THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHERS' YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AND
THEIR PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

to the faculty of the

DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

of

THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

at

ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY

New York

by

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Date Submitted ___October 12, 2020___   Date Approved _January 29, 2021_

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ABSTRACT

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHERS' YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AND
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The number of English Language Learner students (ELLs) has increased within the United States while the number of qualified teachers for these students has decreased. Students' outcomes are related to the quality of education they receive. A teacher's knowledge of and preparation for teaching ELLs influences students' performance. Previous literature found that most classroom teachers do not feel qualified to teach ELLs. The purpose of this quantitative study was to explore the readiness of classroom teachers in teaching ELLs. The sociocultural framework of Bruner (1960) and Vygotsky (1978) aided in the exploration of teachers' perceptions about the adequacy of instruction provided to ELLs. A sample of 256 conveniently selected teachers with no experiences teaching ELLs, one to three years of experience teaching ELLs, and four years or more of experience teaching ELLs shared their responses to the Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale survey items (Téllez & Manthey, 2015) and the Teacher Multicultural Attitude Survey (TMAS) (Ponterotto et al., 1998). Data was sorted, coded, and analyzed to understand differences in teachers' perceptions of teaching ELLs based on years of experience working with these students. The participants' responses helped design a professional development initiative that would address the needs of these teachers and improve overall student performance.

DEDICATION

To my students, who inspire me; my family, who encourage me; and my friends,

who support me. And to Michael, who cares every step of the way.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to my mentor, Stephen Kotok, as well as to the Committee: Randall F. Clemens, Mary Ellen Freeley, and Ceceilia Parnther. Your months of attention and effort have guided me toward the completion of my dissertation, for which I am humbly grateful.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Among students immigrating to the United States, English is not the predominantly spoken language for school-age children. Within public schools, nearly five million English Language Learners (ELLs) are enrolled between kindergarten and grade twelve (U.S. Department of Education, 2019a). In 1990, the foreign-born population in the United States was less than 20 million, while by 2007, the population of foreign-born people was 38 million (Lewis & Landsman, 2011). Fix and Passel (2003) found that immigrant children currently represent about 20 percent of the population and expected their number to rise to 30 percent by 2015.

In 1982, the Supreme Court case of Plyer vs. Doe found that all children regardless of immigration status must be provided with a public education. Schools cannot deny education to undocumented immigrants and must provide court-mandated equal access to education for the 65,000 undocumented students until they graduate from high school (Fix & Passel, 2003). In an effort to help ELLs and undocumented immigrant students, the proposal of the Development, Relief, and Education of Alien Minors (DREAM) Bill by Congress in 2001 aimed to provide a path to legalization and higher education access for undocumented students who graduated from high school, and to allow equal access to education for this population. The goal of DREAM was to allow 360,000 high school graduates to gain legal status, and would benefit an estimated 715,000 children. As of 2010, the bill has gained public support; however, it was not made into law. In 2001, the states of Texas, California, Illinois, Kansas, Nebraska, New

Mexico, New York, Oklahoma, Utah, and Washington began to create new legislation that allowed undocumented students to be eligible for in-state tuition rates (Passel, 2003).

Government regulation requires schools in the United Sates to provide all students with high quality public education that meets the students' academic needs. As the number of ELLs grows, the number of teachers of ELLs should grow with the population. Educational institutions "must prepare educators to teach in a world that projects at least five years into the future" (Lewis & Landsman, 2011, p. 317). However, many teachers are entering the classroom without proper training to work with ELL students. Students classified as ELLs are placed in mainstream classrooms under the care of teachers who are not specialized to meet ELLs' social, emotional, and educational needs (Lewis & Landsman, 2011; Shreve, 2005; Quintero & Hansen, 2017). The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) collected data between Fall 2001 and Fall 2017 that showed a decrease in the number of qualified teachers. Between 2010 and 2011, the number of master's degrees conferred in education was 185,000; this number fell to 146,000 degrees in 2016–17. Batt (2008) found that teachers perceived that not all educators who worked with ELLs were qualified, and 39% themselves self-identified as being not highly qualified to work with ELLs. The greatest challenge when working with ELLs has shown to be that 20% of teachers lack their colleagues' knowledge and skills in educating ELLs. In the area of understaffing, teachers found that ESL and bilingual teachers were employed at a rate of 2.97 teachers when the school required 4.40 teachers (Batt, 2008). Many ESL and bilingual teachers were stretched between schools.

Students' outcomes are related to the quality of education they receive. Researchers have found that teachers need to be trained in culturally responsive pedagogy

and knowledge of language development to create a successful classroom environment for ELLs (Lewis & Landsman, 2011; López et al., 2013). According to the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA) report in 2008, many states do not have certification requirements for teachers to work with ELLs; Ballantyne et al. (2008) reported that 29% of teachers received specific training to support the learning needs of ELLs in the classroom. Moreover, Jackson (2016) found that "ELLs perform poorly on standardized tests and struggle to attain academic success" (p. 2).

Assaf and Zisselsberger (2017) emphasized the importance of teachers having specific training to create learning environments for ELLs. The study addressed the importance of using the third space, which is often referred to as "a hybrid space created when members of a classroom bring together elements of school culture and home culture to create something new" (Carlone & Johnson, 2012 as cited in Assaf and Zisselsberger, 2017, p. 2). This allowed for teachers to create an environment that is centered around the experiences of their students. Gay (2002) and Ford (2004) both found that a culturally responsive school-culture and community is needed to provide meaningful services for multicultural students and that classrooms must be steeped in cultural competences. Schools need to form a partnership between the community and the educational instructors to create successful outcomes for all students (Lewis & Landsman, 2011).

For teachers to be successful working with students of diverse backgrounds, they must have the requisite knowledge and methodology to meet the needs of their students. This can be achieved through preservice teacher training that uses a holistic approach. Lewis & Landsman (2011) defined four areas that need to be addressed in teacher

training programs. First, teachers need to have knowledge of multiple populations of students, including students who have disabilities, those who are linguistically and culturally diverse, those who are gifted, and those who have different socioeconomic backgrounds. Second, teachers must have knowledge of their students' families. Third, the teachers need to have an understanding of the community they serve and what resources are available. Lastly, teachers need to have the ability to generate advocacy efforts. For teachers who do not have preservice training for working with ELLs, Batt (2008) concluded that professional development (PD) would enable both ELL and "mainstream" teachers to help ELL students acquire language proficiency, thus creating an environment for ELLs to learn.

As a middle school educator for over five years, and more specifically a seventh-grade science teacher, the researcher has seen firsthand the benefits and opportunities that education and professional development have had, allowing her to better understand the social, emotional, and academic needs of her ELL students. Many teachers are not provided with opportunities that will enable them to learn how to educate ELLs, leading to teacher frustration and classroom environments that do not support the needs of these students. Providing classroom teachers an opportunity to express their thoughts about ELL education in a safe, nonjudgmental environment is necessary to create targeted professional development that will hold better outcomes for all stakeholders. In undertaking this study, the researcher aimed to find the similarities and differences between the responses of teachers with no experience teaching ELLs, one to three years of experience teaching ELLs, and teachers with four or more years of experience teaching ELLs.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine how teachers' perceptions of teaching ELLs with four or more years' experience compares with those of a one-to-three-year experience and no years of experience teaching ELLs. The teachers' responses provide crucial insight into designing professional development for teachers of ELLs. Exploring their perceptions of their preparedness and knowledge of ELL instruction can help determine what is needed to improve instruction for students (Kane et al., 2010; Moats, 2009). The research was a continuation of previous literature, which finds that most teachers do not feel qualified to teach ELLs, and was founded upon the perceptions of teachers and what they perceive they need to successfully teach their ELL students (Garcia et al., 2019; Greenfield et al., 2010).

Data collection across the United States showed an increasing number of students who do not speak English as a first language. Data collected by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in 2015 stated that 4.8 million students in the United Sates were learners of English. The U.S. Department of Education's FY 2018 Annual Performance Report and FY 2020 Annual Performance Plan (2019b) listed Strategic Objective 1.3 as: "Prepare all students for successful transition to college and careers by supporting access to dual enrollment, job skills development and high-quality science, technology, engineering and mathematics [STEM]" (p. 35). This goal must be accessible for all students; teachers need proper support to create learning environments targeted for the specific needs of ELLs.

In New York, Queens has the largest number of students who are members of the ELL population. The ability of the city of New York and the United States in general to

successfully educate the growing ELL population has been debated. According to Ballantyne, Sanderman, and Levy (2008), 57% of teachers reported that they needed more training when it came to educating ELLs. Data collected for the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA) (2008) found that the nation's K-12 population of ELLs would be 57% by the year 2018. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) (2011) reported that students who do not speak English as a first language often scored in the lowest 25% on state assessments. Reports on student achievement from 2004–2007 showed that 71% of the students identified as English learners (ELs) performed below grade level and were among the nation's lowest-performing students (U.S. Department of Education, 2005; Lee et al., 2007; Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007). This leads to higher high school dropout rates for ELLs. In 2013, Aud et al. stated that the dropout rates were higher for ELLs than their native speaker counterparts.

Increased training for teachers working with ELLs is needed to improve their social, emotional, and academic wellbeing. Duke and Block (2012) found that when teachers lack the ability to teach effectively, students suffer, impeding their ability to reach mastery. Research has indicated a relationship between teachers' knowledge and student achievement. Better trained teachers create better outcomes for ELL students (E. García et al., 2010; Hiebert & Morris, 2012; Konstantopoulos & Sun, 2012; Wang et al., 2011). Students have performed better in classrooms where they felt as if they were valued (Garnett, 2010; Garza & Garza, 2010; Myers et al., 2011).

The importance of teachers' perceptions toward teaching ELLs must be understood to create an academic setting that is targeted to improve ELLs outcomes, as

must the years of experience teaching ELLs and how they impact these perceptions. The sociocultural framework of Bruner (1960) and Vygotsky (1978) guided this study and aided in the exploration of these perceptions.

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

The principles of the sociocultural theory of learning are fundamental in using diverse perspective in education. In this study, the works of Bruner (1960) and Vygotsky (1978) have framed my thinking regarding how years of experience impact teachers' perceptions of teaching ELLs. Data was collected considering teachers' cultural backgrounds, teaching experiences, and cultural understating of their students. Scott & Palincsar (2003) explained that learning adopts socially shared experiences and allows students to acquire useful strategies and knowledge.

The theoretical framework combined the sociocultural work of Bruner (1960) and Vygotsky (1978), which focused on the importance of teachers creating a holistic classroom environment. The sociocultural principles were built upon Vygotsky's ideas that human development and learning were created in social, historical, and cultural interactions. The importance of language is a psychological tool that allows for the development of higher mental functions. The last principle of the sociocultural perspective on learning is that learning must occur in a person's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).

Sociocultural learning environments can be established when teachers have awareness of surrounding circumstances, including individuals and how their behaviors are affected, specifically by their surroundings as well as social and cultural factors. The sociocultural framework addresses how humans communicate, understand, relate, and

cope with one another. This study examines how the years of experience of working with ELLs impact teachers' perceptions of teaching them using the sociocultural framework, comparing teachers with no experience working with ELLs with teachers who have one to three years of working with these students, as well as teachers with four or more years working with them. This study uses the holistic approach to understand the personal and posteriori knowledge a teacher brings to an ELL classroom. See Figure 1.

Figure 1: Sociocultural Framework

Sociocultural Framework

Vygotsky (1978)

Bruner (1960)

Vygotsky (1978)
Knowledge is constructed through human activity and social interactions alongside the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Teachers of ELLs must create an environment that connects students' L1 to L2.

Bruner (1960)
Learning is an active process where learners construct new ideas of concepts based upon their current/past knowledge. Teachers of ELLs must create an environment that builds on ELLs' prior experiences to what they are learning in the classroom.

Adapted from Vygotsky (1978) & Bruner (1960)

Significance of the Study

This study demonstrates how experience working with ELLs impacts classroom teachers' perceptions of teaching these students. The research is limited to teacher self-perceptions and levels of accountability for ELL outcomes. The number of highly qualified teachers is decreasing as the number of ELLs increases. Kunter et al. (2013) found that quality of instruction promotes positive outcomes related to student achievement. This study examines whether or not years of experience impacts teachers'

perceptions when working with ELLs. In a classroom where teachers value students' cultural identities, students may be encouraged to learn at a deeper level (Garnett, 2010; Garza & Garza, 2010; Meyer et al., 2011).

Bruner (1960) explained that education is a process in which the teacher creates an avenue of discovery and greater learning for students. He found that learning can come from interacting with someone who has a greater understanding of a concept and who will assist the student in the development of their understanding. He concluded that students could learn outside of any predetermined stage or prescribed age when teachers targeted their instruction and used proper scaffolding (Wood et al., 1976). This is related to Vygotsky's use of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).

Vygotsky (1978) described a teacher as a facilitator who provides the scaffolding for a student's learning experience. He found that students learn best using language and social interactions. Vygotsky also found that culture is necessary for understanding and communication. Students are social beings and must interact with others, with each new learned concept based on cultural background. They develop higher order thinking skills allowing them to establish "interdependence between individual and social processes in the construction of knowledge" (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996, p. 192). Vygotsky and other sociocultural scholars have created a diverse perspective in the modern approach to education. The focus on qualitative changes in behavior and the development of language and higher order thinking skills have shaped the field of applied linguistics.

Social Justice and the Vincentian Mission

Currently, there is a social injustice in the education system as ELLs are performing at lower rates than their native English-speaker counterparts. This leads to

ELLs having higher high school dropout rates because their language needs were not met by their academic instructors. This study was aligned with social justice and the Vincentian mission of St. John's University, because it allowed preservice and classroom teachers to reflect on their attitudes about ELLs. The reflective process can be used to create an enhanced educational setting targeted to the needs of ELLs. I continue to strive to understand what areas teachers struggle to reach in order to create a targeted professional development for teachers, and to learn how to create a classroom environment that will allow ELLs to succeed, with the goal that all students become innovative, lifelong learners prepared for future careers.

Research Question

1. How do years of experience influence teachers' perceptions toward teaching ELLs?

2. To what extent are years of experience related to multicultural awareness, including linguistic diversity?

Classroom teachers were given an opportunity to take the Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale survey items (Téllez & Manthey, 2015). These survey items explored the relations among teachers' perceptions of ELL strategies and school programs, teachers' ratings of collective efficacy in meeting all students' needs, and the general school climate. Teachers' background knowledge on the importance of culture to them were collected using the Teacher Multicultural Attitude Survey (TMAS) (Ponterotto et al., 1998).

Design and Methods

Classroom teachers were given the adapted Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale survey items (Téllez & Manthey, 2015). The sample consists of 256 conveniently selected teachers with no experience teaching ELLs, one to three years of experience teaching ELLs, and four years or more of experience teaching ELLs. ANOVAs and multivariate regressions were conducted to examine the research questions.

Summary

As the number of students who do not speak English as a home language increases in the United States, the culture of education needs to focus nationally and locally on reform efforts to teach educators how to work with the growing number of ELL students. Chapter 1 presented the background for this study, specified the problem, described the significance of the problem, and introduced an overview of the methodology used. The chapter concluded with the limitations of the study. Chapter 2 presents a review of the related literature as well as the relationship between the sociocultural framework. Chapter 3 presents a description of the research, participants, and methodology for data collection, manner of data analysis, and instrumentation of the study. Chapter 4 presents the results outlined in Chapter 3. In addition, Chapter 4 analyzes the links between the research questions and data interpretations. Chapter 5 includes a summary of the research, limitations, and implications for further research. This study is intended to design target PD for teachers of ELLs, implementing the perceptions of educators within the school setting with the hope of providing a framework for improved practice when working with ELLs.

