—SIOP Component Practice and Application

### Step 7: Have students participate in structured reading and writing tasks

#### Content Objective:

- Students will demonstrate Application of the SIOP Practice and Application by participating actively in various academic tasks.

#### Language Objective:

- Students will orally justify various Practice and Application tasks that specifically link to lesson objectives using the sentence stem: “This task links directly to objective \_\_\_\_ because....”

<b>Workshop #6</b>	<b>Saturday, March 12, 2016 8:15-1:45</b>
Professional Learning Indicator: Outcome 7.A –Support the use of resources to maintain continuous professional learning. –Teachers will receive a wealth of resources to use in their classroom to sustain strategy use throughout their daily teaching.	
<b>NS Standards</b>	<b>Workshop Structures and Tasks</b>
4.2 4.3	<b>Review of SIOP Components, Steps to Language Rich Classroom, Writing measurable and observable Language Objectives tied to measurable and observable Content Objectives, Structured Conversations</b>

3.8 4.5 4.6	<b>Practice and Application—Component 6 of SIOP</b> Activities that integrate all language skills Practice vs. application—what are the differences? “Scan up”—strategy for students to analyze text understanding Strategies practiced: THIEVES, 12 Minute Research Paper, Written Conversations
3.8 4.5 4.6	<b>Step 7: Have students participate in structured reading and writing tasks</b> Review processes for understanding and accessing information from texts Review processes for preparing and providing opportunities for writing
Assignment	1. Submit student work of one structured writing task. 2. Read SIOP chapter Practice and Application and be prepared to discuss teaching scenarios.

### Workshop 7—SIOP Component Lesson Delivery

#### Content Objective:

- Students will demonstrate Analysis of the Lesson Delivery SIOP Component by distinguishing SIOP components in a lesson.

#### Language Objectives:

- Students will orally recommend ways to engage students 90-100% of the time.
- Students will take notes on a SIOP lesson using a SIOP Lesson template and discuss effectiveness of SIOP components included in lesson.

<b>Workshop #7</b>	<b>Saturday, March 19, 2016 8:15-1:45</b>
<u>Professional Learning Indicator: Outcome 5.A</u> – Engage in and provide opportunities for follow-up, feedback, and reflection to support transfer of knowledge and skills into practice as part of ongoing professional learning. –SIOP Lesson Plans will be generated by partners in class and evaluated collectively. Teachers will receive at least two SIOP lesson plans per SIOP component, reflecting language arts, science, social studies, and math curriculum at elementary and secondary grade levels.	
<b>NS Standards</b>	<b>Workshop Structures and Tasks</b>
4.2- 4.3	<b>Review</b> SIOP Components and Steps to a Language Rich Interactive Classroom
2.5 ,3.2-3.5 3.7, 3.8, 4.1 4.2, 4.4- 4.7	<b>Lesson Delivery—Component 7 of SIOP</b> Factors that contribute to high levels of student engagement Observe and take notes on a demonstrated SIOP Lesson— Co-develop a SIOP Lesson Plan with a partner in class and evaluate collectively for effectiveness
Assignment	1. Submit one SIOP Lesson Plan using template and one paragraph describing lesson’s success.

	2. Read SIOP chapter Lesson Delivery and be prepared to talk about affective content and language objectives.
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## Workshop 8—SIOP Component Review and Assessment

### Content Objective:

- Students will demonstrate Comprehension of features of SIOP Review and Assessment by recognizing various effective ways to assess students.

### Language Objective:

- Students will orally elaborate on a discussion of ways to adapt classroom assessment tools.

<b>Workshop #8</b>	<b>Saturday, April 9, 2016 8:15-1:45</b>
Professional Learning Indicator: Outcome 5.A – Engage in and provide opportunities for follow-up, feedback, and reflection to support transfer of knowledge and skills into practice as part of ongoing professional learning. –Teachers will experience various ways to review and assess students’ language proficiency and academic growth. Teachers will reflect on their competency with all components of SIOP.	
<b>NS Standards</b>	<b>Workshop Structures and Tasks</b>
4.4	<b>Review SIOP Components and Steps to a Language Rich Interactive Classroom</b> Summary Word Sort 4-2-1 Summary Task
3.7 4.3 5.8 6.1	<b>Review and Assessment—Component 8 of SIOP</b> Key assessment concepts Adapting Assessments for ELLs List, Rank, Compare, Illustrate SIOP 3-2-1 Rotating Review SIOP review Jeopardy style
Assignment	1. Read SIOP chapter Review and Assessment and be prepared to talk about various ways to review and assess both academic language and academic vocabulary.

