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ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE THEORY FRAMEWORK**

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PERCEPTIONS OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION THROUGH AN ORGANIZATIONAL
CULTURE THEORY FRAMEWORK

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
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ABSTRACT

PERCEPTIONS OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION THROUGH AN ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE THEORY FRAMEWORK

Martha Tuthill

The increase in the English language learner (ELL) student population in New York state has significantly impacted education in many school districts. The New York State Education Department has adjusted regulations for instructing ELL students in Part 154, and administrators and educators are adjusting educational programs to meet ELL student needs through bilingual and English as a new language (ENL) educational programs. The main purpose of this study was to explore perceptions regarding opportunities, challenges, and successes in a bilingual program for ELL students and examine how an organizational culture influences ELL education in the bilingual program. This qualitative multicase study included interviews, classroom observations, and artifacts in an examination of teacher and administrator perceptions of the bilingual program and the school culture. The five participants included two high school general education teachers, two high school bilingual education teachers, and the director of ENL/bilingual education in the study district. The classroom observations took place in a high school bilingual history class and a high school ENL class for emerging and beginner ELL students. The artifacts collected included documents, parent communication letters, and program videos related to the bilingual/ENL educational programs. The theoretical framework of organizational culture guided the analysis. The significance of this research involved the provision of guidance for educational leaders

and administrators delivering professional development regarding bilingual/ENL education to shape school culture, support ELL student education, and increase academic success.

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CHAPTER 1

New York state (NYS) has experienced an increase in the English language learner (ELL) student population. Overall, the New York State had 272,292 (10.4%) multilingual learners in the 2017–2018 school year, an increase of 9.7% in multilingual learners within 3 years (NYS Multilingual learner/English Language Learner Data Report 2018–2019). A *multilingual learner* is someone who is learning to be proficient in multiple languages. ELL students represent a subset of multilingual learners. These students come from a non-English speaking home and are learning English as an additional language in school. The number of ELL students and culturally and linguistically diverse students has not only increased in NYS but also throughout the United States. They comprise the fastest growing student population in U.S. schools. This recent change in demographics has heightened the need to define quality education and obtain teachers with the skills and knowledge needed to educate this population of students (Wong, et al., 2016).

In the 1974 decision in *Lau v. Nichols*, the Supreme Court established the ELL’s right to have “a meaningful opportunity to participate in the educational program” (<https://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed/regulations-concerning-english-language-learners-and-multilingual-learners>). Education law 3204 and Part 154 outlined the standards for educational services that should be provided to ELL students in NYS. The New York State Education Department (NYSED) changed Part 154 of the commissioner’s regulations concerning ELLs and multilingual learners in the 2014–2015 school year in an attempt to meet the needs of ELL students and to increase graduation rates. The changes to the regulations included new procedures for identification and placement in

ELL programs through the administration of a home language questionnaire and the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners, new program requirements for instruction and coteaching, new teacher certification requirements to address the shortage of qualified bilingual teachers, and professional development requirements for all teachers certified after 2004.

Although the NYSED adjusted the regulations for instructing ELL students in Part 154, the regulations allowed each school district to use different methods of teaching. The regulation required districts with schools having 20 or more ELLs in the same grade level who spoke the same home language other than English to establish a bilingual education program. NYSED defined a one-way bilingual education program as composed of students who come from the same home or primary language or background. The state stipulated teachers in these programs should provide instruction in both the home and target language, with the target language being the second language acquired. A two-way bilingual dual language program includes both native English speakers and ELLs. The teacher provides instruction in both English and the home or primary language. In the majority of dual language programs, the students receive half of their instruction in their home or primary language and the remainder in their target language.

Districts that lack a bilingual program educate ELL students through a traditional English as a new language (ENL) or English immersion instruction program. Further, a transitional bilingual educational program (TBE) provides instruction to students in both their home language and English to help them progress academically while they acquire English. The goal of a TBE program is to transition the student to an English classroom

setting without additional supports as they reach English proficiency. Such programs also allow students to develop bilingually. A traditional ENL instruction program emphasizes English acquisition and provides support using specific ENL instructional strategies. Instruction for some core subjects involves an integrated classroom, either cotaught with a content area instructor and a certified ENL instructor or with an ENL instructor dually certified in the content area (<https://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed>).

In this study, the researcher explored perceptions of a bilingual program through the lens of an organizational culture theory with a focus on the opportunities and challenges teachers and students face in a bilingual education program and the perceived benefits or disadvantages as interpreted by stakeholders and the school community. The researcher also examined how perceptions of bilingual education influence ELL education.

Although NYS has implemented new reforms to improve education for ELL students, general education teachers face new challenges in having to coteach with ELL teachers and identify coteaching practices that will support this growing population and all students (Ramos-Velita, 2018). The findings in this study indicated the attitudes and belief systems influenced their teaching practices and effectiveness. Just as teachers must receive Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) certification to teach ELL students, general education teachers need professional development and training to learn how to effectively teach ELL students.