Definition of Terms

Bilingual Teacher: Teacher who has all undergraduate course work and has earned a degree in education, teaching students in their home language and in English.

Classroom Teacher: Teacher who has completed all undergraduate course work and has earned a degree in education.

General Education Student: Student who is not classified as needing special education and is not required to meet the Common Core Standards with mandated accommodations or modifications.

English Language Learner (ELL): Student who has not reached mastery level on the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSITELL) exam. These students are classified as needing special education and require support to become proficient in English and are identified pursuant to Section 154.3 of Commissioner's Regulations. In New York State, ELLs are now referred to ENL students or MML students.

English Language Learner with a Disability (ELL/SED): Student who has not reached mastery level on the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSITELL) exam. These students are classified as requiring support to become proficient in English and are identified pursuant to Section 154.3 of Commissioner's Regulations. They are classified as needing special education and require support to meet the Common Core Standards with mandated accommodations or modifications. In New York State, ELLs are now referred to ENL students or MLL Students.

English as a New Language Student (ENL): Student who has not reached mastery level on the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSITELL)

exam. These students are classified as needing special education and require support to become proficient in English and are identified pursuant to Section 154.3 of Commissioner's Regulations. In New York State, these students used to be referred to as ELLs.

English as a Second Language Teacher (ESL Teacher): A teacher who works with students who do not speak English as their first language. In New York State, ESL, ENL, and TESOL teachers are all used to refer to teachers certified to teach ELLs.

English as a New Language Teacher (ENL): A teacher who works with students who do not speak English as their first language. Formally called ESL teachers in New York. In New York State, ESL, ENL, and TESOL teachers are all used to refer to teachers certified to teach ELLs.

Former English Language Learner: Student who has reached mastery level on the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSITELL) exam. These students are classified as requiring support to become proficient in English and are identified pursuant to Section 154.3 of Commissioner's Regulations. They are not classified as needing special education and are not required to meet the Common Core Standards with mandated language accommodations or modifications.

Home Language: First language of a student or the language spoken within the home/family setting for a student. For ELLs, this language is not English.

Individualized Educational Plan (IEP): An IEP is a plan or program developed to ensure that a child who has a disability identified under the law and is attending an elementary or secondary educational institution receives specialized instruction and related services (U.S. Department of Education, 2019).

Language 1 (L1): Student's first language, the language spoken in the student's home or taught in the home.

Language 2 (L2): The language that the student is learning in an academic setting. This is a new language that is not spoken in the student's home or taught in the student's home. For some students who speak more than two languages in the home setting, L2 academic language may be a third or fourth language spoken by the student.

Multi Language Learner: A student who speaks more than one language and has not reached mastery level on the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSITELL) exam. These students are classified as needing special education and require support to become proficient in English and are identified pursuant to Section 154.3 of Commissioner's Regulations. In New York State, these students were referred to as ELLs and are now referred to ENL students or MML students.

New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSITELL): Assessment of the English language level of new students whose home or primary language is other than English. The child's score on the NYSITELL (Entering, Emerging, Transitioning, Expanding, or Commanding) will determine if he or she is entitled to receive English Language Learner (ELL) services and will determine the level of English language support. The results will also help teachers plan the best program for these children based on their strengths and needs in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English (U.S. Department of Education, 2019).

New York City Department of Education (DOE): The department of the government of New York City that manages the city's public school system.

Second-Language Acquisition (SLA) Researchers: Academic or scholarly individual who conducts research on how students learn a new language in an academic setting.

Student with Disability (SWD): Student who is classified as needing special education and is required to meet the Common Core Standards with mandated accommodations or modifications. Students with disabilities are those who have been identified as such by the Committee on Special Education and are receiving services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Students with disabilities include those having an intellectual disability; hearing impairment, including deafness; speech or language impairment; visual impairment, including blindness; serious emotional disturbance; orthopedic impairment; autism; traumatic brain injury; developmental delay; other health impairment; specific learning disability; deaf-blindness; or multiple disabilities and who, by reason thereof, receive special education and related services under the IDEA according to an Individualized Education Program (IEP), Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), or a services plan.

Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale Survey Items (Téllez & Manthey, 2015): These survey items explore the relations among teachers' perceptions of ELL strategies and school programs, teachers' ratings of collective efficacy in meeting all students' needs, and the general school climate. The Likert scale survey uses 12 statements. The total score can range from 12 to 60 (or if dividing by the number of items [12] to get a Likert-type range mean, from 1 to 5). Higher scores indicate more favorable outlooks regarding the teachers' perceptions of teaching ELLs.

Teacher Multicultural Attitude Survey (TMAS) (Ponterotto et al., 1998): The TMAS gives one score by summing all items based on a Likert scale survey using 20 statements.

Total scores can then range from 20 to 100 (or if dividing by the number of items [20] to get a Likert-type range mean, from 1 to 5). Higher scores indicate more appreciation and awareness of multicultural teaching issues. The TMAS is only meant for large scale mean research at this time and should not be used in any evaluative way.

Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL): New York State teaching license associated with teaching students whose first language is not English.

CHAPTER 2

Introduction

Chapter 1 addressed the concern for high quality access to education for English

language learners and the shortage of qualified teachers. In addition, it introduced an

overview of the applied methodology. Chapter 2 examines the relationship between the

sociocultural framework and the review of related literature.

Review of Related Research

The sociocultural work of Bruner (1960) and Vygotsky (1978) agreed that

students should be able to use discovery in their learning process. Social interactions and

culture play a role in the development of higher order thinking skills. The research of

Vygotsky (1978) is often used as a foundation of the sociocultural theory, as it focuses on

qualitative changes in behavior of children over time. The goal is to see the process of

childhood development through the acquisition of language and the use of higher order

thinking skills. In recent years, the sociocultural framework has become fundamental in

the implication of learning, teaching, and education by influencing instructional design.

The major themes of sociocultural learning are human development and learning

through the organization of social, historical, and cultural interaction. The second theme

is the use of psychological tools with a major focus on language to create higher mental

functions. The last part of the framework is the use of Zone of Proximal Development

(ZPD): "Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the

social level, and later, on the individual level; first between people (interpsychological)

and then inside the child (intrapsychological)" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 57). Learning occurs

when students recall information and make sense of their learning by establishing a

personal connection. Students must pull from prior knowledge and cultural experiences to acquire new knowledge. A more modern approach of the sociocultural learning framework comes from Scott and Palincsar (2013), who found that when students work with others on different tasks, they were able to learn in a socially shared experience that allowed them to gain knowledge.

Teachers must create an environment of guided participation (Rogoff, 1990). The activities must allow learners to acquire new culturally valuable skills using meaningful, collaborated activities and working with others. A successful classroom is established by teachers having awareness of surrounding circumstances, including individuals and how their behaviors are affected, specifically by their surroundings, as well as social and cultural factors. Scott and Palincsar (2013) explained the importance of students being taught how to successfully transfer learned skills to a variety of situations and to solve everyday problems. Teachers of ELLs need to use their perceptions to create a classroom with a focus on the life experiences of students at different levels of awareness, comprehension, and understanding. Matusov (2015) explained that learning must be a transformation based on participation in a sociocultural activity and not a transmission of a skill. Teachers must be able to able to create learning that drives development for students, and a sensitivity to diversity must be used within the classroom.

Miller (2011) found that behavior differs between cultures and that each demographic group has a unique history as well as cultural circumstances that may require different developmental routes to reach a desired endpoint. All students should be perceived as unique individuals rather than a single entity. Rogoff (1990) found that each cultural group has different learning needs, and verbal instruction may not effectively

work for all cultures or all types of learning. When teachers create scaffolding, they must understand each student-specific ZPD.

In addition, the knowledge of teachers has a direct effect on classroom practices. Teachers must understand students' ZPD to create a better and more dynamic indicator of cognitive development. Teachers of ELLs must understand students' ZPD for L1 and L2 vocabulary in order to know what a learner can accomplish independently and if they can reflect on what has already be learned (Vygotsky, 1978). Teachers must create classroom strategies to provide instruction and guidance within the learners' ZPD. Miller (2011) explained that work, play, and other activities can be used to teach individuals beyond their current level and function. This creates a co-constructed understanding of an otherwise common understanding of a task, allowing the learner to apply it to future learning situations. Teachers must create proper scaffolding for ELLs to link the gaps between L1 and L2. Scaffolding is a set of tools or actions that help a learner successfully complete a task within their ZPD. It is a mutual interaction between the learner and the teacher that adjusts as they work collaboratively. As students become better able to complete a task, the teacher gradually phases out the scaffolding (Miller, 2011). This allows the learners to take on more responsibilities for their learning goals, actively collaborating in the learning process and becoming a resource for peers (Grabinger et al., 2007). When teachers were able to successfully use students' ZPD and scaffolding in the classroom, it bridged the gap between student L1 and L2, creating an environment where students of different backgrounds were able to attain a deeper understanding of academic content (Watson & Reigeluth, 2016).

Purpose of the Review

In reviewing the extant literature on students learning English in an academic setting and the perceptions of teachers, several philosophical and theoretical research articles and books explained the diverse needs of ELLs and the challenges that teachers face when working with ELL students. However, significant studies on teachers' perceptions and years of experiences with ELLs were lacking.

The purpose of this review were as follows: (a) to identify the relationship between the sociocultural framework and how it relates to teaching ELLs; (b) to look at Critical Race Theory (CRT) and the historical impacts it has had on teachers' perceptions of diverse learners; (c) to examine the literature for significance regarding creating proper classroom environments for ELLs.

The intent of the review was to inform educational leaders, educators, and political figures about the diverse needs of ELL students and the teachers who educate them. Through a review of the literature, a theoretical framework can be developed that will guide the integration of the relevant literature.

Literature Search Procedures

The literature reviewed for this chapter was accessed via online databases, including ProQuest Direct, EBSCOhost, and JSTOR. In addition, published peer-reviewed books were utilized during the research process. Lastly, print editions of peer-reviewed educational journals were used. The literature review incudes meta-analysis and non-experimental studies relating to ELLs and teacher perceptions of ELLs.

Theoretical Framework

    Sociocultural

        The theoretical framework combines the sociocultural work of Bruner (1960) and Vygotsky (1978), which stated that teachers must create an environment for students so that they can be free to discover and learn. A focus must be placed on the learner within their social, cultural, and historical context to create pedagogical solution to the development of lifelong learning and critical thinking (Grabinger et al., 2007). The teacher must have an awareness of surrounding circumstances, including individuals and how their behaviors are affected, specifically by their surroundings, as well as social and cultural factors. When relating to ELLs, teachers must understand the students' first language (L1) learning needs to create an environment that allows a student to learn English (L2) (Sparks et al., 2011). The sociocultural framework address how humans communicate, understand, relate, and cope with one another. In a classroom that is using the sociocultural framework, interaction and collaboration create an opportunity for reflective thinking that can lead to higher levels of cognitive, social, and moral development, as well as self-esteem, for students. Examining how teachers' perceptions and knowledge influence their attitudes toward teaching ELLs in the sociocultural perspective involves teacher experience, teacher training, hours of professional development with ELLs, preservice teaching course work with ELLs, on-the-job training with ELLs, grade level taught, years of teaching, years of teaching ELLs, location of school (school district), and certification. All will be considered in the holistic view of what personal and posteriori knowledge a teacher brings to an ELL classroom. Educational instruction must reflect society's changing education needs, with a focus on

creating challenging and engaging curricula for diverse learners (Watson & Reigeluth, 2016).

When students' cultural experiences were addressed, students became more receptive to new knowledge. Students who do not know information may feel inferior to their peers (Garza & Garza, 2010). In a classroom, ELLs' personal experiences may be overlooked by the teacher. This can affect the self-esteem of ELLs. Teachers must be mindful of their students and create a classroom that gives the ELLs a feeling of belonging (López, 2010). Teachers must create leaning communities that use situated cognition and cognitive apprenticeships to allow students to understand the world around them and respond to instruction. Carraher et al. (1985) researched Brazilian children and mathematical problem-solving. When the students were presented with math in the simulated selling of produce, the students were able to successfully answer the math questions. When given the same level of math questions in a conventional mathematical format, the students were not able to solve the questions. Teachers must relate the personal experiences of students into the academic setting.

Brill (2001) and Collins (1998) identified four benefits for students when teachers use situated cognition as a means of instructional design. The first is it allows learners to develop the ability to apply knowledge. Lave (1988) studied tailors in Liberia and found that they could solve complex math problems in a real-world context, but struggled to solve the same math problems in a traditional question format. The second is it allows learners to become effective problem solvers after learning in novel and diverse settings. The third is it creates an environment in which learners can witness firsthand the implications of the knowledge they have acquired. Lave and Wenger (1991) further

studied the learning process of tailors in Liberia, discovering that problem-based learning was used as a tool to teach skills from a master tailor to an apprentice. The last benefit of situated cognition is that teachers supporting students hones the latter's ability to organize knowledge for later use. Scott and Palincsar (2013) cited the importance of communities as grounded in the sociocultural theory as necessary to develop the requisite knowledge and skills. See Figure 2.

Figure 2: Teacher Mindfulness Chart
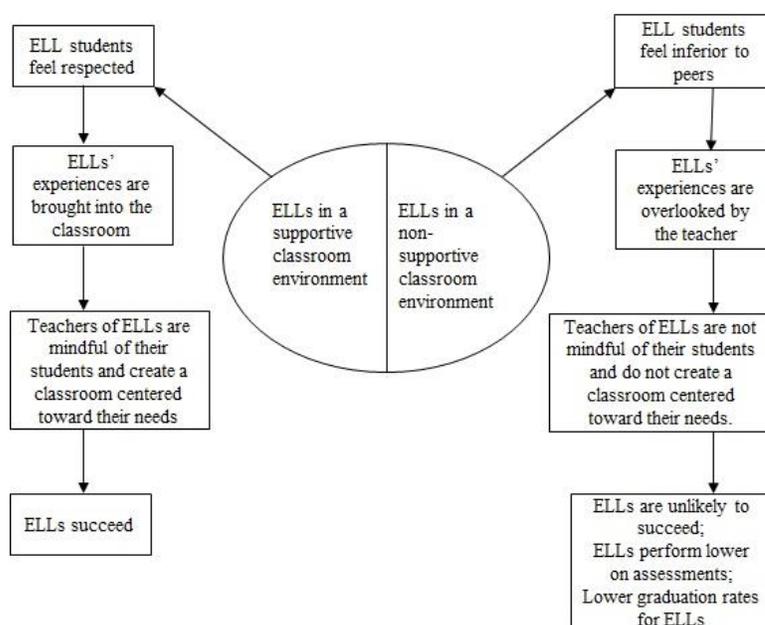
Adapted from Watson & Reigeluth (2016); López (2010); Brill (2001); & Collins (1998)

Bruner (1960) theorized that students could learn outside of a predetermined stage or prescribed age when a teacher provided an environment for discovery-based learning. When students interact with a teacher who has a vast knowledge on a topic, this can assist them in developing their learning. When working with ELLs, value must be placed on the student's home language and culture. Many students are worried about speaking English because of accents, but when they find that they can speak in their home language, they

are more comfortable with interactions before their peers. This practice improved the confidence of the learner and allowed them to feel comfortable when attempting to speak English in front of the class. Wintergerst et al. (2003) asserted: "Learning strategies are the particular techniques or methods students use in learning situations to solve problems, approach an assignment, prepare for a test, or otherwise engage in classroom activities" (p. 86). When a teacher creates an environment for students that is rooted in respect for and application of their home culture and vocabulary, the foundation is set for the successful application of academic content in English.