## Workshop 9—SIOP Presentations

### Content Objectives:

- Students will demonstrate Application of a Language Rich Interactive Classroom by incorporating each step into a SIOP lesson.
- Students will demonstrate Synthesis of SIOP by designing a SIOP lesson and presenting the lesson to colleagues, as well as creating a visual representation of one SIOP component.

### Language Objective:

- Students will orally give feedback about SIOP lessons presented using a SIOP Presentation Rubric and suggesting changes or additions.

<b>Workshop #9</b>	<b>Saturday, April 16, 2016 8:15-1:45</b>
Professional Learning Indicator: Outcome 6.B –Establish collective responsibility for leadership in support of professional learning to improve job performance and student proficiency and growth. –Teachers will present a SIOP strategy live or by video; colleagues will evaluate based on a SIOP rubric.	
<b>NS Standards</b>	<b>Workshop Structures and Tasks</b>
	<b>SIOP Presentations</b>
4.2 4.7	<b>Presentation format:</b> video of SIOP Lesson in a classroom (10 minutes)—submit video and one sample of student work; or SIOP Lesson demonstration with peers acting as your students (10 minutes if individual or 20 minutes with a partner, or 30 minutes in a team of 3). Rubric will be used to evaluate lesson  <b>SIOP Creation/Synthesis:</b> visually represent one SIOP component as a team that includes 2 words, one outcome sentence, and an explanation
Assignments	Make sure all assignments are submitted: Please provide an address where you want your graded assignments mailed. Thank you.

### SIOP Lesson Presentation

Presentation length: 10 minutes per person Audience participation: active

Presenter involvement: all presenters must be actively facilitating

Presentation requirements:



Content Objective: Clearly defined—orally and written, displayed, reviewed at the end of the lesson

Language Objective: Clearly defined—orally and written, displayed, reviewed at the end of the lesson

Integration of Language--listening, speaking, reading, writing

At least 2 different strategies used during presentation

At least 2 different groupings facilitated during presentation

	Component	Exceeded expectation	Met expectation	Did not meet expectation
1	Content Objective			
2	Language Objective			
3	Language integration			
4	2 different strategies			
5	2 different groupings			
6	All presenters involved			
7	Full audience participation			

**Appendix D**

**LANGUAGE KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS SURVEY CONDUCTED BY  
CCCC LANGUAGE POLICY COMMITTEE**

**FOR THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH RESEARCH  
FOUNDATION AND THE CONFERENCE ON COLLEGE COMPOSITION AND  
COMMUNICATION**

**FINAL RESEARCH REPORT JANUARY, 2000  
(CORRECTED COPY)**

**For information about this report, contact:**

**Dr. Geneva Smitherman, University Distinguished Professor, Department of  
English, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824, (517) 353-9252**

**Dr. Victor Villanueva, Immediate Past Chair, Conference on College Composition and  
Communication and Chair, Department of English, Washington State University,  
Pullman, WA 99164, (509) 335-2581/335-268**

This survey has been adapted from the original (Smitherman & Villanueva, 2000) Language Knowledge and Awareness Survey. Please answer the questions to the best of your ability. This is a Pre-professional development survey to be completed before your coursework begins on October 10, 2015. Thank you for completing the survey.

To begin, please complete your individual code; this code is unique to you (no one else will know it). You will be asked to use the same code for other program surveys. Carefully fill in the required information to complete your code.

First 2 letters of your Mother's Maiden Name (1)

First 3 letters of the Month of Your Birth (2)

First 2 letters of your first name (3)

Two digit number of the date (the day) of your birth (4)

**PART ONE** Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the following statements. Mark the number (1-4) that represents your response.