Approximately 60% of college deans admitted teacher preparation programs lack a focus on how to handle the unique needs and issues of students from different

backgrounds, with little existing coursework designed to prepare teachers with strategies for educating ELL students (Khong & Saito, 2014).

The absence of mandated professional development for mainstream teachers and an ELL educational focus in college education programs for general education teachers can lead to frustration for both mainstream and ELL teachers who struggle to meet the needs of this growing student population. Teachers benefit from learning best practices and coteaching strategies in ELL education in both bilingual programs and traditional ENL programs. Less frustration for the teachers can lead to a better learning environment for ELL students.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore perceptions regarding opportunities, challenges, and successes in bilingual programs for ELL students and examine how an organizational culture influences ELL education in the bilingual program. In this study, the researcher gathered information to investigate the perceptions of ENL, bilingual, and general education teachers as well as a director of the bilingual education program through the lens of an organizational culture theory framework.

Multiple researchers have explored the type of instruction provided to ELL students and whether or not they succeed, and other researchers have explored challenges faced by ENL teachers and ELL students. This current qualitative multicase study included five participants: two secondary ENL or bilingual teachers, two secondary general education content certified teachers, and the director of the ENL/bilingual education program in a suburban New York school district that used bilingual or dual language instruction. The researcher collected data from three sources: interviews,

artifacts, and observations gathered from four teachers who instructed students in bilingual programs and the director of the district's ENL/bilingual education program. Some researchers have claimed that dual language instruction fosters academic proficiency in both the primary and second language, adding that students will become competent in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in two languages (Thomas & Collier, 2017). Many schools in the NYS education system do not offer bilingual education. Instead, they place ELL students into a traditional English immersion ENL program. The researcher in this study explored the experiences and feedback from the director of the bilingual program, an ELL student, and both an ENL teacher and a general education teacher regarding ELL education and how the organizational culture affected the bilingual program's success.

Theoretical Framework

The guiding theory for this study was Edgar Schein's (2017) organizational culture theory. Organizational culture theory involves the study of behavior and how people interact within an organization or group. The theory can help to explain teacher perceptions of a bilingual program and can also help school leaders make decisions needed to provide support where needed and ensure the district bilingual program's success. The district offered highly regarded instructional bilingual programs, but if the culture within the school fails to support the program, it could undermine the program's efficacy and could affect the teacher's perception of the program's success.

Edgar Schein developed a 3-level model of how to define and think about culture. The levels include artifacts, espoused beliefs and values, and basic underlying assumptions. These levels range from tangible items that can be seen and felt within a

culture to underlying values and behavioral norms that are deeply embedded and define an organization's culture (Schein & Schein, 2017).

Connection to Social Justice

ELL students face institutional, social, cultural, and instructional obstacles when they enter the U.S. public education system. They often face negative societal attitudes and have limited bilingual curricula and limited resources or textbooks in their primary language. Consequently, they drop out at high rates. Teachers' perceptions of ELL students and their unintentional or ignorant biases can negatively affect ELL students' academic success (Rizzuto, 2017). ELLs face institutional obstacles resulting from inadequate in-service training or preservice education for teachers who work with the ELL population. Additionally, students sometimes even lack the ability to communicate with their teachers because they cannot speak to them in their native languages. In NYS, a teacher with TESOL certification who has been hired to work with ELL students must take foreign language classes but is not required to speak the target language fluently.

Communication between ELL students, their families, and teachers is very challenging. The language barrier represents the biggest obstacle, and culturally, some families do not feel comfortable communicating with the school. The school and family partnership that should support ELL student education breaks when communication fails. The school culture can also affect ELL student achievement. Teacher bias and negative attitudes from teachers and administration toward ELL students or ENL instructional programs can hinder the learning process.

Citizenship status can also present a barrier for ELL students and families. Families who do not speak English and are in the country without legal citizenship status

can feel too intimidated or frightened to speak to authorities in institutions such as schools for fear of being exported back to their home country. This fear undermines the creation of a family–school partnership, detracting from the education of ELL students.

Significance of the Study

This study could have an informative impact on how school leaders identify professional development or teacher instruction programs and instructional programs for ELL students intended to increase academic success. The research could also impact how school leaders shape the organizational culture of their districts and school buildings so they support ELL education.

Most studies in the literature review presented in Chapter 2 related to ELL education focused on teaching methods and challenges faced by ENL teachers and ELL students and families. In a substantial number of studies, the researchers looked at the lack of preparation and professional development for administrators, mainstream teachers, and ENL teachers. The Every Student Succeeds Act held all public schools accountable in the United States with the aim of delivering an equal opportunity for disadvantaged students, including ELL students. The researcher in this current study explored teacher, student, and administrator perceptions of bilingual programs and how organizational school culture influenced them.