Research has found that it is important for educators and parents to foster more outgoing, risk-taking exploratory behavior in children. Teachers can create communities of inquiry. Garrison and Akyol (2013) explained that when social presence is established as part of a community of inquiry, "collaboration and critical discourse is enhanced and sustained" (p. 108). When working with ELLs it is imperative for teachers to become aware that students were forming their opinion regarding enjoyment towards school prior to their ability to speak English. Central to the theory is the idea that the socialization process forms the behavior that affects future achievement. Steinkamp and Maehr's (1984) theory of motivational style and exploratory behavior links early childhood experiences in school with adult achievement. A teacher's ability to create communities of inquiry, ones that can fluidly integrate a student's prior knowledge with their cultural experiences, allows for the development of all learners to relate through relevant experiences, thus creating a positive learning environment (Grabinger et al., 2007).

Classrooms must be set up as collaborative environments that encourage learners to think critically and apply their knowledge. Educators must center their classrooms

around creating cooperative learning environments for students, allowing for authentic activities, and ensuring that their instruction will create a sociocultural theory of learning. This is done by allowing students to solve practical problems, develop cultural skills by guided participation in collaborative groups, and use language for communication and internalized learning (Reeves et al., 2002). Classrooms that were set up by teachers with observational learning allowed for ELLs to have better academic outcomes (Schunk, 2016). Teachers must use scaffolding within learning to support students' understanding. They must also realize that their ELLs' ability to learn through observation is especially important, as they do not always have grade level language abilities. Teachers must use a mix of authentic activities, real world problem-solving, and anchored instruction, relating their content on an applicable level to promote an environment of complex problem-solving abilities for collaborative teams. When working with ELLs, teachers must show flexibility in order to foster a learning environment that scaffolds the language and translation needs of ELLs. Establishing an environment that makes all learners feel they are members of a learning community is necessary so that ELL students feel more comfortable taking academic risks in the classroom. This will ultimately improve their English language comprehension and understanding of academic content. Teachers must use both authentic activities and anchored instruction to create learning in a social setting, encourage student development, and foster the ability of students to solve complex problems (Bransford et al., 1990).

Vygotsky (1978) observed that students learned best when they interacted with one another. Research on second-language acquisition (SLA) emphasized the use of pedagogical tasks that encouraged students to work collaboratively in order to produce

spoken and written L2 outputs in the classroom (Dobao, 2012; Kim, 2008; Nassaji & Tian, 2010; Swain, 2000, 2005, 2010; Swain & Lapkin, 1998, 2002; Swain & Watanabe, 2012). Teachers must set up classrooms in a way that requires learners to work together to use internal feedback and language outputs, thus providing effective opportunities for external peer feedback and scaffolding (Dobao, 2012; Nassaji & Tian, 2010). Seeing how many ELL students displayed a difference in written and spoken output of L2, second-language acquisition (SLA) researchers determined a link between L2 research and sociocultural theory. The production of language is a process that pushed learners to notice gaps in their linguistic knowledge, triggering a socio-cognitive process that enhanced their ability to learn L2 (Swain, 2006, 2010; Swain & Lapkin, 2002). A teacher's ability to promote L2 development within the students' ZPD led to independent problem-solving at the highest level (Vygotsky, 1978).

Modern research on ZPD had found that interaction must involve an expert and a novice. In the classroom, the expert is a teacher or student with a higher level of academic understanding, and the novice is the student with a lower academic understanding. The expert uses mediated assistance to help the student perform better (Lantolf, 2000; Nassaji & Cumming, 2000). One tool that can help students reach their ZPD is scaffolding.

Scaffolding is related to Vygotsky's (1978) ZPD, in which teachers of ELLs can utilize social interactions and proper use of language to help ELLs learn. Mirzaei and Eslami (2015) examined ZPD's role in fine-tuning student L2-input as it related to writing. The study concluded that ZPD activities significantly facilitated the learner's ability to use metadiscoursal devices in their writing, making students more enganged in

writing tasks (Mirzaei & Eslami, 2015). Successful teachers work with students to improve their social skills as well as their cultural knowledge and understanding of background. When working in an inquiry-based environment, multiple routes and outcomes can be accepted in order to solve a problem. Ultimtaely, ZPD activities allow students to compare what they can accomplish independently and reflect on what they have learned (Vygotsky, 1978). Teachers of ELLs must be able to successfully assist students, creating ZPD-designed learning experiences. Houng's (2006) study of group work among Vietnamese students learning new vocabulary found that when student work in homogeneous groups were "unassisted," the group did not perform as well as when working in heterogeneous groups "assisted" by higher level students.

Twenty-first century evolution of the sociocultural theory emphasized the interaction between students as an additional form of scaffolding a teacher can use to improve their students' ZPD (Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Guerrero & Villamil, 2000; Riazi & Rezaei, 2011; Shehadeh, 2011; Walqui, 2006). Further interaction between a teacher and a classroom full of students was also regarded as necessary scaffolding (Davis & Miyake, 2004; Many et al. 2009). Ultimately, teachers who create a classroom of peer collaboration can provide better scaffolding to students. Houng's (2007) study found that when students are placed in expert-novice, student-led groups, they have more available learning opportunities. Similar findings were also cited by Richards & Rodgers (2001), Gibbons (2011), and McDonough (2004), who all found that when ELL students learning L2 worked in pairs or groups, they were able to produce better results than when working alone.

This approach allows students to see that success can be achieved in different ways. An achievement in the academic setting can inspire students to continue to grow in their academics on a broader scale. The successful use of this growth mindset permits them to become self-actualized and less likely to drop out of school, seeing how they have developed intrinsic motivation. Students who reach the self-actualized level of learning often continue their development toward becoming "human beings who think and feel and make meaning of the world around them" (Donmoyer & Kos, 1993, p. 195). See Figure 3.

Figure 3: Training for Teachers of ELLs
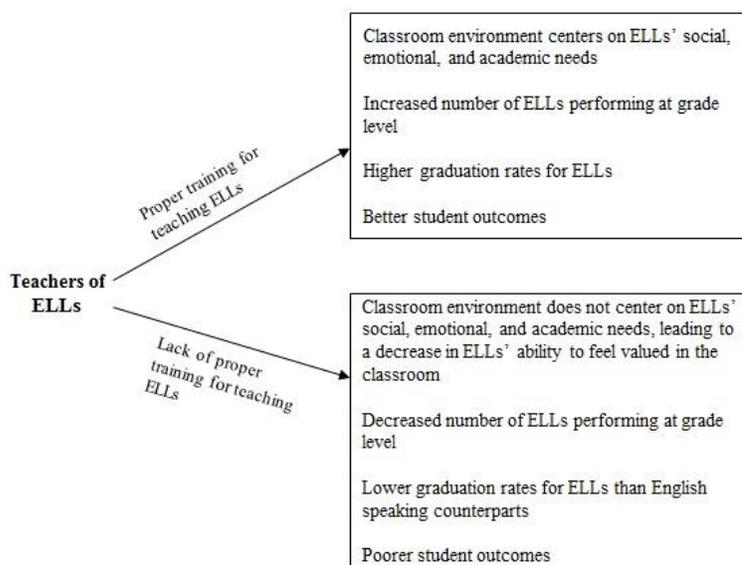
Adapted from: Dobao (2012); Kim (2008); Nassaji & Tian (2010); Swain (2000, 2005, 2010); Swain & Lapkin (1998, 2002); & Swain & Watanabe (2012)

Students should be able to learn in an environment that pushes them to relate what occurs in the real world to what is going on in the textbook. Since the primary function of teachers is to inspire all students to learn, a classroom must be set up as student-centered above all else, with flexibility, acceptance, and high mobility. In addition, students need to be able to work in an environment where they can hone their ability to create and

explore new ideas about learning. According to Wintergerst et al. (2003), "Learning styles, on the other hand, are a part of an individual's makeup or personality" (p. 86). When learning content is presented in a way in which the students recognize value, they will likely be more receptive to the learning process. When working with ELLs, a supportive learning environment can make the difference between a student's ability to succeeded or struggle.

Academic communication cannot always be processed through language. Students must learn in a "space in which they can construct, create, and inquire actively" (Maker & Nielson, 2006, p. 30). The learning environment for ELLs must be student-centered and use hands-on, project-based learning with peer collaboration. Jewell (2011) stated that "for students to grasp what is being taught, they needed to be able to relate it to real life experiences" (p. 17). In traditional classrooms set up in rows with strict rules and regulations, "students cannot actively solve problems, do experiments, [or] observe and construct new knowledge under these conditions" (Maker & Nielson, 2006, p. 29). This is related to the education of ELLs in the United States, as students need to be in a classroom where their linguistic, social, and emotional needs are being met.

When working with ELL populations, Phillips and Wardship (2012) emphasized the importance of underlining new vocabulary and keywords, allowing the ELLs to observe which words were important and thus acquire an academic vocabulary. Khaliliaqdam (2014) found that scaffolding in ZPD should be recognized as a tool to teach L2 by providing cognitive-structured and organizational models of language. To help further academic content language acquisition, total physical response (TPR) would be used so that students could first listen to how words sounded in English. Students

would then practice saying the new words. Each time a word was said, an added hand single would follow, allowing ELLs to express understanding of science content without speaking out loud to the class. TPR also provides kinesthetic learners with an additional channel for learning.

Csikszentmihalyi (1988) asked, "How can we make past creativity available to the most people, so as to facilitate future creativity?" (p. 337). In a 2017 interview with Lebuda, Csikszentmihalyi reflected on his time in school after WWII: "That was a kind of constant realization that made me think that schools were really missing more important things in life, they just got you to remember what happened in the past but didn't give you the strength and the knowledge to face the future." Teachers using the sociocultural framework within their classroom create a space for students to hone their knowledge and foster their problem-solving abilities in order to approach future issues. When working with ELLs, the use of flexibility must be implemented to bridge the gap between their students' ZPD in L1 and L2. According to Maker & Nielson (2006), "[f]lexibility, in essence, is demonstrated by a willingness to change—either room arrangements or routines—so that students will feel they are an integral part of an effective, functional, learning community" (p. 63).

For all students, academics must be related to real world experiences in order to provide value to their learning experiences. Based on the students' prior knowledge about vocabulary acquired earlier in the week, they can adapt the content to their lives as developing human beings who are gradually understanding their place in the world. The use of inquiry-based activity is essential when linking science vocabulary and real-life relation of content. Since students need to work in groups to better develop

communication skills, the use of cooperative learning with group-specific roles can help all ELLs feel that they have a part in the academic experience. Giving each student individual responsibility will also help target and promote their academic preferences. Csikszetmihalyi and Lebuda (2017) explained that people like to do things because they were good at it: "I meet challenges, I find this thing challenging and I feel good when, through my skill, I am able to master the challenge. I know clearly what I have to do, I get constantly the feeling of knowing how well I am doing" (p. 1).

Review of Literature

Critical Race Theory (CRT)

For ELLs to succeed in the educational setting, teachers must provide the necessary conceptual tools for integrated education for ELLs. Within education, race and racism, as well as other forms of oppression are present within the academic setting (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Race impacts various aspects of education. Students and teachers enter a classroom with material inequities, different exposures to interaction with policies, and unique lived experiences (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Teachers of ELLs must recognize these factors within their students and create a holistic view of the learners. CRT in education is an important conceptual tool in analyzing the context of ELL students because it locates student experiences within a historically situated institutional context. Understanding the role of CRT in education is needed to expose the nature of race and racism as it is transmitted from United States society into its educational institutions. Property rights create inequitable outcomes for diverse students and their families (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Long term discrimination based on race within the U.S. has led to housing and school segregation (Anderson, 2004; Xiong, 2012).

Different areas receive various amounts of school funding, thus causing a disparity

between quality of education between geographic locations (Baker & Corcoran, 2012).

Schools in different areas had different levels of supportive and qualified teachers of the

same racial/cultural background as their students (Sleeter et al., 2014). It goes beyond the

educational sphere, and can be seen in other American institutions, most visibly in the

healthcare sector. According to Kason (2020), even "[t]he hospital is not always able to

provide the same quality of services to parents who are not Native-English speakers." For

ELLs to receive the highest quality of education targeted to their specific needs, teachers

must understand CRT and how it impacts their classroom dynamics and their students'

overall performance and experience.

Teaching Practice

Most researchers contend that a teacher's beliefs and knowledge had a direct

effect on classroom practices (Calderhead, 1991; Pajares, 1992; Woolfolk Hoy et al.

2006; Spruce & Bol, 2015). According to Adoniou (2015), "[t]eacher knowledge is a

complex tapestry, and teachers must successfully weave the multiple threads" (p. 99).

Knowledge is described by Bernstein (1999) as vertical and horizontal. Discourse of

knowledge is the basis of understanding the nature of knowledge. In Bernstein's model,

horizontal discourse is based on common sense knowledge, the ability to solve practical

problems in everyday life. Vertical discourse is formal, learned, and specialized

knowledge; this knowledge is considered hierarchical and provides the ability to know

the why behind a sequence of thinking. Pajares (1992) concluded that "knowledge and

beliefs are inextricably intertwined, but the potent affective, evaluative, and episodic

nature of beliefs makes them a filter through which new phenomena are interpreted" (p. 325).

Teacher effectiveness has had an influence on student performance (Clark et al., 2013; Hiebert & Morris, 2012). Current literature on effective instruction indicated that teachers needed to have targeted professional development to improve students' knowledge (Leos & Saavedra, 2010). Shulman (1986) defined knowledge of content as the specific understanding of how an educator must attain a deep understanding of a subject. Peterson et al. (1994) stated that during the career of an educator, a teacher must use their experiences and reflection to effectively use their knowledge to build outstanding programs and maintain their motivation to continue to gain knowledge. In terms of working with ELLs specifically, understanding how the English language works in literacy and literature is important. For a teacher to be effective in teaching children who struggle with literacy, they need a strong content knowledge of the English language (Spear-Swerling & Cheesman, 2012). Shulman (1986) indicated that lack of content knowledge results in narrowed and regressionist pedagogies as teachers resort to replicating their own past experiences with instruction in language. Adoniou (2015) expanded on the concept: "Thus, in subject English, teachers must have a content knowledge of how the English language works (linguistic knowledge), how English literature is constructed (literary knowledge), and how communication happens in English (literacy knowledge)" (p. 104). Good knowledge of content is needed to provide good education for ELL students. Spear-Swerling and Cheesman (2012) found that when teachers had poor content knowledge, "teachers may provide inadvertently confusing instruction to children" (p. 1692). Liakopoulou (2011) emphasized the importance of

understanding the complexity of teacher knowledge in meeting the learning needs of students: "The degree of combination of all this separate knowledge differentiates the 'competent' from the 'excellent' teacher" (p. 475). For a teacher to succeed at teaching ELLs, they must have had a well-rounded knowledge of content.

A 2011 study in California concluded that teachers were ill-prepared, and that they believed they had not received training in methods that were useful in meeting the challenges of teaching ELLs (Alamillo et al., 2011). Lenski & Nierstheimer (2006) defined the knowledge of teaching as the pedagogical understandings of how to teach. Moreover, Shulman's (1986) notion of pedagogical content knowledge showed that the capacity of teachers to apply their general pedagogic skills correlated with their ability to teach discipline content. When creating academic content, teachers must be able to plan and assess curriculum documents.

Teachers can have a privileged knowledge domain in the public discourse. Teachers must have knowledge about teaching as well as the ability to teach the unique learners in their classroom, with the overwhelming truism being that good teaching is enough for teaching all learners (De Jong & Harper, 2005).