	Strongly Agree (1)	Agree (2)	Disagree (3)	Strongly Disagree (4)
A student whose primary language is not English should be taught solely in English. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students need to master standard English for upward mobility. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In the home, students should be exposed to standard English only. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students who use nonstandard dialects should be taught in standard English. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are valid reasons for using nonstandard dialects. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are valid reasons for using languages other than English. (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students should learn grammar rules to improve their ability to understand and communicate concepts and information. (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## PART TWO

To what extent do you discuss language diversity with your students? Please mark the answer that represents your response.

- a lot (1)
- moderately (2)
- a little (3)
- not at all (4)

Which approaches do you use in discussing language diversity with your students? Mark all that apply.

- readings on language matters (1)
- analysis of language in literature and other creative art forms (2)
- affirmations of equality of all languages and language varieties (3)
- I do not discuss language diversity in my classroom (4)

List the most important issues or topics about language diversity that your students raise with you. Mark all that apply.

- differences between dialect and language, or between dialect and slang (1)
- why everyone doesn't speak the same way (2)
- status and appropriateness of languages and language varieties older than standard English (3)
- My students do not raise issues about language diversity (4)

What approaches do you use with students who use nonstandard dialect features in their speech? Mark all that apply.

- I correct their writing, not their speech (1)
- I discuss knowing both standard and nonstandard and the contexts when each is appropriate (2)
- I use private conferences to discuss issues of correctness (3)
- I might not say anything (4)
- I tell them that for an English class only standard English is appropriate (5)

What approaches do you use with students who use nonstandard dialect features in their writing? Mark all that apply.

- I discuss knowing both standard and nonstandard and the contexts when each is appropriate (1)
- I use private conferences to discuss issues of correctness (2)
- I might not say anything (3)
- I tell them that for an English class only standard English is appropriate (4)

How would you characterize the teaching style of the best English teacher you ever had? mark all that apply

- was a strict grammarian (1)
- had high expectations and was demanding (2)
- was open-minded, a good listener (3)
- gave constructive feedback on writing (4)
- encouraged risk-taking in writing (5)
- stressed creativity and critical thinking (6)
- I never had an outstanding English teacher. (7)

Which courses in language diversity were part of your college education? Mark all that apply.

- African American English (1)
- American Dialects (2)
- Introduction to the English Language (3)
- Linguistics for Teachers (4)
- I didn't have any courses in language diversity in college (5)

Which courses would you recommend for anyone preparing to be a teacher today? Please rank in order of importance from 1, "most important," to 4, "least important," or see next question.

- African American English (1)
- American Dialects (2)
- Introduction to the English Language (3)
- Linguistics for Teachers (4)

\*If you did not rank the choices above, please select below:

- I don't think courses in language are necessary for anyone preparing to be a teacher today. (1)

Give the title and author of the text you use to teach about language issues.

Title: (1)

Author: (2)

My grammar was most often corrected by (Mark the answer that represents your response):

- a friend (1)
- a family member (2)
- my teacher (3)
- a supervisor (4)

How helpful was this correction? (Mark the answer that represents your response):

- very helpful (1)
- helpful (2)
- somewhat helpful (3)
- not helpful at all (4)

How would you describe your language now? Mark all that apply.

- multilingual (1)
- multidialectal (2)
- standard American English most of the time (3)
- nonstandard American English (4)

How would you describe your language in the past? Mark all that apply.

- multilingual (1)
- multidialectal (2)
- standard American English most of the time (3)
- nonstandard American English (4)

What factors do you believe have influenced your language? Rank in order of importance, from 1 "most important," to 6, "least important,"

- \_\_\_\_\_ race/ethnicity (1)
- \_\_\_\_\_ cultural background (2)
- \_\_\_\_\_ neighborhood/community language (3)
- \_\_\_\_\_ geographic background (4)
- \_\_\_\_\_ socioeconomic class (5)
- \_\_\_\_\_ education (6)

### **PART THREE**

Gender:

- Male (1)
- Female (2)

Racial/Ethnic Identification:

- African American (1)
- Asian American (2)
- European American/Caucasian, non-Latino (3)
- Latino (4)
- Native American/Alaskan American (5)
- Pacific Islander (6)
- other (specify) (7)

If other, please specify:

Age Range:

- 21-30 (1)
- 31-40 (2)
- 41-50 (3)
- 51-60 (4)
- Over 60 (5)