This current study included teacher and administrator viewpoints and feedback that could help administrators make decisions about professional development for all school personnel regarding ELL education. The researcher also aimed to understand the views and experiences related to organizational culture described by the director of bilingual education and the ENL/bilingual and general education teachers. The results of

this study can help administrators understand and address some of the obstacles facing ELL teachers and students through the lens of organizational culture.

Research Questions

The following three research questions guided this study:

RQ1. To what extent does bilingual education influence learning for English language learner students through an organizational culture lens?

RQ2. What are the opportunities and challenges ELL students encounter in the bilingual language instruction program through an organizational culture lens?

RQ3. Does organizational culture influence bilingual education or the perception of the bilingual program?

Definition of Terms

Bilingual one-way dual language program – A bilingual one-way dual language program includes students from the same home or primary language and background. The teacher in these programs provides instruction in both the home language and the target language (<https://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed>).

Bilingual two-way dual language program – A bilingual two-way dual language program includes both native English speakers and ELLs. The teacher provides instruction in both English and the home or primary language. In the majority of dual language programs, the students receive half of their instruction in their home or primary language and the remainder in their target language (<https://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed>).

Emerging (low intermediate) level of proficiency – A student at the emerging level has some dependence on supports and structures to advance academic language skills and has

not yet met the linguistic demands necessary to demonstrate English language proficiency in a variety of academic contexts (<https://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed>).

English language learner – An ELL is a student who comes from a non-English speaking home who is learning to be proficient in the English language (<https://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed>).

Entering (i.e., beginning) level of proficiency – A student at the entering level depends significantly on supports and structures to advance academic language skills and has not yet met the linguistic demands necessary to demonstrate English language proficiency in a variety of academic contexts (<https://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed>).

Home Language Questionnaire – Administrators and educators in NYS use the Home Language Questionnaire to determine the language students speak at home (<https://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed>).

Multilanguage learner – A multilanguage learner is a student working to develop proficiency in multiple languages (<https://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed>).

New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test – Administrators annually give the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test at the end of the school year to determine a student’s language proficiency level for the next school year (<https://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed>).

New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners – Administrators in NYS use the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners to determine the student’s “entering level of proficiency” and the ENL level of service a student requires (<https://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed>).

Part 154 – New York State Education Department Regulations – These regulations pertain to the NYSED Commissioner’s regulations concerning ELLs and multilingual learners (<https://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed>).

Target language – A student’s target language is the second language they are learning.

Traditional ENL program – Instruction in a traditional ENL program emphasizes English language acquisition and occurs primarily in English. The program offers home or primary language supports (<https://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed>).

Transitional bilingual program – A TBE offers students of the same home language the opportunity to learn to speak, understand, read, and write in English while continuing to learn academic content in their home language. Teachers use the students’ home language to help them progress academically in all content areas while they acquire English. TBE programs aim to increase the amount of English instruction over time while also providing home language instruction (<https://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed>).

CHAPTER 2

Theoretical Framework

Edgar Schein cowrote the fifth edition of *Organizational Culture and Leadership* with his son, Peter Schein. Although Edgar Schein's 1983 3-level model of how to define culture remains relevant, the newer edition adds a focus on a multicultural world and how different cultures are embedded into an organizational culture. Anthropologists and sociologists have studied culture for many years, with some defining macrocultures (e.g., nations, large organizations) and micro- or subcultures. Culture helps individuals see patterns in social behavior. A definition of organizational culture emerges in observed behavior regularities when people interact, have key shared values, follow rules of behavior, and have leadership structure. People usually come together as a group for a purpose, either for safety or security or to accomplish a task. Once they have completed the initial task, the group purpose can shift to thoughts, emotions or feelings, and a shared perception (Schein & Schein, 2017)

Edgar Schein's Organizational Culture Theory 3-level model, developed in the early 1980s described the structure of culture. The levels include the following categories and subcategories.

- Artifacts
 - a. Visible and feelable structures and processes
 - b. Observable behavior – difficult to decipher
- Espoused beliefs and values
 - a. Ideals, goals, values, aspirations
 - b. Ideologies

- c. Rationalizations, which may or may not be congruent with behavior and other artifacts
- Basic underlying assumptions
 - a. Unconscious, taken-for-granted beliefs and values.
 - b. Determined behavior, perception, thought, and feeling

Underlying assumptions can affect behavior and perception. Organizational leaders must understand the underlying assumptions, espoused beliefs, and values of the organization and how they create an organizational culture that can affect the positive or negative impact of the work at hand (Schein & Schein, 2017).

Review of Related Literature

Chapter 1 provided an overview of the research topic, perceptions of bilingual education through an organizational culture framework, and Edgar Schein's organizational culture theory. Chapter 2 is organized around the related literature and includes four themes: a) systemic problems facing the ELL student population in the U.S. public education system, b) teaching methods in ENL education, c) challenges for ENL teachers and ELL students, and d) how perception and organizational culture in schools can affect bilingual education.