Buehl and Fives (2009) explicitly linked teacher beliefs to practice. In their study, they administered an open-ended questionnaire to 100 preservice and current teachers about their beliefs regarding teaching knowledge. The findings identified both informal sources, such as personal experiences, observations, and reflections, as well as more formal sources, including the educational preparation and research that were used to shape their knowledge about teaching. A similar finding was cited in Peterson's (1994) research, which found that "[m]any of the teachers cited 'experience' as their greatest

source of professional knowledge" (p. 31). This was also seen in Guo's (2015) study, in which teachers responded to students' needs and interests based on the teacher's knowledge. Teachers of ELLs should acknowledge their preservice teaching training as a skillset that could be transferable to teaching their ELLs.

Teachers ultimately set the learning environment for their students. Adams (2009) explained that success with ELLs can only be truly achieved if teachers are willing to be taught (or self-taught) how to create an academic environment that is conducive to ELL learning. A supportive learning environment for ELLs allows for inquiry-based learning. In these environments, Adams posited that when technology is used in an appropriate way, the learning of ELLs can effectively increase. When teachers implemented new and relevant technology in their instruction, it allowed for ELLs to make connections between all the language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), which lead to greater academic success.

Teacher Training Regarding English Language Learners

Teachers require training on the academic and social behaviors that are unique to ELL students. Shulman (1986) defined knowledge of theory as the theoretical understanding of teaching literacy and its history, which was supplemented by Heilbronn and Yandell's (2010) separation of knowledge into propositional knowledge and procedural knowledge. Similarly, Cochran-Smith and Lytle's (1999) conceptualization of teachers found that they must possess and operationalize knowledge on two planes: knowledge for practice and knowledge in practice. Therefore, teachers must first understand why the theory has been useful for teaching students and then develop the knowledge of how to implement it into their classrooms. Teachers of ELLs must have a

theoretical understanding of teaching language acquisition, and must be informed of the three major language learning pedagogies: behaviorism, nativism, and social constructivism. Linguistic, psychological, and neurological research traditions have informed theories of language acquisition and literacy teaching. Theoretical knowledge has thus been a crucial thread in the teacher knowledge tapestry (Adoniou, 2015, p. 104-105).

According to recent researh, teachers place value in having knowledge of educational theory. Wilson and Bai (2010) administered a questionnaire to 105 preservice teachers. Collected data found that preservice teachers understood that metacognitive knowledge impacted their understanding of how to teach their students metacognitive strategies. Subsequently, teachers understood the value of theory and its application in classrooms. Gu and Day (2011) also suggested that when teachers were forewarned and forearmed, they were better able to meet the needs of their students, indicating that the study of sociocultural policies of education is crucial in teacher education. Lastly, the importance of knowledge of theory was cited in Devine (2008), which propounded that it is critical for teachers to use theory of constructivism to seek to understand not only the origins of identity, but also how it is formed to meet the needs of their students.

When teachers hold misconceptions and lack understanding of their ELL students, this can result in an over-classification of ELLs as students with disabilities (SWD). Teachers require an understanding of who their students are as people. Lenski and Nierstheimer (2006) recognized the importance of teachers' knowledge regarding their students, and that their confidence in the effectiveness of this knowledge will allow them to meet the diverse learning needs of the children in their classrooms. Teachers must

successfully identify the Zone of Proximal Development for each learner (Vygotsky, 1978). They must determine if their students speak the language of the school (English) as their first language and identify whether their home experiences are congruent with school experiences. Furthermore, they must also understand their students' cognitive capabilities to learn a language, which may be modified by their age or other congenital conditions. Good teachers should be able to monitor their language in the classroom to meet the specific language needs of their learners (Adoniou, 2015, p. 105). Teachers must also effectively grasp their students' "knowledge, skills and attitudes," which when "aligned with [their] interests and needs is the central focus of child development" (Guo, 2015, p. 63).

Gorski (2006) indicated that teachers need to possess knowledge of their diverse learners by putting aside their own cultural ideas and bringing the needs and interests of children of diverse cultures into their lessons. According to May (2003), a teacher's ability to utilize knowledge about their students can create a multicultural education, allowing their students' learning to develop a more complex and critical interpretation that reconstructs education as a social agent that challenges the social structures that produce inequities. Guo (2015) asserted that such a teacher "emphasized the importance of knowing the needs and interests of the children and saw this knowledge as having a valuable effect on the learning experiences of children of minority cultures" (p. 69).

Teachers can create conceptualized knowledge as a race-consciousness in their reflection when they acquire the necessary knowledge to become self-aware (Ullucci, 2010). This would give rise to a practice in which a teacher's content and behavioral framework is aligned with their learning about children and their races; the process of

learning from children and their families is valued over a teacher's subjective knowledge. Teachers must work with their students and their families to provide an appropriate understanding of their students (Guo, 2014). Guo (2015) also asserted, "Without parents' input, it appeared that teachers could not build appropriate knowledge about children of minority cultural background" (p. 68).

Teachers must understand that an ELL's home culture also plays a role in how they perceive instruction. Depending on where an ELL's cultural identity is established, they may hold a different perception of their academic abilities. Sydorenko et al. (2017) found that ELLs from different cultural groups responded differently when their mastery of English was assessed. In a culturally efficacious model program for education, data collected in Flores's (2015) study at the University of San Antonio found that the only way for ELL students to be successful in a class was if teachers were provided with proper education and training when it came to teaching ELLs. When teachers were able to instruct in a culturally sensitive way, ELLs had higher outcomes for academic success (Flores et al., 2015). Students from a Chinese culture rated themselves lower than peers learning English, whereas ELLs from Russia believed that they were better at speaking it than other counterparts learning the same language. When assessed by an instructor, the students' understanding and their English-speaking abilities were the same (Sydorenko et al., 2017). When creating instruction for ELLs, teachers must note differences in cultural character among ELLs of diverse backgrounds. For ELLs to be successful in the academic setting, they need qualified teachers who have been trained with strategies designed to create an instructional curriculum that enhances their learning environments.

Figure 4: Knowledge of Teaching ELLs
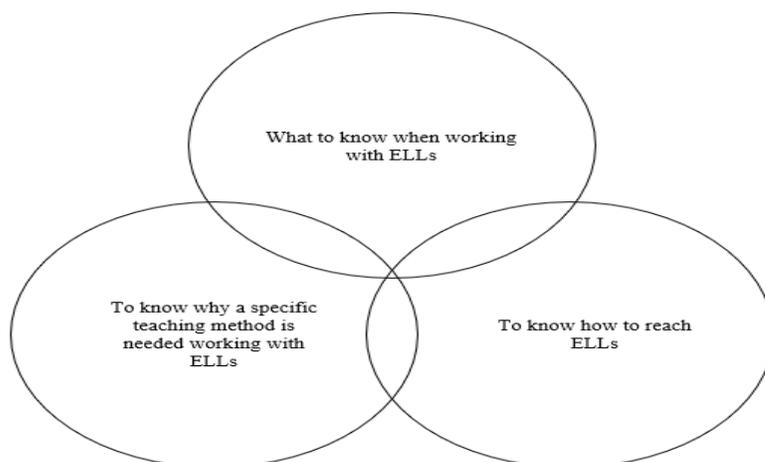
Adapted from Adoniou (2015)

Teacher training as it pertains to ELLs relates to the sociocultural ideas of Bruner (1960) and Vygotsky (1978), which emphasized that good teaching requires an educator who possesses knowledge of the sociocultural politics of teaching. Teachers must understand the ways in which larger political agendas impact teaching regarding state and national testing as well as global citizenship for students. Teachers must understand larger sociopolitical agendas in society and acknowledge how this impacts their ELLs. Students must also be literate, according to Adoniou (2015): "Literacy is a perennially fraught field in the history of any country's education endeavors. It is recognized as key to achievement both at school and beyond, and governments and administrative bodies devote large parts of their policies and budgets to improving and monitoring literacy outcomes" (p. 106). Teachers must be knowledgeable about the social politics of teaching to promote academic success for ELL students.

Since knowledge is defined as both vertical and horizontal (Bernstein, 1999), teachers must be able to understand the why and how of knowledge. Adoniou (2015)

created a framework for viewing the orientations of knowledge, specifically citing what, how, and why. Each must be looked at in terms of knowledge about content, theory, teaching, students, school context, and the sociocultural politics of teaching. The knowledge of teachers has had a direct effect on classroom practices (Calderhead, 1991; Pajares, 1992; Woolfolk Hoy et al., 2006; Spruce & Bol, 2015).

Perceptions of Teachers

The life experiences of teachers create different levels of awareness, comprehension, and understanding when working with students. Teachers place different values on what is important for ELLs to understand. The value of speaking the English language is viewed as important to an ELL, as "adolescents expressed that the lack of English proficiency would bring isolation, exclusion, and social problems" (Brittain, 2009, p. 106). Teachers were also cited as saying that they valued when a student spoke English more than when a student spoke Spanish: "Officials believed that any performance or effort done in the native language of immigrant adolescents did not have the same merit as doing it in English" (Brittain, 2009, p. 106). Teachers who value growth mindset with their students, in which they "believe their talents can be developed (through hard work, good strategies, and input from others)," encourage their students to do so through a structured process, as they "tend to achieve more than those with a more fixed mindset (those who believe their talents are innate gifts)" (Dweck, 2016). In studies of ELLs, teachers had a role in shaping mindsets, as "it is said that learners' beliefs cause them to approach a specific language learning task differently and account for the individual differences observed even among learners with similar language proficiency" (Mohebi & Khodadady, 2011, p. 42).

In terms of instruction, what teachers' value may be different from what ELL students' value. McCardle and Leung (2006) found that when looking at Spanish speakers being taught English, grammar was not valued as highly by the students as their ability to speak the language. This feeling of ELLs not esteeming grammar was echoed by Loewen et al. (2009), who examined "L2 learners' beliefs about grammar instruction and error correction. For instance, learners had a general view of the efficacy or usefulness of grammar instruction. However, some learners held negative views of grammar instruction and still others prioritized communication over grammar" (p. 102). Due to ELLs' dislike of grammar, teachers' instructional practices should work to increase vocabulary first so that students are able to speak a language, and design instruction for grammar thereafter.

Teachers must also have an awareness of cultural differences among their students to gain a holistic understanding of them. Mohebi and Khodadady (2011) found that learners' beliefs cause them to approach a specific language learning task. Kim (2002) found that Vietnamese and Cambodian immigrant children in school learned differently despite coming from similar geographic locations. Sydorenko et al. (2017) found that ELL students from Germany and Russia differed in what classroom environment they learned best. Grant et al. (2011) discovered that Spanish-speaking students and Portuguese-speaking students differed in their ability to read and write in English. To improve teachers' experiences with ELLs and create a level of awareness, preservice and classroom teachers must be presented with a platform to increase their knowledge about ELLs.

Kilic (2015) collected data using the 24-item Perception about Teacher Knowledge on 315 preservice teachers to determine their perceptions about teacher knowledge and investigate how they differ with respect to some variables such as gender, department, class, academic achievement, and career planning. The study found that "pedagogical content knowledge is a fundamental component of teacher knowledge, and that preservice teachers' perceptions about their own knowledge is high and relates to their classes as well as the quality of the undergraduate program they were enrolled in" (Kilic, 2015, p. 1841). Thus, when a preservice teacher is educated as to how to teach ELLs, their perceptions of their knowledge will be higher than that of a preservice teacher with no education on teaching ELLs.

ELLs graduate at a lower rate than native English speakers, and since the number of ELLs are rising, stakeholders in education have increased their interest in what can be done to provide instruction to ELLs (U.S. Department of Education, 2013). Each school and community is unique based on geographic location and the students they serve, and "[a]n important part of becoming a member of any new community is having some insight into how that community works" (Adoniou, 2015, p. 105). Teachers must have knowledge about school context, including the school and community they teach in and how that may impact the teaching strategies needed to help students. Each school has had a different set of requirements for planning, reporting, assessing, and administering content in the academic setting. Teachers must be well prepared for the different learning potentials of students and what resources are available within the context of school, which will affect learning opportunities afforded to students (Haggarty et al., 2011). Teachers must have knowledge: "knowledge about students, knowledge about content,

knowledge about pedagogy and knowledge about relationships within and beyond the classroom" (Santoro et. al, 2013, p. 123). When working with ELLs, teachers must use their knowledge about the school and community to shape their classrooms to meet their students' needs.

Attitudes of Teachers

According to Grant et al. (2011), "[m]any studies had found that [for] L2 learners . . . English vocabulary knowledge remains below that of their native English-speaking peers for a long period of time" (p. 219). Teachers must design classroom instruction to help scaffold the differences that ELLs have between L1 and L2 vocabulary.

Many ELLs were not offered access to highly qualified teachers, however. The U.S. Department of Education (2013) stated that data on the 2011 achievement gap between non-ELL and ELL students was 36 points at the 4th-grade level and 44 points at the 8th-grade level. This gap between ELLs and native speakers is due to a lack of qualified teachers. According to the U.S. Department of Education data collection in 2016, thirty-two states reported that they did not have enough qualified teachers to meet the demands of the increasing ELL population (Sutcher et. al, 2016). This data suggests that the quality of instruction is not performed in a way that supports the needs of ELLs for them to succeed in the academic and post-graduation settings. Data collected in the state of Idaho during the 2002–03 school year revealed that 5.64% of the state's ESL and bilingual teachers were not fully certified (Batt, 2008 p. 39). This mirrors data collected in other states as well.

Data from Ross (2011) found that many district teachers were not able to communicate with their ELLs, leading to their inability to properly teach them.

Moreover, the district teachers in the study began to dislike the ELLs in their classrooms, and "also demonstrated fewer positive attitudes on the survey tool toward ELL students in general" (Ross, p. 29). They showed favoritism to native speakers, thus creating a negative impact on the ELLs' attitudes towards instruction. According to Wintergerst et al. (2003), "[s]tudents learn best when they were actively involved in the learning process and when they were in learning situations that meet their learning style needs" (p. 99). When a teacher provides a positive learning environment for ELLs with proper strategies embedded in the instruction of content, ELLs can succeed. When a learning environment is not targeted to their needs or the teacher is not willing to implement ELL strategies for instruction, ELLs struggle to achieve academically.

Relationship Between Prior Research and Present Study

The sociocultural framework of Bruner (1960) and Vygotsky (1978) guided this study and aided in the exploration of teachers' perceptions about the adequacy of instruction provided to ELLs. A sample of 256 conveniently selected teachers from different schools with one to three years of experience teaching ELLs and four years or more of experience teaching ELLs shared their responses via the Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale survey items (Téllez & Manthey, 2015) and the Teacher Multicultural Attitude Survey (TMAS) (Ponterotto et al., 1998). Data was analyzed to understand differences in teachers' perceptions based on years of experience working with ELLs. The participants' responses can help design a professional development initiative to address the needs of teachers of ELLs.

The sociocultural framework was used in this research to examine how societal and cultural factors influence teachers' feelings, thoughts, and behaviors. Within the prior

research, it has been noted that many teachers feel they are not qualified to meet the needs of ELL students. The purpose of this study was to examine how teachers working during the 2019–2020 school year perceived their ELLs. The collected demographic data included a large sample of teachers from New York City. This population of teachers has a higher concentration of ELL students compared to other areas of the United States. The collected data will compare them to their counterparts in the United States as well as findings in the current literature.

This study aimed to gather data about how teachers viewed their feelings, thoughts, and behaviors by utilizing the Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale survey items (Téllez & Manthey, 2015) and how teachers assessed cultural factors, which was measured by the TMAS (Ponterotto et al., 1998). Both are aligned with the sociocultural framework of Bruner (1960) and Vygotsky (1978).