Highest level of education obtained:

- Bachelor's degree (1)
- Master's degree (2)
- Master's plus several semester hours beyond (3)
- Educational Specialist degree (4)
- Doctorate degree (specify) (5)
- Other (specify) (6)

Please specify area:

Number of years teaching:

- less than 1 year (1)
- 1-3 years (2)
- 4-6 years (3)
- 7-10 years (4)
- 11-14 years (5)
- 15 years or more (6)

Current teaching level:

- Grades Pre-K-5 (1)
- Grades 6-8 (2)
- Grades 9-12 (3)
- Community College (4)
- 4-year college (5)
- University (6)
- Other (specify) (7)

Other: Please specify:

As a teacher of English, what language issues most concern you? What language issues least concern you?

Name (optional):

Would you be willing to be interviewed about your coursework this year?

- yes (1)
- No (2)

**Permission to use this survey granted by: Dr. Geneva Smitherman on August 18, 2015. (CCCC Language Policy Committee, Department of English, Michigan State University, East Lansing MI 48824)**

## Appendix E

### Permission to use Language Knowledge and Awareness Survey

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#### Permission to please use Language Knowledge and Awareness Survey

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**Geneva Smitherman** <smither4@msu.edu>

Tue, Aug 18, 2015 at 10:41  
PM

To: "Villanueva, Victor,Jr" <victorv@wsu.edu>, Christina Kozlowski <>, Geneva Smitherman <smither4@msu.edu>, "Dr. E" <ebr2singer@gmail.com>, "Lovejoy, Kim B." <klovejoy@iupui.edu>

Dear Christina,

Yes, you may use the Language Policy Committee's (LPC) "Language Knowledge and Awareness Survey" for your dissertation research. Please acknowledge the LPC and CCCC in your work. Also, if possible, would you send the current LPC Co-Chairs, Drs. Elaine Richardson and Kim Lovejoy a description of your study's results? I'm including them on this email.

Thanks, Victor, for making sure this got to me.

Christina, wishing you all the best with your work.

Geneva Smitherman, Ph.D.  
University Distinguished Professor Emerita  
Michigan State University

**Appendix F**

**Post Survey**

**LANGUAGE KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS SURVEY CONDUCTED  
BY**

**CCCC LANGUAGE POLICY COMMITTEE**

**FOR THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH RESEARCH  
FOUNDATION AND THE CONFERENCE ON COLLEGE COMPOSITION AND  
COMMUNICATION**

**FINAL RESEARCH REPORT JANUARY, 2000  
(CORRECTED COPY)**

**For information about this report, contact:**

**Dr. Geneva Smitherman, University Distinguished Professor, Department of  
English, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824, (517) 353-9252**

**Dr. Victor Villanueva, Immediate Past Chair, Conference on College Composition and  
Communication and Chair, Department of English, Washington State University,  
Pullman, WA 99164, (509) 335-2581/335-26**

This survey has been adapted from the original (Smitherman & Villanueva, 2000) Language Knowledge and Awareness Survey. Please answer the questions to the best of your ability. This is a POST SURVEY. Please complete this survey by April 14, 2016. Thank you for completing the survey.

To begin, please complete your individual code; this code is unique to you (no one else will know it). You will be asked to use the same code for other program surveys. Carefully fill in the required information to complete your code.

First 2 letters of your Mother's Maiden Name (1)

First 3 letters of the Month of Your Birth (2)

First 2 letters of your first name (3)

Two digit number of the date (the day) of your birth (4)

**PART ONE** Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree (1)	Agree (2)	Disagree (3)	Strongly Disagree (4)
A student whose primary language is not English should be taught solely in English. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students need to master standard English for upward mobility. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In the home, students should be exposed to standard English only. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students who use nonstandard dialects should be taught in standard English. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are valid reasons for using nonstandard dialects. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are valid reasons for using languages other than English. (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students should learn grammar rules to improve their ability to understand and communicate concepts and information. (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## PART TWO

To what extent do you discuss language diversity with your students? Please mark the answer that represents your response.

- a lot (1)
- moderately (2)
- a little (3)
- not at all (4)

Which approaches do you use in discussing language diversity with your students? Mark all that apply.