The related research includes the following systemic problems for ELL students: an administrator preparation gap in professional development for ELL student education programs, ELL students needing more pathways to citizenship, and a need for academic and professional mentorship to support ELLs. Another systemic issue facing ELL education involves the testing requirements and regulations of the No Child Left Behind Act (updated regulation now called, The Every Student Succeeds Act) that hinder schools

and educators from focusing on ELL students. The literature review uncovered studies focused on teaching methods, the reading achievement gap between non-ELLs and ELLs in Kansas public schools, student achievement for ELLs and non-ELLs in a dual language program, a traditional bilingual program and an all-English program, educators' perspectives of structured English immersion, factors that challenge ELLs and increase their dropout rates, and academic achievement and college-going rates for ELL students. According to the literature, ELL students face challenges related to limited time to complete necessary courses and testing for graduation, high-stakes testing, adjusting to a new culture, economic factors, and possible reunification with family. Challenges for ENL teachers include limited professional development, changing regulations and limited resources and, in some cases, a lack of linguistic knowledge needed to instruct language acquisition. Research related to challenges in coteaching for regular education teachers and ENL teachers and teacher preparation included the influence of teacher attitudes and beliefs on coteaching and coteaching versus dual-certified instruction. Researchers in other studies explored teacher perception and attitudinal beliefs and their effect on school culture and education for ELL students.

Systemic Changes Designed to Meet ELLs' Academic Needs

Administrators must obtain professional development or ENL education preparation in their administrative programs to ensure successful ENL instruction in their schools or districts. Judkins (2018) examined the ELL-focused knowledge of school-site administrators in a midwestern district to identify the impact of administrator knowledge on ELL achievement, the potential impacts of years of experience, professional development participation, and the percentage of ELL students at their schools. Judkins

performed a qualitative study using a survey sent to 64 principals in the second-largest district in a midwestern city. The city served over 40,000 students and over 3,000 ELL students (i.e., about 7.5% of the district student population). Only 35 principals responded to the survey, but the results indicated a gap in administration preparation for educating ELL students. Ironically, principals with more experience were more self-critical of their knowledge, but they actually had more knowledge than they self-reported, regarding ELL education according to the survey results.

A systemic issue that also affects ELL education involves the competing demands in preservice TESOL supervision. Box (2017) explored the competing demands in the supervisory process and the practices supervisors or administrators use in their postobservation meetings with new ENL teachers preparing for TESOL certification. This qualitative study included six preservice teachers who were in their final year of their TESOL pre-K–12 master’s program and were completing their high school student teaching in New York City. Supervisors must navigate the competing demands for the specific TESOL program and, more broadly, for teacher education during the postobservation conference and overall supervision of the preservice teacher. NYS passed Education Law 3012, which radically changed the evaluation system for teachers from simple categories of satisfactory and unsatisfactory into four categories. Teachers who fall into the bottom two categories for 2 years in a row can lose their teaching license. NYS also changed the certification process. Many of the changes emerged from increased observations and meetings before and after the observations and more detailed written and verbal feedback between the supervisor and the preservice teacher. Box

concluded strategies existed for administrators and preservice teachers to help meet the challenging demands of the process.

Another systemic change that research has shown appears to help ENL and ELL students involves creating more pathways to citizenship in addition to a specialized mentor program. Hansen-Thomas and Sourdout (2018) concluded the combination of additional pathways to citizenship and a specialized mentorship can foster academic success in high school and at the college level for ELL students. Hansen-Thomas and Sourdout stated:

In 2010 President Obama set a goal for the USA to produce 8 million more college graduates by 2020 but acknowledged the USA needs to focus on successfully educating the English Language Learner population (Hispanic/Latin). [The U.S. Census Bureau (2010) showed] the Latino/a population will account for 60% of the nation's population growth over the next 50 years. (p. 48-49)

Hansen-Thomas and Sourdout focused on “two cracks in the pipeline” (p. 49), Latin/Hispanic ELLs entering higher education and Latin/Hispanic ELLs obtaining employment after college. This qualitative study included a case study of a Latina with a teaching degree, interviews with eight secondary teachers from a large district with a 25% ELL population rate, policy data regarding ELLs in higher education, and the voices of the authors as researchers and educators of ELL students.

The pressure school districts feel to teach to the test rather than focus on what academic skills ELL students need represents a systemic obstacle hindering academic success for ELL students (Menken, 2006). The No Child Left Behind Act, which was later replaced by the Every Student Succeeds Act, and the testing mandated by these laws

limits school districts, forcing them to focus instruction on preparing students for standardized tests so the district will remain eligible for federal and state funding. School districts do not have the time to focus on alternate curricula and language policies because ELL students must pass the tests required by the government. In Menken's (2006) qualitative study and quantitative data analysis, the data consisted of interviews, observations, state, district, and school policy documents, standardized test scores, and data related to graduation, promotion, retention, and dropout rates. The study included 128 participants (i.e., 61 students, 19 administrators, 44 ENL teachers, and four guidance counselors). The researcher also drew from New York City school data. Menken concluded that curriculum changes in schools allowed ELL students to pass the tests to graduate rather than to meet their academic needs. Manken called for school districts to meet ELL student needs rather than offer a one-size-fits-all approach mandated by the state education department.