CHAPTER 3

Introduction

Chapter 2 offered an assessment of the associated research and how it correlated with the sociocultural framework. Chapter 3 will present a description of the research and participants, as well as the methodology for data collection, manner of data analysis, and instrumentation of the study.

The five million ELLs enrolled between kindergarten and grade twelve (U.S. Department of Education, 2019) deserve access to highly qualified teachers so as to succeed in the academic setting, readying them for college and eventual careers. Many teachers across the United Sates are not ready to meet the demands of the growing number of ELLs.

The purpose of this research was to investigate the perceptions of teaching ELLs among teachers with no experiences teaching ELLs, one to three years of experience teaching ELLs, and four or more years of experience teaching ELLs. The data collected for this study came from teachers working in the United States during the 2019–2020 school year. The collected data was then used to create a professional development model that matched teachers' perceptions of ELL students' needs.

The study was performed as a single-phase, one-year study during the 2019–2020 school year employing quantitative methods. Two Likert-type scale instruments, the Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale survey items (Téllez & Manthey, 2015) and TMAS (Ponterotto et al., 1998), were used to collect data on teachers perceptions' of ELLs within three levels: teachers with no experience teaching ELLs, one to three years of experience teaching ELLs, and four or more years of

experience teaching ELLs. As a result of the data collected from the study, the researcher

designed a targeted professional development Google Slide that was posted to all social

media/Facebook groups in which the original survey had been posted. At the completion

of the survey, teachers could select to request PD with the results of the study.

Methods and Procedures

Research Questions

1.) How do years of experience influence teachers' perceptions toward teaching

ELLs?

Levels:

Teachers with four or more years of experience teaching ELLs

Teachers with one to three years of experience teaching ELLs

Teachers with no years of experience teaching ELLs

2.) To what extent are years of experience related to multicultural awareness,

including linguistic diversity?

Levels:

Teachers with four or more years of experience teaching ELLs

Teachers with one to three years of experience teaching ELLs

Teachers with no years of experience teaching ELLs

Hypotheses

The research hypotheses related to these research questions implied a relationship

suggesting there is a level of difference between classroom teachers with four or more

years of experience working with ELLs and classroom teachers with less than three years

of experience working with ELLs in their perceptions towards teaching these students. The hypotheses for this study are listed below.

Research Question 1:

Hypothesis: Teachers with four or more years of experience working with ELLs will have a statistical difference in their attitudes toward teaching ELLs.

Null Hypothesis: Teachers with four of more years of experience working with ELLs will have no statistically significant difference in their attitudes towards teaching ELLs compared to those with less than four years.

Research Question 2:

Hypothesis: Teachers with a higher score on the TMAS (Ponterotto et al., 1998) will hold perceptions that have a statistical significance on their attitudes of teaching ELLs.

Null Hypothesis: Teachers with a higher score on the TMAS (Ponterotto et al., 1998) will hold perceptions that have no statistical significance on their attitudes of teaching ELLs.

Research Design and Data Analysis

Research Design

This quantitative design analyzed the statical difference between teachers with zero years of experience teaching ELLs, compared to teachers with one to three years teaching ELLs and teachers with four or more years teaching ELLs. Teachers' perceptions were measured using the Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale (Téllez & Manthey, 2015) and the TMAS (Ponterotto et al., 1998).

Variables

Independent Variables:

1.) Years of experience teaching ELLs of diverse races, ethnicities, and genders

2.) Gender of teachers (male, female, other, no answer given)

3.) Ethnicity of teachers (African American/Black; American Indian/Alaskan
Native; Asian American; Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander; White; Other)

Dependent Variable:

Teachers' scores on the two surveys

Data Collection

The data contained within this study was collected using teachers' responses to

demographic information, as well as survey answers collected using Qualtrics software

sent via social media. The survey was administered in the spring of 2020. The survey was

expected to take participants approximately 20 minutes to complete.

Participants in the study included 256 teachers across the United States, with a

high concentration living in New York State. Participants were notified of the survey via

different teaching social media Facebook groups, emails from principals in non-New

York City DOE schools, and professors of graduate classes at universities. All responses

collected on Qualtrics software were kept anonymous and confidential.

The survey results were collected on Qualtrics software, and the research took the

collected data and input it into SPSS statistical software to analyze the information using

ANOVA transcript and linear regression.

Data Analysis

The results of the surveys were analyzed to determine differences in scores between teachers with no experience teaching ELLs, teachers with one to three years of experiences teaching ELLs, and teachers with four or more years of experience teaching ELLs.

Descriptive statistics were generated from the adapted 12-question Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale survey items (Téllez & Manthey, 2015) and the 20-question TMAS (Ponterotto et al., 1998). The descriptive statistics included a mean score for each survey. The means were than analyzed between teachers with no experience teaching ELLs, one to three years teaching ELLs, and four or more years teaching ELLs. These means were analyzed using an ANOVA to determine the significance of the differences between groups. Linear regression was used to measure correlation between survey scores based on years of experience.

These statistical methods measured the influence of an independent variable (the teachers' years of experiences working with ELLs) on a dependent variable (the scores earned on the Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale survey [Téllez & Manthey, 2015] and the TMAS [Ponterotto et al., 1998]). An alpha level of .05 or less was used to determine statistically significant relationships. The use of an ANOVA required the researcher to follow the assumptions of normal distribution, homogeneity of variances, and assumption of independence. The normality assumption concerns for the sampling of the means in this data set were not the same for the means for each group. The equal variance of assumption addressed the variance between and within the population. The use of a multiple linear regression was used to look at a

relationship between teachers' years of experience and the scores earned on the Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale survey and the TMAS, controlling for other variables such as gender and race/ethnicity.

Reliability and Validity of the Research Design

This research was conducted using a survey design. This was accomplished through the use of demographic information, a Likert-type survey adapted for the Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale survey (Téllez & Manthey, 2015), and a Likert-type survey TMAS (Ponterotto et al., 1998), which was used to collect quantitative data from educators in New York State and the surrounding area. This methodology allowed for statistical analysis of the data. The researcher utilized a survey design to collect the quantitative data for this study.

Due to the parameters of this study, observations and personal interviews would not have provided the honesty and anonymous nature that a survey allowed. The survey allowed for a non-biased set of questions that would provide the concrete data needed for statistical analysis.

Data was analyzed to understand differences in teachers' perceptions based on years of experience working with ELLs. This quantitative data collection method used demographic questions such as teacher experience, teacher training, hours of professional development with ELLs, preservice teaching course work with ELLs, on-the-job training with ELLs, grade level taught, year of teaching, location of school (school district), and certification. All were added to the survey to gain a holistic view of the teachers surveyed. Questions from Téllez and Manthey's (2015) Collective Efficacy Scale survey and the Teacher Multicultural Attitude Survey (TMAS) (Ponterotto et al., 1998) were

made digital and sent to secondary education teachers in New York and the surrounding

via Qualtrics.

Review of the Instruments

Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale Survey

In 2015, Téllez & Manthey observed that teachers held perceived shortcomings

when working with ELLs. In the mixed method study, they researched 578 Californian

teachers of ELLs to explore the relations among teachers' perceptions of ELL strategies

and school programs, teachers' ratings of collective efficacy in meeting all students'

needs, and the general school climate. Based on their results, they argued for school-wide

reforms designed to improve ELL instruction, which might yield greater collective

efficacy. They also advocated for new policies that could enhance teachers'

perceived efficacy for students learning English.

In 2016, 2017, and 2018, the research of Téllez & Manthey had been repeatedly

cited in studies about ELLs. Bavo (2016) investigated preservice elementary teachers and

their knowledge of the role of language in science, citing their work within the study. The

study found that preservice teachers needed to use the integrated language and science

teaching pedagogy approach for science and language learning of ELLs. Ascenzi-Moreno

(2017) also cited Téllez & Manthey in a case study of two secondary teachers of English

as a new language, examining the implementation of translanguaging pedagogy and

student language development. In 2018, Donohoo looked at patterns of behavior and

positive consequences, further citing the works of Téllez & Manthey. She found that

Collective Teacher Efficacy (CTE) has had a perceived effect on socioeconomic status

and student achievement. Educational reform should be strategic and international, using

collective efficacy for conceptualization, design, delivery, and assessment of changing initiatives. Within the context of this study, an adaption of the question used by Téllez & Manthey (2015) explored the relationship among teachers' perceptions of ELL strategies and school programs, teachers' ratings of collective efficacy in meeting all students' needs, and the general school climate.

Teacher Multicultural Attitude Survey (TMAS)

Ponterotto is a renowned psychologist who has done extensive research on the psychological and educational impact of cultural identity. In his 30-year educational career, he has published over 100 articles and 13 books. The Teacher Multicultural Attitude Survey (TMAS) was developed by Ponterotto et al. in 1998, and has since been used as worldwide tool to examine the multicultural attitudes of teachers. The TMAS scale is internal consistency, and has a credibility coefficient at Cronbach's alpha of 0.86, and a credibility coefficient of 0.80.

The TMAS had been used in various research studies since 1998. Cicchelli and Cho (2007) used the TMAS on 61 intern/teaching fellows in New York City. They found that white intern/teaching fellows had significant differences at p<.0001, while no significant differences were noted for culturally diverse interns and teachers.

In 2018, 273 self-identifying Greek teachers' attitudes towards multiculturism were measured using the TMAS. A T-test distinguished three factors: 1) teachers' attitude towards multiculturalism; 2) emphasis of the educational system on multiculturalism; and 3) satisfaction from teaching in multicultural classrooms. In conclusion, the study found that the TMAS was a reliable instrument to be used on the Greek population (Athanasopoulou et al., 2018).

Sample and Population

Sample: The sample population for this research was composed of 256 educators, whose experiences ranged from no experience teaching ELLs, to one to three years of experience teaching ELLs, and finally to four of more years teaching ELLs. Schools withing the group were in urban, suburban, and rural communities.

Population: 256 classroom teachers teaching in United States during the 2019–2020 school year. This research used a convenience sample because participants were available for the study and convenient to the researcher (Creswell, 2002). The sample was selected for ease of access, size, academic levels, and heterogeneous properties for the purpose of having a mixed sample and the possibility of different perspectives. All participants were kept anonymous, and all gave informed consent to partake in the study. Specific demographic information about the participants will be presented in Chapter 4.

Instruments

Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale survey items (Téllez & Manthey, 2015) as published in *Learning Environments Research*. The Teacher Multicultural Attitude Survey (TMAS) (Ponterotto et al., 1998), as published in *Educational and Psychological Measurement*.

Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale survey (Téllez & Manthey, 2015) was adapted, and specific questions were taken for the purpose of this study (Appendix B). Within the context of this study, the Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale explored the relationships among teachers' perceptions of ELL strategies and school programs, as well as teachers' ratings of

collective efficacy in meeting the needs of all students, with a specific focus on ELLs within their schools.

The Teachers Multicultural Attitudes Survey (TMAS) (Ponterotto et al., 1998) was prepared in a digital format, with no changes to the original questions for the purpose of this study. The purpose of the TMAS was to measure teachers' attitudes toward cultural identity (racial, ethnicity, linguistic) based on experience working with ELLs in the classroom.

Procedures for Collecting Data

This study was conducted utilizing social media groups on Facebook, targeted to contact teachers using the Qualtrics link that was provided to take the surveys. All teachers gave permission for the use of their information. Teachers in all grades and subject areas were included due to their willingness to participate in the study. Information included in this study is focused on the teachers who responded to the Qualtrics link provided. A sample-size calculation was not utilized to determine if this sample would allow for an overall generalization regarding all teachers within the United States due to the small size of the sample.

The study was posted on multiple teachers' Facebook pages, with membership ranging across the United States. Data was collected during spring 2020. All respondents were teachers in the United States for the 2019–2020 school year.

Research Ethics

Data was collected in a stratified random sampling, with the highest concentration of teachers being from New York State. All participants gave informed consent for their data to be used for the survey. All identifying factors for each participant were kept

anonymous. All participants were told they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

Conclusion

As described in Chapter 1, the purpose of this study was to explore how experience teaching ELLs impacts teachers' perceptions of their adequacy and ability to meet the need of their students. ELL students often had teachers who were underqualified to address these needs in the mainstream classroom (Ballantyne et al., 2008; Batt 2008; De Jong & Harper, 2013). Data showed a disparity in academic achievement between ELLs and non-ELLs (Lipka & Siegel, 2012). Data was collected through the teachers' completion of the adapted Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale survey items (Téllez & Manthey, 2015) and the Teacher Multicultural Attitude Survey (TMAS) (Ponterotto et al., 1998). Teachers' scores for both studies were compared among teachers with no years of experience teaching ELLs, teachers with one to three years of experience teaching ELLs, and teachers with four or more years of experience teaching ELLs. This chapter described the methods and procedures used, including research design, research questions, and sample population. The conceptual framework, instrumentation, and data collection were included. This chapter also discussed the data analysis for the study.

This study addressed two research questions: 1.) How do years of experience influence teachers' perceptions toward teaching ELLs? 2.) To what extent are years of experience related to multicultural awareness, including linguistic diversity?

Research Question 1 utilized the data collected in the Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale survey (Téllez & Manthey, 2015). The

teachers' scores were measured based on a Likert scale. The research question also addressed an analysis of the data in the form of stakeholders' perceptions of teaching ELLs. Research Question 2 addressed the data collected in the TMAS (Ponterotto et al., 1998). The teachers' scores were also measured based on a Likert scale. The research question also addressed an analysis of the data in the form of stakeholders' perceptions of personal cultural identity in the lens of teaching ELLs.

CHAPTER 4

Introduction

This chapter begins with an overview of the analysis of the quantitative data

collected from 256 classroom teachers within the Unites States during the 2019–2020

school year. The overview of the analysis includes procedures within the analysis and a

description of the demographic characteristic of the educators participating in the survey.

The results of the educators' responses to each of the following research questions were

examined: 1.) How do years of experience influence teachers' perceptions toward

teaching ELLs? 2.) To what extent are years of experience related to multicultural

awareness, including linguistic diversity?

Data Analysis Procedures

The researcher utilized data collected from the Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching

ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale survey (Téllez & Manthey, 2015) and TMAS (Ponterotto

et al., 1998) for one two-week window in spring of 2020. The instrument was internet-

based, and a link was provided via social media and email for teachers. All information

was kept anonymous. The perceptions of teachers' survey scores were grouped into three

classifications: teachers with no experience teaching ELLs, teachers with one to three

years teaching ELLs, and teachers with four or more years teaching ELLs.

The first part of the survey contained questions intended to produce demographic

data of the teachers participating in the survey. The second and third part of the survey

asked questions using the data collection instruments based on Likert-scale questions.

The population of the study was composed of 256 classroom teachers from 22 states. The

highest concentration of teachers for the data set came from New York.

The two research questions were examined using descriptive and inferential statistics including means and standard deviations. The mean provided the measure of central tendency for each range of years that teachers had taught ELLs; the standard deviations allowed the variation for each distribution to be observed. The data was analyzed using an ANOVA and linear regression.

Results/Findings

Demographic Data

A set of 12 demographic questions intended to produce specific demographic data about the educators participating in the study was collected (see Appendix F). These questions included years of teaching ELLs, state the teachers taught in, and their identity. Tables 1–4 show the results. Most teachers (52.21%) who responded to all questions on the demographic questions had four or more years of experience working with ELLs.