- readings on language matters (1)
- analysis of language in literature and other creative art forms (2)
- affirmations of equality of all languages and language varieties (3)
- I do not discuss language diversity in my classroom (4)

List the most important issues or topics about language diversity that your students raise with you. Mark all that apply.

- differences between dialect and language, or between dialect and slang (1)
- why everyone doesn't speak the same way (2)
- status and appropriateness of languages and language varieties older than standard English (3)
- My students do not raise issues about language diversity (4)

What approaches do you use with students who use nonstandard dialect features in their speech? Mark all that apply.

- I correct their writing, not their speech (1)
- I discuss knowing both standard and nonstandard and the contexts when each is appropriate (2)
- I use private conferences to discuss issues of correctness (3)
- I might not say anything (4)
- I tell them that for an English class only standard English is appropriate (5)

What approaches do you use with students who use nonstandard dialect features in their writing? Mark all that apply.

- I discuss knowing both standard and nonstandard and the contexts when each is appropriate (1)
- I use private conferences to discuss issues of correctness (2)
- I might not say anything (3)
- I tell them that for an English class only standard English is appropriate (4)

How would you characterize the teaching style of the best English teacher you ever had? mark all that apply

- was a strict grammarian (1)
- had high expectations and was demanding (2)
- was open-minded, a good listener (3)
- gave constructive feedback on writing (4)
- encouraged risk-taking in writing (5)
- stressed creativity and critical thinking (6)
- I never had an outstanding English teacher. (7)

Which courses in language diversity were part of your college education? Mark all that apply.

- African American English (1)
- American Dialects (2)
- Introduction to the English Language (3)
- Linguistics for Teachers (4)
- I didn't have any courses in language diversity in college (5)

Which courses would you recommend for anyone preparing to be a teacher today? Please rank in order of importance from 1, "most important," to 4, "least important," or see next question.

- \_\_\_\_\_ African American English (1)
- \_\_\_\_\_ American Dialects (2)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Introduction to the English Language (3)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Linguistics for Teachers (4)



\*If you did not rank the choices above, please select below:

- I don't think courses in language are necessary for anyone preparing to be a teacher today. (1)

Give the title and author of the text you use to teach about language issues.

Title: (1)

Author: (2)

My grammar was most often corrected by (Mark the answer that represents your response):

- a friend (1)
- a family member (2)
- my teacher (3)
- a supervisor (4)

How helpful was this correction? (Mark the answer that represents your response):

- very helpful (1)
- helpful (2)
- somewhat helpful (3)
- not helpful at all (4)

How would you describe your language now? Mark all that apply.

- multilingual (1)
- multidialectal (2)
- standard American English most of the time (3)
- nonstandard American English (4)

How would you describe your language in the past? Mark all that apply.

- multilingual (1)
- multidialectal (2)
- standard American English most of the time (3)
- nonstandard American English (4)

What factors do you believe have influenced your language? Rank in order of importance, from 1 "most important," to 6, "least important,"

- \_\_\_\_ race/ethnicity (1)
- \_\_\_\_ cultural background (2)
- \_\_\_\_ neighborhood/community language (3)
- \_\_\_\_ geographic background (4)
- \_\_\_\_ socioeconomic class (5)
- \_\_\_\_ education (6)

### **PART THREE**

Gender:

- Male (1)
- Female (2)

Racial/Ethnic Identification:

- African American (1)
- Asian American (2)
- European American/Caucasian, non-Latino (3)
- Latino (4)
- Native American/Alaskan American (5)
- Pacific Islander (6)
- other (specify) (7)

If other, please specify:

Age Range:

- 21-30 (1)
- 31-40 (2)
- 41-50 (3)
- 51-60 (4)
- Over 60 (5)

Highest level of education obtained:

- Bachelor's degree (1)
- Master's degree (2)
- Master's plus several semester hours beyond (3)
- Educational Specialist degree (4)
- Doctorate degree (specify) (5)
- Other (specify) (6)

Other: Please specify area:

Number of years teaching:

- less than 1 year (1)
- 1-3 years (2)
- 4-6 years (3)
- 7-10 years (4)
- 11-14 years (5)
- 15 years or more (6)

Current teaching level:

- Grades Pre-K-5 (1)
- Grades 6-8 (2)
- Grades 9-12 (3)
- Community College (4)
- 4-year college (5)
- University (6)
- Other (specify) (7)

Other: Please specify:

As a teacher of English, what language issues most concern you? What language issues least concern you?