Teaching Methods for ELL Students

Jung (2017) researched the reading achievement gap between non-ELL and ELL students in Kansas public schools. Jung examined the longitude relationship between reading outcomes for a student group who received English to speakers of other languages (ESOL) services and a group that did not receive ESOL services. Jung sought to determine if the outcome gap between non-ESOL and ESOL groups differed among elementary, middle, and secondary school students and to see if the reading outcomes changed significantly over the 5 years of the study. The author included assessment records, teachers' ESOL endorsement records, and school records from a total of 289 districts and 5,734 schools in the state of Kansas in this quantitative study. The study also

included two reading outcomes from a reading assessment given to students who received and did not receive ESOL services in Grades 3–11.

Jung's (2017) repeated analysis of variance (ANOVA) measures showed the scores of students with ESOL services were slightly significantly higher than the scores of students without ESOL services; therefore, the author concluded that ESOL services in Kansas did help ESOL students. In one limitation, the study made no comparison between ESOL services in Kansas and another state, nor did the author compare ESOL teaching methods.

Cole (2015) conducted a study to compare student achievement for ELL and non-ELL students enrolled in dual language programs, traditional bilingual programs, and an all-English program in a large urban North Texas school district using state exam data. The author used the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness scores in 2012, 2013, and 2014 from 478 fifth-grade reading exams and 487 fifth-grade math exams in this quantitative study. Cole adopted a casual comparative and nonexperimental design and considered *ex post facto* due to the fact they gathered the data after the fact. The author performed an ANOVA and one sample *t* test, and generalized the results to conclude that non-ELL fifth-grade students in a dual language program were usually more successful than students in an all-English program. Overall, the results indicated that ELLs and non-ELLs can benefit from dual language programs. Cole recommended additional research and suggested researchers take other measures to quantify the progress of all students in dual language programs. Language acquisition and true biliteracy take approximately 5–7 years.

In an effort to meet the needs of the growing ELL student population, educators should be creative in developing instruction programs for ELL students. Watkis (2020) explored how beginner high school ELL students developed literacy skills using multimedia and multimodal resources. In this qualitative case study, Watkis gathered data through interviews with ENL teachers and ELL students. The data revealed a few themes: learning in a social context, using home language to support learning, and the necessity to use multimedia and multimodal approaches to make content accessible. As noted by the researcher, many mainstream teachers have misconceptions about language acquisition and the optimal conditions needed for students to acquire English. Some teachers also have misconceptions about the English proficiency level of ELL students based on their social language skills and ability to interact in various settings. As the ELL student population continues to increase in the United States, educators should explore multiple ways to develop literacy skills.

Herrera (2020) concluded dual language instruction is a successful teaching method. Herrera studied ELL and non-ELL student performance in a Brooklyn district with a large Spanish and Polish ELL population. The author compared a group of students who received dual language instruction to their peers who received other types of instruction and found students with dual language instruction outperformed their peers with other types of instruction by the fifth grade.

Cruze et al. (2019) conducted another study related to instruction in which they examined educators' perspectives of a structured English immersion program a decade after it was implemented. The researchers used information from an educational summit in Arizona with a committee of 12 superintendents, 80 pre-K–12 teachers, experts in

emerging bilingual education from two Arizona universities, and key stakeholders from the Arizona Department of Education about their ELL programs. Cruz et al. examined whether or not the structured English immersion language program was more effective in the Arizona public school system for emergent bilingual students than the bilingual program it replaced. The authors analyzed qualitative artifacts through a language policy lens and concluded there were too many challenges with the structured English immersion model, and the students did not receive the cultural and linguistic benefits needed to succeed. The author found one of the biggest challenges involved teacher preparation in this program. Most teachers felt they did not have adequate instruction or experience in the structured English immersion program. Analysis of the data produced 13 themes, nine of which related to challenges with the structured English immersion program. The premise of the structured English immersion model was the notion that students would be proficient in English within 1 year. The research did not support this assumption, and responses included statements such as the “whole model is based on a false assumption of 1 year” (p. 444). Although the results did not support the assumption that the structured English immersion program was effective in the Arizona public school system for emergent bilingual students, they created a new question regarding how better teacher preparation could have impacted program outcomes.

In a study of school counselor interventions, Cook et al. (2018) researched academic achievement and college enrollment for ELLs based on school counselor interventions. In this study, the authors interviewed 198 school counselors in the Northeast using a self-perception survey instrument. Cook et al. used the total design method of data collection and conducted a *t* test and ANOVAs to study the results of the

data. The data-driven recommendations included counselors collaborating with multiple school and community stakeholders to advocate for ELL students. The authors also recommended communicating with parents and involving them in academic and college planning. They also recommended engaging ELL students in various career education and informational college activities. Although communication barriers related to language and cultural barriers regarding postsecondary education may exist for this population, Cook et al. suggested counselors and teachers make an effort to communicate with ELL parents to help inform them and their children about postsecondary and career options in order to reduce dropout rates. The authors cautioned that if ELL students do not see the big picture or have long-term educational or career goals, they may lose motivation in high school.