Table 1

Years of Teaching ELLs

Years with ELLs	Frequency	Percent
0 years	46	20.35%
1–3 years	62	27.43%
4 or more years	118	52.21%

Table 2

States Where Teachers Teach

State	Frequency	Percent
California	9	4.05%
Colorado	4	1.80%
Connecticut	2	0.90%
Delaware	1	0.45%
Florida	3	1.35%
Georgia	3	1.35%
Kansas	1	0.45%
Maryland	1	0.45%
Massachusetts	2	0.90%
Michigan	2	0.90%
Missouri	1	0.45%
New Jersey	5	2.25%
New Mexico	1	0.45%
New York	162	72.97%
North Carolina	4	1.80%
Oklahoma	1	0.45%
Pennsylvania	3	1.35%
Rhode Island	2	0.90%
Texas	12	5.41%
Utah	1	0.45%
Virginia	1	0.45%
Washington	1	0.45%

Teachers from 22 states in the United States responded to the survey during the spring of the 2019–2020 school year. Most teachers (72.97%) who responded to all questions on the demographic questions were teaching in New York State during the 2019–2020 school year. The second highest population of teachers were from Texas with 5.41%.

Table 3

Teacher Identity

Identity	Frequency	Percent
African American	11	5.00%
Asian	12	5.45%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1	0.45%
Other	22	10.00%
White	174	79.09%

Most teachers (79.09%) who responded to all questions on the demographic questions that were teaching in the 2019–2020 school year self-identified as white. Most teachers (91.82%) who responded to all questions on the demographic survey that were teaching in the 2019–2020 school year identified as female.

Table 4

Teacher Gender Identity

Identity	Frequency	Percent
Female	202	91.82%
Male	14	6.36%
Prefer not to answer	4	1.82%

Research Question 1

The first research question asked educators about their years of experience and how they influenced their perceptions towards teaching ELLs. The respondents used the adapted Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale survey (Téllez & Manthey, 2015) to answer Research Question 1. Each teacher earned a score between 12 to 60. Teachers with a high perception of ELLs earned a score closer to 60, and teachers with a lower perception of ELLs earned a score closer to 12. The research

question was measured at three levels: teachers with four or more years of experience

teaching ELLs, teachers with one to three years of experience teaching ELLs, and

teachers with no years of experience teaching ELLs. The results are presented in Table 5

and 6.

Table 5

Teachers' Scores on Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs

N	210	
Mean	42.51	
Median	43.00	
Mode	47	
Std. Deviation	7.183	
Variance	51.600	
Skewness	-.452	
Std. Error of Skewness	.168	
Percentiles	25	38.00
	50	43.00
	75	47.00

Note: The score of Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs is measured across 60 points. Higher scores indicated a more positive perceptive of ELLs. Based on the mean (42.51), the majority of teachers scored a more positive perception towards ELLs.

Table 6

Histogram of Teachers' Scores on Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs
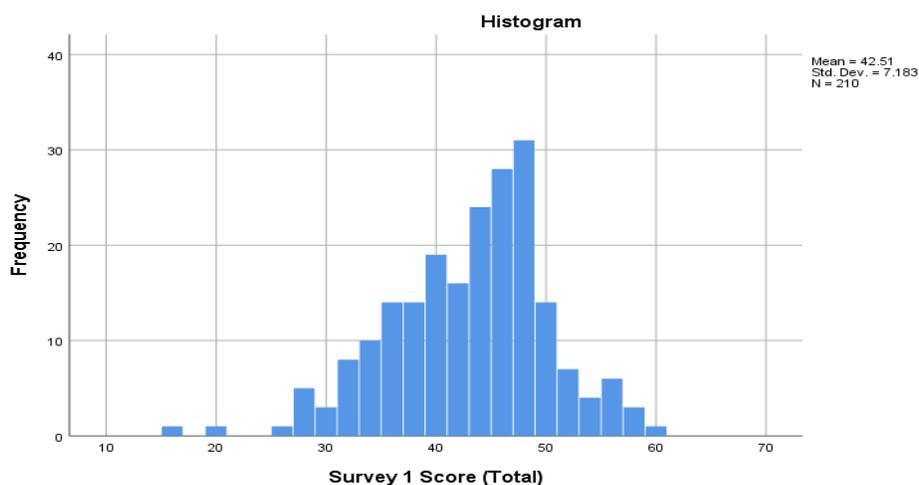
The histogram for the Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs showed a bell curve with a slight negative skew. Data collected showed that most teachers scored well on the Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs during the 2019–2020 school year.

To examine Research Question 1, an ANOVA was calculated to assess whether there was significance in teachers' perceptions based of years of experience teaching ELLs. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 7–9.

Table 7

Teachers' Scores on Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs and Years of Teaching ELLs

Score on TPTE	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
No years of Teaching ELLs	40.10	7.465	39
1–3 years teaching ELLs	43.97	6.252	60
4 or more years teaching ELLs	42.57	7.390	111
Total	42.51	7.183	210

Table 8

ANOVA of Teachers' Scores on Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs and Years of Teaching ELLs

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups (Combined)	353.715	2	176.857	3.510	.032
Linearity	80.302	1	80.302	1.594	.208
Deviation from Linearity	273.413	1	273.413	5.426	.021
Within Groups	10430.766	207	50.390		
Total	10784.481	209			

Data for the ANOVA of scores on Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs and Years of Teaching ELLs showed a statistical difference between teachers with zero years of experience teaching ELLs, teachers with one to three years of experience teaching ELLs, and teachers with four or more years of experience teaching ELLs (.032).

Table 9

Measures of Association of Teachers' Scores on Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs and Years of Teaching ELLs

_____

R	R Squared	Eta	Eta Squared
.086	.007	.181	.033

The dependent variable for this question was the teachers' scores earned on the adapted Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale (Téllez & Manthey, 2015). The data was sorted based on teachers' years of experience. Within the study, there was not a significant difference in scores earned between groups. The ANOVA model for context is not significant.

The interpretation of the data provided from the ANOVA demonstrated that teachers' years of experience working with ELLs had no significant influence on the perceptions of the 210 teachers who completed all questions for the survey.

To further examine Research Question 1, a linear regression was calculated to assess whether there was significance in teachers' perceptions based of years of experience teaching ELLs. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 10.

Table 10

Linear Regression of Teachers' Scores on Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs and Years of Teaching ELLs

_____

Years of Experience (ref: 4 or more years) / Demographics	Perception of ELLs	P-values
0 years	-2.47*	.064
1–3 years	1.39	.220
Female	-.862	.603
White	-3.50**	.003
R	.181[a]	
R Squared	.033	
N	200	

Note: P<.10*; P<.05**

The interpretation of the data from the linear regression demonstrated that teachers' years of experience working with ELLs showed a marginally significant correlation (.064) between teachers with zero years of teaching ELLs and four or more years of teaching ELLs. On average, having no years (0) of experiences is associated with a 2.47 decrease on the scale components of the Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale (Téllez & Manthey, 2015) compared to having four or more years of teaching ELLs. Gender did not show a significant relationship between scale scores on the Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale and years of experience teaching ELLs. On average, being white is associated with a 3.50 decrease on the scale scores on the Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale compared with non-white teachers.

Due to the high concentration of teachers located in New York State, data was analyzed with the sample of 162 New York-based teachers. Of the 162 teachers from

New York, 155 completed the full data set for the Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching

ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale.

Table 11

New York State Teachers' Scores on Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs

N		155
Mean		42.51
Median		43.00
Mode		45
Std. Deviation		7.10346
Variance		50.459
Skewness		-.451
Std. Error of Skewness		.195
Percentiles	25	38.00
	50	43.00
	75	47.00

The score of Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs is scored out of 60 points.

Higher scores indicated a more positive perception of ELLs. Based on the mean (42.51),

the majority of teachers scored a more positive perception towards ELLs.

Table 12

Histogram of Teachers' New York Scores on Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs
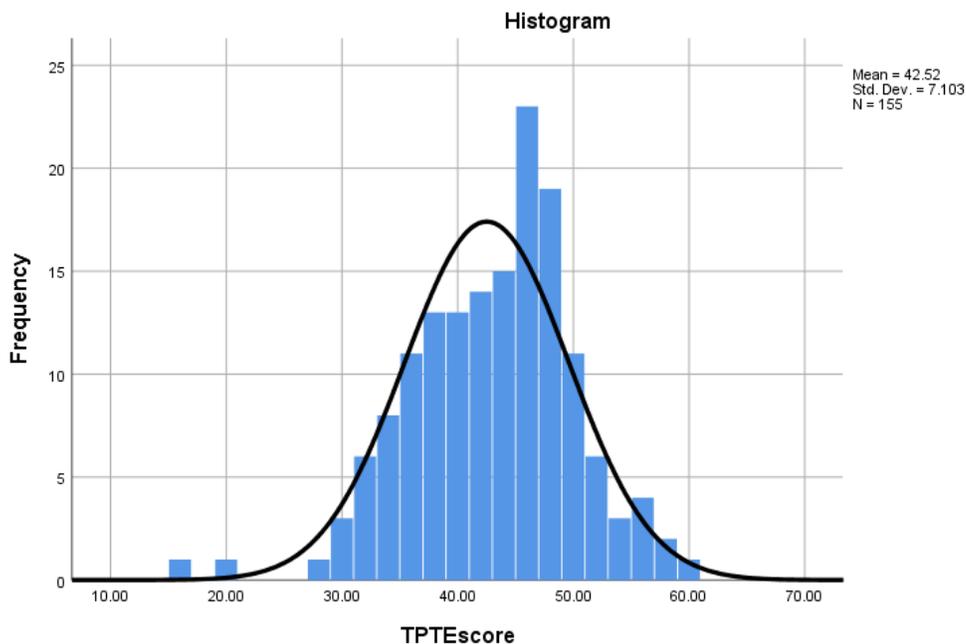
The histogram for the Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs for New York teachers demonstrated a bell curve with a negative skew. Data collected demonstrated that most teachers scored well on the Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs during the 2019–2020 school year.

In addressing Research Question 1, a second ANOVA was calculated for teachers in New York to assess whether there was significance in teachers' perceptions based on years of experiences teaching ELLs. The results of this analysis are presented below.

Table 13

New York State Teachers' Scores on Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELL (TPTE)s and Years of Teaching ELLs

Score on TPTE	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
No years of teaching ELLs	40.3529	7.69842	34
1–3 years teaching ELLs	44.0000	6.04743	50
4 or more years teaching ELLs	42.5070	7.32291	71
Total	42.5161	7.10346	155

Table 14

ANOVA of New York Teachers' Scores on Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs and Years of Teaching ELLs

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups (Combined)	269.198	2	134.599	2.727	.069
Within Groups	7501.511	152			
Total	7770.710	154			

Data for the ANOVA of New York Teachers' Scores on Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs and Years of Teaching ELLs did not show a statistical difference between teachers with zero years of experience teaching ELLs, teachers with one to three years of experience teaching ELLs, and teachers with four or more years of experience teaching ELLs.

The dependent variable for this question was the teachers' scores earned on the adapted Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale (Téllez & Manthey, 2015). The data was sorted based on teachers' years of experience. The ANOVA model for the data for New York was found to not be significant at the 0.05 level between the means of teachers with zero years of experience teaching ELLs and teachers with one to three years of teaching ELLs. No significant differences were found

between teachers' perceptions with one to three years teaching in New York and four or

more years teaching ELLs in New York.

To further examine Research Question 1, a linear regression was calculated for

teachers from New York so as to assess whether there was a significant relationship

between teachers' perceptions and years of experiences teaching ELLs. The results of this

analysis are presented in Table 15.

Table 15

Linear Regression of New York Teachers' Scores on Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs and Years of Teaching ELLs

_____

Years of Experience (ref: 4 or more years) / Demographics	Perception of ELLs	P-values
0 years	-1.89	.155
1–3 years	.1.763	.121
Female	-.680	.695
White	-4.23	. 001
R		.265[a]
R Squared		.070
N		155

Note: P<.10*; P<.05**

The interpretation of the data from the linear regression for the teachers from New

York demonstrated that teachers' years of experience working with ELLs showed no

significant difference from those who had for or more years of experience. Gender did

not show a significant correlation between scale scores on the Teachers' Perceptions of

Teaching ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale (Téllez & Manthey, 2015) compared with years

of experience teaching ELLs. White teachers (.001) showed a significant correlation

between scale scores; on average, being white is associated with a 4.23 decrease on the

scale scores on the Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale compared with years of experience teaching ELLs.

Research Question 2

The second research question asked educators: To what extent are years of experience related to multicultural awareness, including linguistic diversity? Data was collected using the Teacher Multicultural Attitude Survey (TMAS) (Ponterotto et al., 1998), which provided a single score by summing all 20 items based on a Likert scale survey consisting of 20 statements. Total scores ranged from 20 to 100, with a score of 100 signifying that a teacher had a higher exposure to different cultures, while a score of 20 showed a lower exposure to different cultures.

Table 16

Teachers' Scores on the Teacher Multicultural Attitude Survey (TMAS)

N		202
Mean		78.13
Median		78.00
Mode		75
Std. Deviation		9.839
Variance		96.743
Skewness		-1.001
Std. Error of Skewness		.171
Percentiles	25	73.00
	50	78.00
	75	84.25

Note: The score of Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs is scored out of 100 points. Higher scores indicated a more positive perceptive of ELLs.

To examine Research Question 2, an ANOVA was calculated to assess if there was a significance in teachers' cultural identity scores and their perceptions of teaching ELLs between teachers with four or more years of experience teaching ELLs, teachers

with one to three years of experience teaching ELLs, and teachers with no years of

experience teaching ELLs. The resulting analysis is presented in Table 17–18

Table 17

Histogram of Teachers' Scores on TMAS
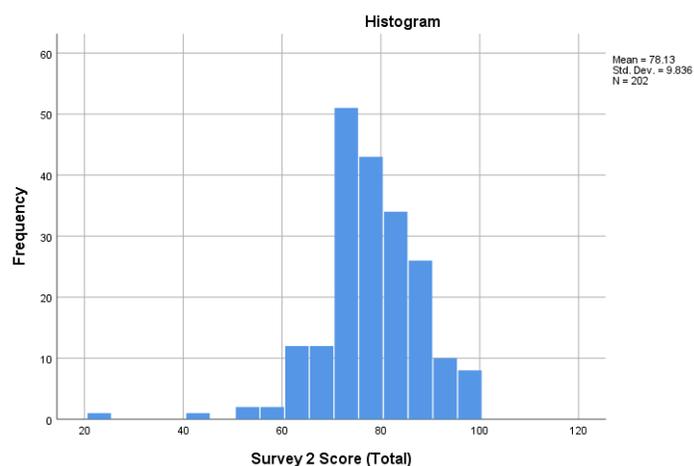
Note: The histogram for the TMAS demonstrated a bell curve with a negative skew. Data collected demonstrated that most teachers scored well on the TMAS during the 2019–2020 school year.

Table 18

Descriptive Statistics of Teachers' TMAS Scores

Score on TMAS	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
No years of Teaching ELLs	76.5263	8.31390	38
1–3 Years teaching ELLs	79.0877	6.66355	57
4 or more years teaching ELLs	78.1963	11.59492	107
Total	78.1337	9.83581	202

Table 19

ANOVA for Teachers' TMAS Scores

TMAS Score

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	(Combined)		150.477	2	75.239	.776	.462
	Linear Term	Unweighted	78.200	1	78.200	.807	.370
		Weighted	37.830	1	37.830	.390	.533
		Deviation	112.647	1	112.647	1.162	.282
Within Groups			19294.914	199	96.959		
Total			19445.391	201			

The ANOVA for the TMAS scores of teachers with zero years of experience, one to three years of experience, and four or more years of experiences showed no statistical differences between groups.