Did you feel prepared to teach the English Language Learners in your classroom at the start of the school year?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If yes, explain why.

If no, explain why not.

Did you change anything in your teaching this year that was particular to the ELs in your class?

- Yes (4)
- No (5)

If yes, what and why?

If no, why not?

Have you ever thought about your own cultural identity?

- Yes (9)
- No (10)

If yes, how do you identify your own culture?

Do you think your cultural identity plays a role in how you teach your students? Please explain.

Did you have any “aha” moments?

- Yes (9)
- No (10)

If yes, please describe the moment.

Did it change your thinking in any way? If yes, how?

Name (optional):

Would you be willing to be interviewed about your coursework this year?

- yes (1)
- No (2)

**Permission to use this survey granted by: Dr. Geneva Smitherman on August 18, 2015. (CCCC Language Policy Committee, Department of English, Michigan State University, East Lansing MI 48824)**

## Appendix G

### PD Instructor Interview Protocol

Hello. Thank you for meeting with me today. This interview is part of my dissertation study on professional development for teachers of English Learners. I will be asking you some questions on this topic. Please answer as you see fit, but you are not required to answer a question if you wish to skip it. You can pass at any time and we can stop the interview at any time. Can I have permission to audio-record our conversation today? Great. Let's begin (if no: then record notes on protocol as thorough as possible.)

1. Please share with me why you volunteered to teach this professional development.
  - a. Probes for more information:
  - b. If the individual says she has taught the course in the past, find out more about that.
  - c. If does not come up, ask if ever taught for [the university], if yes, what?
  - d. If no, has she ever taught a similar course? Tell me about that.
  - e. Did you teach it as a university course or as a PD for the district?
  
2. Please share with me how the professional development of this grant was designed.
  - How much input did you have on the topics and courses offered?
  - Did you create the course or portions of the course?
  - If so, what is it and why?
  - How is this course design as part of the grant compare or contrast to how the courses have been taught in the past? (topics, schedule, participants, etc.)
  - Why?
  
3. How do you think teachers learn new knowledge about teaching (new pedagogy)?
  - How might you design professional development instruction to achieve that

learning development?

- What about how teachers learn new content?
  - Do you feel your view about how teachers learn aligns with the coursework from the grant?
  - Why or why not?
4. Can you please tell me about your experience with teaching ELs?
- (If needed) What about your experience preparing teachers to work with their EL students?
  - You mentioned. . . . . is there anything else?
5. (Probe for #4 if flows in that direction) Do you recommend anything in particular for teachers to do to get to know their ELLs in the classroom?
- If yes, what, please give an example? And Why?
  - If not, Why?
  - (if not mentioned, probe for student academic abilities, culture, personal experiences, lives outside of school, etc.)
6. Do you think culture plays a role in teaching and learning?
- If yes, how so?
  - Do you think it's being included in the grant PD? Why or why not? Can you give me examples?
  - Do you think teachers are aware of their own cultural beliefs?
  - Why or why not? How do you know this?
  - Do you think any of the course work helped teachers identify their own culture or cultural identity?
  - Why do you think that, can you give an example?
7. How do you recommend teachers communicate with ELLs who have no or limited English proficiency?
- Why do you think that? Can you give an example?
  - Do you think teachers need to speak the languages of their students?
  - If yes, why?
  - If no, Why not?

8. How familiar are you with teacher preparation programs for teaching ELLs?
  - Do you think teacher preparation programs prepare teachers to teach ELLs?
  - If yes, tell me how.
  - If not, tell me why not, what is missing?
  - Do you think a mandatory course on ESL (or ELs) would be valuable?
  - Do you think this course would be more effective than infusing the topic of ELLs throughout existing courses?
  
9. Did you incorporate any ways for teachers to think about their learning in the course?
  - If yes, how? Can you give me examples?
  - Do you feel the participants were reflective? Did they reflect change at all during the course?
  - If so, how? Can you give examples?
  - If not, why do you think that?
  - If needed: I know that the teachers were asked to write reflections throughout the course. Tell me your thoughts about how you thought that worked.
  - How important is reflection to teaching ELLs?
  