Challenges for ELL Students and ENL Teachers in Public Education

In order to help ELL students succeed, educators must identify their challenges and support systems. Hanks-Sloan (2016) utilized a quantitative and qualitative 32-question student survey as well as student focus groups in English and Spanish administered to 159 Latino ELLs enrolled in Grades 9–12 at three high schools that provided ESOL classes in the mid-Atlantic region. The author looked at graduation rates and measured the economic impact on the national economy when students failed to complete school. One of the challenges facing the ELL student population is limited time to prepare for graduation, as many ELLs enter the school system after age 12. High-stakes testing to meet graduation requirements represents another challenge. Hanks-Sloan also noted the family reunification process, along with family expectations and obligations, impedes ELL progress. In many cases, the reunion between family and child

is not easy because they may have not lived together for a long time. Students may find it difficult to reunite with their parents who left them behind to move to a new country.

Adjusting to a new culture and possibly new family members, siblings, and stepparents can be very difficult. The author added that ELLs also experience family obligations in different ways. The families of many ELL students expect them to work to help support the family. Cultural dissonance, politics, immigration policies, and community influence all present challenges that can isolate ELL students and give them negative experiences inside and outside of school.

Beck (2017) asserted that one significant challenge for teachers involves the lack of in-service professional development related to teaching ELL students. Teachers experience improved self-perception and self-efficacy when they feel prepared to teach language acquisition to ELL students and are equipped to meet their students' needs. Beck designed this qualitative study as a multiple case study to explore how in-service professional development curriculum influenced elementary teachers' self-efficacy when instructing emerging bilingual students. The participants in the study attended two elementary schools in a northern suburb of New York City. The study included in-service professional development observations, a review of documents and artifacts, and data collection from semi-structured interviews and surveys. The author of the study identified a lack of in-service professional development in ELL education and suggested in-service professional development for educators of ELL students benefits students and teachers when it meets the needs of the individual teachers and includes cultural competence.

Understanding global migration and why immigrants come to the United States will allow educators to prepare for a growing diversity of students. U.S. immigration

occurs in waves, and a shift in expectations has occurred in educational institutions. The No Child Left Behind Act and then the Every Student Succeeds Act imposed protocols mandating educators meet the needs of ELL students, and the current law holds schools accountable with the threat of lost government funding. There have been many changes in NYS ELL education rules, so Curiale (2019) explored different elementary ENL push-in teachers' perspectives on teaching ELL students to find common themes, highlight success stories, and identify challenges in order to transform ENL education. Curiale conducted a mixed method Q methodology approach that incorporated the views of 55 teachers in New York schools.

Teacher knowledge and biases about the role of language in the classroom play an important role in their ability to teach ELL students. Stevens (2019) explored the instructional practices and beliefs of mainstream and bilingual teachers and their instructional decision-making in the linguistically diverse classroom. This qualitative case study included classroom observations and interviews with teachers in which the researcher asked about their backgrounds and asked them to reflect on their decision-making regarding language instruction in the classroom. The researcher also addressed school culture during interviews with each of the administrators in the two included elementary schools. Stevens organized the results into common themes, and the author organized the themes around teacher certifications (i.e., bilingual vs. mainstream teachers). The teachers reflected on personal experiences and biases and reported realizing, in some cases, how they had grown in their teaching skills based on their experiences. The results of this study could have implications for decisions made by

administrators in charge of educating ELL students or in professional development offered for teachers.

Another challenging aspect for teachers relates to coteaching and teacher preparation for ENL or regular education teachers. The literature review revealed significant amounts of research on teacher preparation and teacher attitudes regarding educating ELL students. Fasciana (2019) studied the attitudes and beliefs of general education teachers regarding effective methods of literacy instruction for ELL students. In 2014, the New York State Board of Regents adopted Part 154-3 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, which required general education and ENL teachers to coteach an integrated English class to all ELL students. This represented a new experience for many teachers, so it included a learning curve for how to work collaboratively with ENL teachers in the same classroom. In the mixed-method study, general education teachers shared their viewpoints by ranking statements presented to them and responding in group interviews and discussions. Results of the study varied based on teaching experiences, relationships with the coteacher, preferences for teaching alone, and professional development offered to the teacher. Fasciana strongly believed that administrators need to understand teacher attitudes and beliefs in order to implement successful coteaching models to educate ELL students.