In addition to the ANOVA, a linear regression was used to examine Research Question 2. Data from the regression can be seen in Table 20.

Table 20

Linear Regression for TMAS and Years of Teaching ELLs

Years of Experience (ref: 4 or more years) / Demographics	Perception of ELLs	P-values
0 years	-1.67	.370
1–3 years	.891	.582
Female	2.26	.331
White	-14.150	.173
R		.088[a]
R Squared		.008
N		202

Note: P<.10*; P<.05**

The interpretation of the data from the linear regression demonstrated that teachers' years of experience working with ELLs showed no significant correlation between teachers with zero years of teaching ELLs and four or more years of teaching ELLs. Female and white teachers did not show a significant correlation between scale scores on the Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale (Téllez & Manthey, 2015) compared with years of experience teaching ELLs.

Due to the high concentration of teachers located in New York State, data was analyzed with the sample of 162 New York-based teachers. Of the 162 teachers from New York, 150 completed the full data set for the TMAS. See Tables 21 and 22.

Table 21

New York State Teachers' Scores on TMAS and Years of Teaching ELLs

N	150	
Mean	78.1267	
Median	78.0000	
Mode	75.0000	
Std. Deviation	9.63097	
Variance	92.756	
Skewness	-1.190	
Std. Error of Skewness	.198	
Percentiles	25	73.00
	50	78.00
	75	83.25

The score of Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs is measured out of 100 points. Higher scores indicated a more positive perceptive of ELLs. Based on the mean (78.1267), the majority of teachers in New York scored a more positive perception towards ELLs.

Table 22

Histogram of Teachers' New York Scores on TMAS and Years of Teaching ELLs
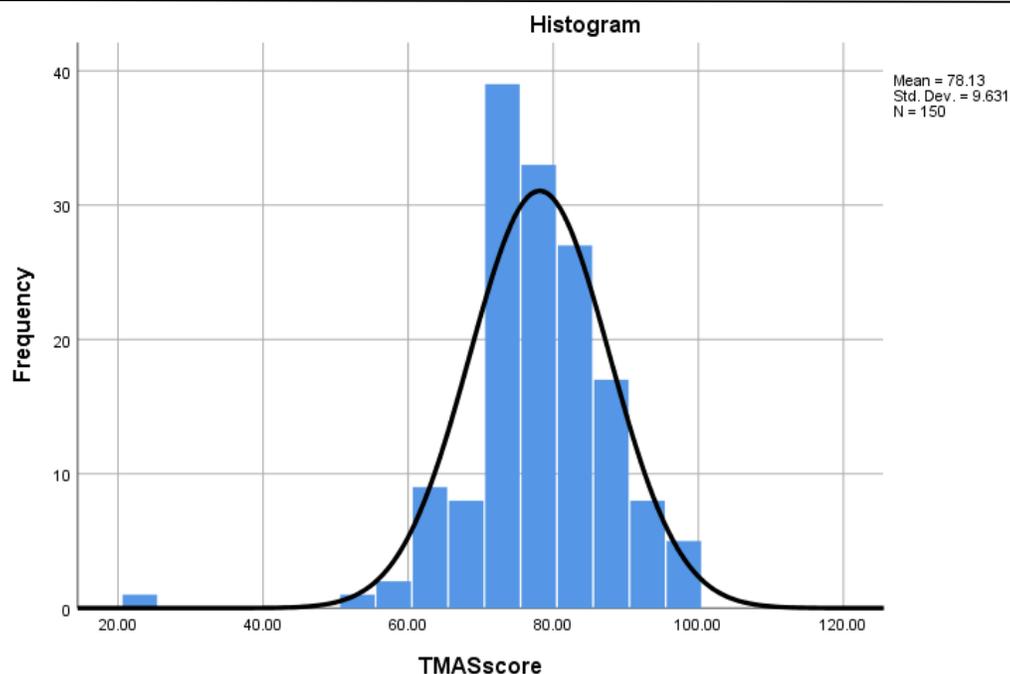
Histogram

Mean = 78.13
Std. Dev. = 9.631
N = 150

(x-axis: TMASscore, y-axis: Frequency)

The histogram for the Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs for New York teachers demonstrated a bell curve skewed to the left. Data collected demonstrated that most teachers scored well on the TMAS during the 2019–2020 school year.

To further examine Research Question 2, a second ANOVA was calculated for teachers in New York to assess whether there was significance in teachers' perceptions based of years of experiences teaching ELLs. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 23–24.

Table 23

New York State Teachers' Scores TMAS and Years of Teaching ELLs

Score on TMAS	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
No years of Teaching ELLs	76.5455	8.70377	33
1–3 Years teaching ELLs	79.3750	6.79682	48
4 or more years teaching ELLs	78.0145	11.54721	69
Total	78.1267	9.63097	150

Table 24

ANOVA of New York Teachers' Scores on TMAS and Years of Teaching ELLs

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups (Combined)	158.176	2	79.088	.851	.429
Within Groups	13662.417	1	92.942		
Total	13820.593	149			

The dependent variable for this question was the teachers' scores earned on the adapted TMAS. The data was sorted based on teachers' years of experience. Within the study, there was not a significant difference in scores earned between groups.

To further examine Research Question 2, a linear regression was calculated for teachers for New York to assess whether there was significance in teachers' perceptions based of years of experiences teaching ELLs. The results of this analysis are presented below.

Table 25

Linear Regression of New York Teachers' Scores on TMAS and Years of Teaching ELLs

Years of Experience (ref: 4 or more years) / Demographics	Perception of ELLs	P-values
0 years	-1.70	.372
1–3 years	.8843	.607
Female	3.235	.203
White	-.244	.902
R		.092[a]
R Squared		.008
N		150

Note: P<.10*; P<.05*

The interpretation of the data from the linear regression demonstrated that teachers' years of experience working with ELLs showed no significant correlation between teachers with zero years of teaching ELLs and those with four or more years of teaching ELLs. Female and white teachers did not show a significant correlation between scale scores on the TMAS compared with years of experience teaching ELLs.

Summary

This chapter began with an overview of the data analysis procedures and a description of the demographic characteristics of the 256 teachers. The Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs had 210 completed surveys and the TMAS had 202 completed surveys. The responses for each question were contained within the three levels: 1.) teachers with no experience with ELLs; 2.) teachers with one to three years of teaching ELLs; and 3) teachers with four or more years of teaching ELLs. All were examined using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, means, and standard deviations. The focus of the study was to determine if teachers' years of experiences had an impact on their perceptions of ELLs.

The data for all states suggested that based on the ANOVA model of the Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs, there was statistical significance in the perceptions of teachers based on years of experience teaching ELLs within the sample from the United States teachers (.032). The linear regression for Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs was marginally significant between the group of teachers with zero years of experience teaching ELLs compared to teachers with four or more years within the sample for the United States. The data for the United States showed no statistically significant differences between genders. The data for ethnicity found that white teachers had a statistically significant difference (.003) between scores on the Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs.

For Research Question 1, data for the New York State teachers' ANOVA model was found not to be significant at the 0.05 level between the means of teachers with zero years of experience teaching ELLs and teachers with one to three years of teaching ELLs. The linear regression was marginally significant between the group of teachers with zero years of experience teaching ELLs compared to teachers with four or more years. Within the isolated New York data set, no significant differences were found between teachers' perceptions with one to three years teaching in New York and four or more years teaching ELLs in New York based on the ANOVA and the linear regression. In both data sets for New York, no statistically significant differences were found between gender and ethnicity.

For Research Question 2, regarding the United States data, the ANOVA model of teachers' perceptions remained static between the three groups and there was no significant difference among them. The linear regression found no significant differences

among groups. The variable of gender also had no significant differences between groups on the linear regression. The variable of ethnicity concluded a marginally significant difference between white teachers (.061). Within the New York data set, both the ANOVA and the linear regression for teachers' perceptions remained static among the three groups, and there was no significant difference among groups. In both data sets, no statistically significant differences were found between gender and ethnicity.

The insights gained by this study will offset the lack of quantitative data regarding teachers' years of experiences and their perceptions of teaching ELLs. This will assist educational leaders at the federal, state, and district levels in making decisions regarding ELLs, as well as create targeted PD for teachers of ELLs. Chapter 5 will provide interpretation of the data and the subsequent conclusions. The findings will be presented with an accompanying literature. Lastly, suggestions for policy, practice, and future research will be discussed.

CHAPTER 5

Introduction

This research was conducted to discover if teachers' years of experience working with ELLs had an impact on their perceptions of teaching these students. These perceptions were measured using two surveys: the Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs (Téllez & Manthey, 2015) and TMAS (Ponterotto et al., 1998). Identifying key differences between years of experience working with ELLs and teachers' perceptions can assist school district administrators who have growing ELL populations in the implementation of proper aid and support for teachers and ELLs in the academic setting. Insights gained from the scope of the study may provide federal, state, and local district administrations with the incentive to create reform models in practices relating to academic settings for ELL students. The review of teachers' perceptions from varied demographic and experience levels pertaining to their work with ELLs can allow for PD targeted toward teachers on a nationwide scale, improving overall student performance. In addition, the findings from this study may assist school districts in ascertaining if current structures are appropriate for meeting the educational needs of ELL students and their teachers. Furthermore, these findings may aid state and national educational officials in their adoption of ELL reform models within the United States.

This chapter presents a summary of the research purpose, procedures, and findings. In addition, the relationship between the quantitative results and the literature will be discussed. Chapter 5 ends with the limitations for the study, recommendations for future research, and implications that the current study may have on ELL reform.

Implications of Findings

Summary of Purpose

The increase in immigration has changed the education system in America. As the number of ELLs grows, the number of adequately equipped teachers of ELLs should likewise grow with the population. To meet the demands of the growing ELL population within the United States, better programs and professional development for teachers of diverse learners must be implemented at the local, state, and national level.

The purpose of this study was to quantitatively determine the perception of teachers working with ELLs based on their years of experience teaching them. The first part of the survey contained questions to collect demographic information from the educators who were completing the Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale survey items (Téllez & Manthey, 2015) and the Teacher Multicultural Attitude Survey (TMAS) (Ponterotto et al., 1998). The second section of the study had teachers answer the 12-question Likert-type scale questions by Téllez & Manthey in order to examine how teachers perceived ELLs within their school communities and classrooms. The last section of the study had teachers answer the 20-question TMAS so as to determine a teacher's personal awareness of culture.

The researcher sought to examine the differences between the two survey scores of teachers with no experience teaching ELLs, teachers with one to three years of experience teaching ELLs, and teachers with four or more years of experience teaching ELLs.

The data for Research Question 1, derived from an ANOVA, found a statistical significance in the perceptions of teachers based on years of experience teaching ELLs

within the sample from the United States teachers. This may be based on the exposure teachers in various states have in teaching ELLs within their classrooms. The linear regression was marginally significant between the group of teachers with zero years of experience teaching ELLs and those with four or more years within the sample for the United States. Therefore, in the United States, teachers who have more experience with ELLs scored higher on the data scale. No statistically significant differences were found between genders of teachers in the United States. The data for ethnicity found that white teachers had a statistically significant difference (.003) between sores on the Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs Collective Efficacy Scale, with a 3.50 decrease in scores. This may be due to white teachers not having as much exposure to cultural differences than their non-white counterparts. The decrease is exposure to culture may have contributed to the lower sores of white teachers who educate ELLs.

In further examining Research Question 1, an ANOVA model was run to compile and analyze data for New York teachers. There was no significant difference at the 0.05 level between the means of teachers with zero years of experience teaching ELLs, teachers with one to three years of teaching ELLs, and teachers with four or more years teaching ELLs. The linear regression was marginally significant between the group of teachers with zero years of experience teaching ELLs and those with four or more years. Within the isolated New York data set, no significant differences were found between teachers' perceptions with zero years teaching ELLs, one to three years teaching ELLs, and four or more years teaching ELLs, all based on the ANOVA and the linear regression. In both data sets for New York, no statistically significant differences were found between gender and ethnicity. This may be due to the high concentration of ELLs

in the state of New York compared to other states. Teachers in New York may have more exposure to ELLs during their time teaching, thus making the different perceptions less apparent than within the total United States data.

The data for Research Question 2, derived from an ANOVA, found no significant difference between groups of teachers and their perceptions in the total United States sample. The linear regression found no significant differences between groups. The variable of gender also had no significant differences between groups on the linear regression. Thus, the years of experiences teaching ELLs has no impact on a teacher score on the TMAS within the teachers who participated. Within the New York data, the variable of ethnicity concluded a marginally significant difference between white teachers (.061), with a 4.23 decrease. This result may be based on the high concentration of white teachers within the New York population. Within the New York data set, both the ANOVA and linear regression of teachers' perceptions indicated that there was no significant difference between groups. In both data sets, no statistically significant differences were found between gender and ethnicity. This may be due to the high concentration of ELLs in the state of New York compared to other states. Teachers in New York may have more exposure to ELLs during their time teaching, thus making the different perceptions less apparent than within the total United States data.

Relationship to Prior Research

The findings of this study reinforced those posited by Bruner (1960) and Vygotsky (1978), which emphasized national, state, and local organization and educational awareness on the teachers' part to address the cultural and linguistic differences that exist in the classroom, mainly among their ELL students. The teachers'

responses to the surveys in this study provided crucial insight and aid in designing a

professional development initiative for teachers of ELLs, one that would benefit both

teachers and students across the county. A more culturally aware educational program

that engages all students is likely to yield overall better student performance, as well as

higher education and professional outcomes.

Prior research has found that most teachers shared a perception where they felt

unqualified to work with ELLs; a trend that was not heavily noted within the data sample.

The data collected in this study was primarily sourced from teachers who taught in at

least one of the New York City five boroughs. When compared to other New York State

districts, New York City has a dense population of ELLs. Consequently, the higher

teacher exposure to ELLs in New York City may have impacted their perceptions

comparatively to teachers outside of New York City.

Limitations of the Study

In addition to the limitations presented in Chapter 1 of this study, the researcher

acknowledged several limitations that made the research vulnerable to internal and

external validity. This study should not be generalized based on the research findings due

to the following: 1.) Lack of access to available data. The collected teacher data is based

on convenience sampling and not true random sampling. This is seen in the small sample

size, as many teachers were from the same school or area of the country. The subjects'

heterogeneity served as a threat to internal validity, as the sample had selection bias, thus

making it reflective of data from one area of the county and not of the United States as a

complete unit; 2.) Contamination of the sample also threatened internal validity, as some

teachers surveyed were in the same schools and may or may have not communicated with

one another. Teachers were also able to access the Qualtrics survey in their homes, so there existed a possibility that they could have discussed their answers with peers; 3.) The study was conducted in Spring 2020 during a two-week period in the mist of the global Covid-19 pandemic. This made contacting teachers more difficult, as the United States shifted from traditional schooling to the online school model; 4.) Since there was no space in the study for participants to make comments or elaborate on the answers they provided, and since the utilization of CRT is aligned with qualitative research, the addition of qualitative components and expanded feedback would allow for a more complete picture of teachers' perceptions; and 5.) There were additional threats to external validity that needed to be considered. The sample did not have the capability to be generalized for all schools in New York City or all those within the United States. However, this study examined an area with a definitive gap that existed within the available literature, and this area of research can be further supplemented by future studies.

Recommendations for Future Practice

The results of this research have implications for those at the federal, state, and district levels who are looking at practices to improve teachers' perceptions of teaching ELLs. The perceptions of educators are shaped by the experiences they have with ELL students. Proper implementation of professional development for teachers could assist in providing a quantitative view of success on teaching and learning that ultimately influences student outcomes.