10. Did any of your teacher participants find any strategies learned from the PD useful?
  - If so, what were they?
  - Why were they useful?
  - Besides strategies, what else do you think the teachers may have learned from the PD? (theory?, SLA?, needing change/reform?)
  - Why do you think that?
  
11. How do you think attending these courses has changed the way the teacher participants view or teach their English Learners?
  - Why do you think that? Tell me more
  - Do you have any recommendations for professional development with regard to ELLs?



12. As needed: Do you recall when ...Can you tell me about that? (Include any aha moments from field notes that may need revisited during the interview)
13. Is there anything else you would to share with me or add to this interview?

Thank you very much for taking the time to interview with me. Can I follow up with you if needed?

(Stop recording if granted consent to record)

## Appendix H

### Grant Project Director Interview Protocol

Hello. Thank you for meeting with me today. This interview is part of my dissertation study on professional development for teachers of English Learners. I will be asking you some questions on this topic. Please answer as you see fit, but you are not required to answer a question if you wish to skip it. You can pass at any time and we can stop the interview at any time. Can I have permission to audio-record our conversation today? Great. Let's begin (if no: then record notes on protocol as thorough as possible.)

1. Please share your experiences with teacher preparation for working with ELLs.
  - Probes (as needed)
  - Can you tell me more about university teacher preparation?
  - (if flows in this direction) Do you think a mandatory course on ELLs (or ESL) would be valuable?
  - Why or why not?
  - Can you tell me more about professional development?
  - What do you think is important for teachers to know in order to be better prepared to teach ELLs?
  - Do you think that was included in the coursework?
  - If so, how? If not, why?
  
2. Please share with me how the professional development of this grant was designed.
  - Are any of the two courses (the reading course or the second language development course) your design?
  - How much input did you have on the topics and courses offered?
  - How is this course design as part of the grant compare or contrast to how the courses have been taught in the past? (topics, schedule, participants, etc.)
  - Why?

3. How do you think teachers learn new knowledge about teaching (new pedagogy)?
  - How might you design professional development instruction to achieve that learning development?
  - What about how teachers learn new content?
  - Do you feel your view about how teachers learn aligns with the coursework from the grant?
  - Why or why not?
  
4. Do you feel that teachers in general know enough about ELLs and working with ELLs to be effective educators?
  - Why or why not? Please elaborate.
  - How could this situation be changed?
  
5. Do you think culture plays a role in teaching?
  - If yes, how so? Also, how would this be dealt with in PD?
  - Do you think it's being included in the grant PD? Why or why not? Can you give me an example?
  - (if needed) Do you think a teacher's own culture influences his/her teaching practices?
  - Why do you think that?
  - Do you think teachers are aware of their own cultural beliefs?
  - Why or why not? How do you know this?
  - Do you think it's important for teachers to know their students' individual cultures?
  - Why or why not?
  
6. What do you think a teacher should know about his/her student before teaching him/her?
  - Why do you think that? Can you give an example?
  - Do you recommend anything in particular for teachers to do to get to know their ELLs in the classroom?

- If yes, what? And Why?
  - If not, Why?
  - (if not mentioned, probe for student academic abilities, culture, personal experiences, lives outside of school, etc.)
7. How do you recommend teachers communicate with ELLs who have no or limited English proficiency?
- Why do you think that?
  - Do you think teachers need to speak the languages of their students?
  - If yes, why?
  - If no, Why not?
8. Do you think any of the coursework helped the participants to understand their own culture and beliefs?
- If yes, how?
  - If not, why?
  - Do you think the participants can interact with students from other cultures in an appropriate and understanding way?
  - If yes, how do you know? Can you give an example?
  - If not, why?
9. Do you think attending these courses has changed the way the teacher participants view or teach their English Learners?
- Why do you think that? Tell me more
  - Do you have any further recommendations for professional development with regard to ELLs?
10. Is there anything else you would to share with me or add to this interview?

Thank you very much for taking the time to interview with me. Can I follow up with you if needed? (Stop recording if granted consent to record)