Administrators must understand mainstream teacher experiences and viewpoints to create successful coteaching environments for ELL students. Ramos-Velita (2018) examined mainstream teacher experiences with ENL students and their influence on teaching and coteaching practices. In this qualitative case study, the researcher examined the implementation of an ENL program in the mainstream classroom with a coteaching

model to understand how the teachers understood their roles and responsibilities. The 12 mainstream teachers with experience teaching ELL students participated in the study. Two themes emerged from the results: teacher and coteacher attitudes and perceptions and teacher and coteacher practice and collaboration. Teachers reported feeling empathy toward their ELL students and frustrated they were not taught how to communicate with them or help them understand the curriculum in English. Some teachers initially expressed discomfort with the coteaching model for ELL students. The second theme regarding coteacher practice and collaboration revealed many different beliefs about coteacher instruction practices. Some teachers who had limited experience with coteaching models struggled to find a model that worked for both teachers and students, and other teachers adapted to the ENL program and found advantages of coteaching with an ENL teacher.

Teachers' perceptions of and preparation for teaching ELL students represent an important factor in ELL students' academic success. Caruso (2020) stated: "The attitudes of teachers in the classroom affect how an ELL student will learn" (p. 26). This researcher examined "teacher's perceptions of ELL students and the adequacy of teacher preparation to teach this population" (p. 28). Caruso's qualitative study included a survey questionnaire, individual interviews, focus group interviews, and observations. The 14 teachers included ELL teachers, special education teachers, English Language Arts teachers, ENL teachers, and dual language classroom teachers in a fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-grade setting. One theme that emerged from the data analysis was that "teaching has changed" (p. 106). Due to the rise in the ELL student population, some teachers have changed the way they teach their classes. The use of visual learning, hands-on learning,

and group work has become more prevalent and possibly better for all students. In another theme from the findings, Caruso noted a lack of professional development. ENL teachers reported having more professional development over the last 5 years compared to general education teachers, but overall, teachers reported receiving less than 8 hr of professional development regarding teaching ELL students. All teachers stated they would welcome more training and professional development.

Although the NYSED has enacted new guidelines and regulations for teaching ELL students, districts in NYS have some flexibility in the teaching model they use. The TESOL extension certification in the NYSED Regulations in Part 154 allows for a dual-certified instructor of ENL in a content area to instruct ELL students. Weeks (2021) explored if the coteaching model with two instructors (i.e., an ELL teacher and a content area teacher) in the classroom provided a better model to meet the needs of ELL students versus having one instructor dual certified in ENL instruction and a content area. Weeks studied the effects on ELL students who received either a cotaught model or a dual-certified teaching model in secondary English language arts. In this mixed-method study, the author analyzed English Regents scores and also gathered qualitative data from one-on-one teacher interviews. The study showed no statistical difference in Regents scores between teaching models, but the interviews revealed strengths and weaknesses with each model. One of the limitations of this study was the lack of generalization due to the impacts of ongoing professional development in the study district. Due to the larger size of the ELL student population, this district had received ongoing professional development, which could have impacted the results compared to a district with less professional development in ELL education.

How Teacher Perception and Organizational Culture in Schools Can Affect Education

Flores and Smith (2008) explored attitudinal beliefs of teachers regarding ELL students. The authors compared attitudinal beliefs to teachers' ethnicity, linguistic proficiencies, number of minority students in class, and the teachers' preparation for instructing a diverse student body. Flores and Smith sought to understand whether personal characteristics, number of students in class, and teacher preparation influence attitudinal beliefs regarding students of diverse populations. This quantitative study took place in southern Texas, in a predominantly Hispanic urban community. The authors analyzed the survey data using descriptive statistics (i.e., *t* test and multivariate ANOVA) and conducted the research in two phases. Despite the study's limitations, which included the use of a convenient sample and self-reported data and other variables, the findings merit consideration from school leaders because they suggested no single factor tested (i.e., ethnicity, years of service, diversity training) was strong enough by itself to affect the negative cultural and language attitudinal beliefs. The researchers conclude that all teachers, regardless of ethnicity, need exposure to and professional development for diversity issues. Teachers who acquire some second-language proficiency when working with a large ELL population may develop a more positive attitude toward ELL students. Recruiting teachers with a similar background to their student population can increase student achievement for ELL students. The results of this study can persuade school administrators to provide ongoing in-service training for diversity and second language support to impact student achievement for the ELL student population (Flores & Smith, 2008).

In their qualitative study, Wheeler (2020) identified themes and challenges that lead to teachers' positive or negative perceptions. Teachers of both bilingual instruction and English immersion instruction reported challenges such as having to continually monitor student understanding and the need to create visual, academic, and linguistic supports for beginning ELLs in addition to addressing many other student needs in the classroom (Wheeler, 2020).

In a mixed-method study, Rizzuto (2017) explored how the perceptions of early childhood teachers toward ELL students can shape their teaching practices. Using the qualitative and quantitative data collected in this study, Rizzuto showed that most teachers hold negative perceptions regarding ELL students, specifically regarding ELL students using their native language in the classroom. Some teachers lacked an understanding of second language acquisition. Others lacked both training regarding second language acquisition and instructional practices to foster it. Other bilingual teachers implemented literacy instruction for ELL students using a literacy series manual that was distributed to teachers. The data also revealed that teachers strongly agreed with survey prompts that teachers should not be expected to adjust their preferred mode of instruction to accommodate the needs of all students. Rizzuto concluded that teachers needed professional development to help them understand language diversity and the instruction practices that support it. Rizzuto asserted that administrators can address negative teacher perceptions by providing teachers with instructional practices to address language diversity and educating them about its benefits.