Education reform movements gain momentum when educators observe the value of increased staff performance, increased student success, and better policy or structure

within the school. For successful implementation of a program within a school, the model must be long term, provide data concerning the effectiveness of the program, and undergo a successful implementation in order to reach the desired goals. The data collected within this study demonstrated specific areas of need from educators' viewpoints when working with ELLs. This data has been used to create a professional development initiative that is attuned to teachers' needs, and can ultimately lead to successful reform.

This study can be used by individuals, the state, or district levels, who could implement similar Likert-type scale surveys to determine the specific needs of their educators. The utilization of data-driven research allows for the creation of targeted PD. This will provide schools with the proper tools, as well as a model that will efficiently meet the needs of educators, schools, and communities at large. The research suggested that school districts should utilize the information in this study for the theoretical presentation of teachers' perceptions of ELLs and as a comparison with other quantitative studies relating to teachers' perceptions of these students. The findings of this study could prove to be beneficial in developing talking points that would lead to new training, workshops, and PD, encouraging districts to shift their policies so as to provide more efficacious training for teachers of ELLs.

Recommendations for Future Research

For educators and academic stakeholders to truly understand the attitudes and perceptions of teachers of ELLs, further research needs to be conducted. The following recommendations for further research can be made based on the findings of this study: 1.) This study was limited to educators mostly at the middle school level. Perhaps increasing

the sample to include more individuals from the primary and high school level could

provide for a greater collection of information across the entire spectrum of education; 2.)

Participation in the study was not mandatory for any teacher. Perhaps future studies could

make specific schools' or districts' participation mandatory to garner a complete view of

perceptions within a specific community; 3.) Public schools have become increasingly

populated with ELLs, whereas private schools have lower numbers of ELL students. It

would be interesting to compare teachers' perceptions of ELLs in public schools versus

other schools of choice (i.e. private, magnets, charters, etc.); 4.) While the demographic

information and the data collected from the two Likert-type surveys provide a good

amount of information, adding in components of a mixed-method study would allow the

researcher to collect more information regarding the reported perceptions of teachers of

ELLs. The qualitative component would allow for teachers to articulate perceptions that

were developed while working with these students. In addition, focus groups, interviews,

and observations could be used to gather rationales regarding teachers' perceptions and

findings while working with ELLs; 5.) It would be beneficial to collect additional data

from all states represented in the data set. Having equal means between state groups

would allow a comparison of the perceptions of teachers within each state. This research

study did not disaggregate data or seek to create a balance between the states where

educators worked; 6.) The data collected in this study was over 90% women. Additional

research can be done to increase the sample size of people who identify as men to gather

a better understanding of the differences in male and female teachers' perceptions of

ELLs; and 7.) Data collection was altered by the outbreak of the global Covid-19

pandemic in the spring of 2020. This pandemic shifted the school system in the United

States from the traditional classroom to the digital model. Future research should be conducted after the global pandemic is over to compare results during the Covid-19 pandemic and after.

Conclusion

Students' outcomes are related to the quality of education they receive. Researchers have found that teachers need to be trained in culturally responsive pedagogy and knowledge of language development to create a successful classroom environment for ELLs (Lewis & Landsman, 2011; López et al., 2013). As the number of ELLs increase in the United States, teachers must be able to work and learn collaboratively in order to create classroom environments that are geared toward encouraging their diverse learners to succeed.

The areas studied in this research revolved around the perceptions of teachers working with ELLs so as to create a targeted PD that can be used within schools, providing educators with the necessary tools that will help them better educate and connect with the growing population of ELLs.

The data collected suggested that teachers' perceptions of teaching ELLs were not statistically significant when compared between groups with no experience teaching ELLs, one to three years teaching ELLs, and four or more years teaching ELLs. Perhaps different results could be found when reviewing data between public schools and other schools of choice (i.e. private, magnets, charters, etc.), the latter category traditionally having a lower number of ELLs. As a result, it is suggested that additional research should be conducted.

This study will provide educational leaders with quantitative data regarding educators' perceptions of teaching ELLs. The findings from this study could be beneficial in developing targeted professional development for teachers, developing talking points among educational leaders that may implement institutional reforms. Such restructuring would likely encourage staff presentations and workshops on the issue, as well as create new opportunities to combine data-driven models so as to foster successful support for teachers working with ELLs and improve overall student performance across the board.

APPENDIX A

IRB Approval Letter

ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY

Federal Wide Assurance: FWA00009066

Apr 15, 2020 11:41 AM EDT

PI: Kerriann McFadden
CO-PI: Mary Ellen Freeley
Dept: Ed Admin & Instruc Leadership

Re: Initial - IRB-FY2020-533 Teachers' Years of Experience and Their Perceptions of Teaching English Language Learners

Dear Kerriann McFadden:

The St John's University Institutional Review Board has rendered the decision below for Teachers' Years of Experience and Their Perceptions of Teaching English Language Learners.

Decision: Exempt

PLEASE NOTE: If you have collected any data prior to this approval date, the data must be discarded.

Selected Category: Category 2.(i). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording).
The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

Sincerely,

Raymond DiGiuseppe, PhD, ABPP
Chair, Institutional Review Board
Professor of Psychology

Marie Nitopi, Ed.D.
IRB Coordinator

APPENDIX B

Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs

Collective Efficacy Scale Survey Items

1. Teachers in this school are able to get through to difficult students (GC).

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

2. Teachers in this school are confident they will be able to motivate their students (GC).

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

3. Teachers in this school really believe every child can learn (GC).

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

4. If a child doesn't want to learn, teachers here give up (GC).

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

5. Teachers here don't have the skills needed to produce meaningful student learning (GC).

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

6. Students at this school come to school ready to learn (TA).

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

7. Home life provides so many advantages; the students here are bound to learn (TA).

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

(1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

8. Students here just aren't motivated to learn (TA).

    Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

       (1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

9. The opportunities in this community help ensure that students will learn (TA).

    Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

       (1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

10. Learning is more difficult at this school because students are worried about their safety (TA).

    Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

       (1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

11. Drug and alcohol abuse in the community make learning difficult for students here (TA).

    Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

       (1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

12. Teachers in this school do not have the skills to deal with student disciplinary problems (GC).

    Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

       (1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

Adapted from Goddard (2002) as cited in Téllez & Manthey (2015).

APPENDIX C

Teacher Multicultural Attitude Survey (TMAS)

1. I find teaching a culturally diverse student group rewarding.

       Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

           (1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

2. Teaching methods need to be adapted to meet the needs of a culturally diverse student group.

       Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

           (1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

3. Sometimes I think that there is too much emphasis placed on multicultural awareness and training for teachers.

       Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

           (1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

4. Teachers have the responsibility to be aware of their students' cultural backgrounds.

       Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

           (1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

5. I frequently invite extended family members (e.g. cousins, grandparents, godparents) to attend parent-teacher conferences.

       Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

           (1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

6. It is not the teacher's responsibility to encourage pride in one's culture.

       Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

           (1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

7. As classrooms become more culturally diverse, the teacher's job becomes increasingly

challenging.

Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

(1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

8. I believe that the teacher's role needs to be redefined to address the needs of students

from culturally diverse backgrounds.

Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

(1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

9. When dealing with bilingual children, communication styles often are interpreted as

behavioral problems.

Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

(1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

10. As classrooms become more culturally diverse, the teacher's job becomes increasingly

rewarding.

Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

(1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

11. I can learn a great deal from students with culturally different backgrounds.

Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

(1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

12. Multicultural training for teachers is not necessary.

Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

(1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

13. To be an effective teacher, one needs to be aware of cultural differences present in the classroom.

Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

(1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

14. Multicultural awareness training can help me to work more effectively with a diverse student population.

Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

(1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

15. Students should learn to communicate in English only.

Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

(1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

16. Today's curriculum gives undue importance to multiculturalism and diversity.

Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

(1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

17. I am aware of the diversity of cultural backgrounds in my classroom.

Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

(1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

18. Regardless of the makeup of my class, it is important for students to be aware of multicultural diversity.

Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

(1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

19. Being multiculturally aware is not relevant for the subject I teach.

Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

(1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

20. Teaching students about cultural diversity will only create conflict in the classroom.

Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

(1)   (2)   (3)   (4)   (5)

APPENDIX D

Email with Dr. Téllez

APPENDIX E

Email with Dr. Ponterotto

JOSEPH Ponterotto [Staff/Faculty [GSE]] <ponterotto@fordham.edu>
Tue 10/1/2019 9:10 AM
Kerriann McFadden ⌄

* External Email *

Hi kerriann,
Yes you have my permission to use the TMAS. Do you have the scale, scoring directions, etc? Let me know what you need,
Dr. Ponterotto

Sent from my iPhone

...

Kerriann McFadden
Tue 10/1/2019 7:31 AM
ponterotto@fordham.edu ⌄

Dear Dr. Ponterotto,

My name is Kerriann McFadden, and I am a doctorate student at St. John's University. I would like to ask for permission to use 20-item Teacher Multicultural Attitude Survey(TMAS) in my study.

I appreciate any assistance that you can provide for my study. My study is focusing on teachers' attitudes when teaching English Language Learners (ELLs) in New York City public schools.

Please feel free to contact me via email kerriann.mcfadden16@my.stjohns.edu or mcfak57@gmail.com.

Thank you,

Kerriann McFadden

APPENDIX F

Demographics for Classroom Teachers

1. What subjects do you teach? Select all that apply:

    a. Reading and/or Language Arts

    b. Mathematics

    c. Science

    d. Social Studies (History, Geography, etc.)

    e. Special Education/Students with Disabilities

    f. English as a Second Language (ESL)

    e. Other

2. What district do you teach in?

3. What grade to you teach?

4. What is your gender?

5. What is your ethnicity?

6. How many years have you taught?

7. Of your years teaching how many were spent teaching ELLs?

8. Did you teach in your current district last school year?

    a. Yes

    b. No

9. Do you find that professional development is helpful to teach ELLs?

    a. Yes

    b. No

10. Do you speak a language other than English?

a. Yes

b. No

11. What language(s) do you speak?

12. Do you know the levels of the ELLs in your classes?

a. Yes

b. No

c. I have no ELLs in my class.

APPENDIX G

Cover Letter

Dear Participants,

My name is Kerriann McFadden, and I am a Doctoral candidate under the direction of Dr. Mary Ellen Freeley in the Department of Administrative and Instructional Leadership at St. John's University. I am conducting a research study to investigate attitudes of teachers towards teaching English Language Learners (ELLs).

I am requesting your participation, which will involve a survey questionnaire aimed at gathering your views about knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions of teaching ELLs. It is anticipated that the survey will take approximately 30 minutes.

There are minimal to no risks associated with this study. Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty of any kind. The results of the research study may be published, but your name will not be used. I will take all precautions to maintain your confidentiality. You will not be asked for your identity, and the data collected will be protected from disclosure. Electronic files containing pertinent data will be privately secured and accessible to only my supervisor, Dr. Mary Ellen Freeley, and myself.

Although there may be no direct benefit to you, the possible benefit of your participation is that the information you provide may be used to better undergraduate course work and professional development relating to English Language Learners.

Your participation is greatly appreciated. By taking the survey it is assumed that you are giving your informed consent to participate in this research study. If you have any questions concerning the research study please email me at kerriann.mcfadden16@my.stjohns.edu or Dr. Mary Ellen Freely at freeleym@stjohns.edu.

Respectfully,

Kerriann McFadden-Arena

APPENDIX H

ANOVA Post-Hoc Test

Multiple Comparisons of New York Teachers' Scores on Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs and Years of Teaching ELLs

Dependent Variable: TPTE score

	(I) Years teaching ELLs	(J) Years teaching ELLs	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Tukey HSD	0 years teaching ELLs	1 to 3 years teaching ELLs	-3.64706	1.56159	.054	-7.3432	.0491
		4 or more years teaching ELLs	-2.15410	1.46514	.308	-5.6219	1.3137
	1 to 3 years teaching ELLs	0 years teaching ELLs	3.64706	1.56159	.054	-.0491	7.3432
		4 or more years teaching ELLs	1.49296	1.29697	.484	-1.5768	4.5628
	4 or more years teaching ELLs	0 years teaching ELLs	2.15410	1.46514	.308	-1.3137	5.6219
		1 to 3 years teaching ELLs	-1.49296	1.29697	.484	-4.5628	1.5768
LSD	0 years teaching ELLs	1 to 3 years teaching ELLs	-3.64706*	1.56159	.021	-6.7323	-.5618
		4 or more years teaching ELLs	-2.15410	1.46514	.144	-5.0488	.7406
	1 to 3 years teaching ELLs	0 years teaching ELLs	3.64706*	1.56159	.021	.5618	6.7323
		4 or more years teaching ELLs	1.49296	1.29697	.251	-1.0695	4.0554
	4 or more years teaching ELLs	0 years teaching ELLs	2.15410	1.46514	.144	-.7406	5.0488
		1 to 3 years teaching ELLs	-1.49296	1.29697	.251	-4.0554	1.0695

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

_____

Multiple Comparisons of Teachers' Scores on TMAS and Years of Teaching ELLs

Dependent Variable: TMAS Score

	(I) Years teaching ELLs	(J) Years teaching ELLs	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval Lower Bound	95% Confidence Interval Upper Bound
Tukey HSD	0	1 to 3	-2.56140	2.06218	.430	-7.4310	2.3082
		4 or more	-1.66995	1.85950	.642	-6.0609	2.7210
	1 to 3	0	2.56140	2.06218	.430	-2.3082	7.4310
		4 or more	.89146	1.61468	.846	-2.9214	4.7043
	4 or more	0	1.66995	1.85950	.642	-2.7210	6.0609
		1 to 3	-.89146	1.61468	.846	-4.7043	2.9214
LSD	0	1 to 3	-2.56140	2.06218	.216	-6.6279	1.5051
		4 or more	-1.66995	1.85950	.370	-5.3368	1.9969
	1 to 3	0	2.56140	2.06218	.216	-1.5051	6.6279
		4 or more	.89146	1.61468	.582	-2.2926	4.0755
	4 or more	0	1.66995	1.85950	.370	-1.9969	5.3368
		1 to 3	-.89146	1.61468	.582	-4.0755	2.2926

Multiple Comparisons of New York Teachers' Scores on TMAS and Years of Teaching ELLs

_____

Dependent Variable: TMAS score

	(I) Years teaching ELLs	(J) Years teaching ELLs	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Tukey HSD	0 years teaching ELLs	1 to 3 years teaching ELLs	-2.82955	2.18007	.399	-7.9913	2.3322
		4 or more years teaching ELLs	-1.46904	2.04044	.752	-6.3002	3.3621
	1 to 3 years teaching ELLs	0 years teaching ELLs	2.82955	2.18007	.399	-2.3322	7.9913
		4 or more years teaching ELLs	1.36051	1.81198	.734	-2.9297	5.6507
	4 or more years teaching ELLs	0 years teaching ELLs	1.46904	2.04044	.752	-3.3621	6.3002
		1 to 3 years teaching ELLs	-1.36051	1.81198	.734	-5.6507	2.9297
LSD	0 years teaching ELLs	1 to 3 years teaching ELLs	-2.82955	2.18007	.196	-7.1379	1.4788
		4 or more years teaching ELLs	-1.46904	2.04044	.473	-5.5014	2.5633
	1 to 3 years teaching ELLs	0 years teaching ELLs	2.82955	2.18007	.196	-1.4788	7.1379
		4 or more years teaching ELLs	1.36051	1.81198	.454	-2.2204	4.9414
	4 or more years teaching ELLs	0 years teaching ELLs	1.46904	2.04044	.473	-2.5633	5.5014
		1 to 3 years teaching ELLs	-1.36051	1.81198	.454	-4.9414	2.2204

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