A qualitative study conducted by four researchers in Salt Lake City in 2017 explored teacher perceptions, school culture, and partnership building and their role in

creating pathways to higher education. Aleman et al. (2017) cofounded a partnership called Adelante with the University of Utah to serve a predominantly Latina/o student population in a low-income community in Salt Lake City. The partners aimed to provide elementary students and families with experiences and knowledge about higher education to create pathways to eventual college attendance. The researchers conducted interviews with 10 teachers who were aware of the Adelante program. The interview data collected was analyzed using a coding system to identify themes. At the time of this study, Adelante had been in existence for 11 years, and although the program provided many successful field trips, enrichment activities, and faculty professional development meetings, the authors reported the program “failed to establish a more collaborative and sustained relationship with a majority of the teachers” (Aleman et al., 2017, p.875).

Aleman et al. (2017) concluded that although the Adelante program had success, they identified teachers’ misunderstandings of the goal and mission and also identified teachers’ deficit thinking that conflicted with the partnership’s values. The study results can guide future conversations between teachers and community and college partners and also assist administrators’ efforts to provide professional development focused on classroom practices and social justice and culture.

In a quantitative study conducted in a district home to multicultural and working-class families in a suburb of a Midwestern U.S. city, Karabenick et al. (2004) explored teacher beliefs and attitudes toward ELL students and the professional development implications. The researchers surveyed 729 teachers at the elementary, middle school, and high school levels. Most teachers had been in the classroom for over 20 years, and 74% of the teachers had some ELL students in their classes (i.e., about 14% of the

students). A team of experienced teachers developed the survey, and “the team identified knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that impact regular and bilingual classroom teachers’ delivery of quality educational services to ELL students in regular and bilingual settings.”

Karabenick et al. (2004) used descriptive statistics to analyze the survey data, and they concluded this was a responsive district ready for professional development for its teachers of ELL students. The results provided school leaders with information about restructuring ELL education programs and outreach to ELL families and community-based organizations. Teachers expressed interest in gaining knowledge and training to equip them with the skills needed to enhance their instruction and increase confidence in teaching ELL students. Teachers also expressed ambivalence in their characterization of their school environment for ELL students and families. Teachers reported the more contact they had with ELL students, the more positive their attitudes were toward having ELL students in their classrooms.

In a different study, Horton (2018) focused on school climate and culture in public schools in New York and New Jersey and their relationship to student achievement in high- or low-performing schools. The author in this descriptive study purposively selected schools that performed well and schools that performed poorly using data from the U.S. Department of Education from the 2015–2016 school year. The participants included high school teachers who taught Grades 9–12. Horton removed schools from the study that had a building principal with less than 2 years of experience because prior research had shown building principals have a big impact on school climate and culture. Horton gave the teachers the school culture survey to analyze school culture

and the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire – Rutgers Secondary to analyze the school climate. The researcher analyzed the data with quantitative formulas using IBM’s Statistical Package for the Social Sciences.

Horton’s (2018) results indicated that high-performing schools had supportive building principals and a school culture and climate that included a high degree of trust, collaboration, and engagement with all members of the school. Lower performing schools had a more closed climate where teachers felt the principals were rigid and unresponsive to their own and students’ needs. Teachers also felt their principals burdened them with unnecessary busy work and were not supportive. Horton stated the implications of the study were that the schools with consistently high achievement had open school climates and collaborative school cultures as opposed to lower performing schools with closed climates and school cultures.

Summary

The research studies included in this literature review showed ELL students face many obstacles in the U.S. public education system. The NYSED, school board associations, and local school administrators must address the systemic problems in order to help ELL students succeed. The literature included in this study also focused on teaching methods for ELL students and indicated favorable results from schools implementing some sort of dual language or bilingual instruction. The research studies that focused on educator and ELL student challenges identified many social and economic obstacles for ELL students. Studies also showed challenges for teachers, which included a lack of teacher professional development or preparation. The research also highlighted the need for further professional development for all mainstream and ENL

teachers to facilitate successful coteaching that will support ELL students at all levels of proficiency.

The literature review showed that administrator, teacher, and student perceptions are important to student success. Teacher perceptions of student ability and perceptions about instructional program effectiveness can greatly impact ELL student success and the cultural environment of the school. The school culture can, in turn, influence ELL student achievement. The results of this current study will provide administrators with information about areas of professional development needed for ENL and general education teachers to address bias toward ELL students and create effective ENL instructional programs.

Chapter 3 presents the methodology for this study, including data collection and analysis procedures, research design and the sample and population of participants, limitations, and factors related to reliability and validity of the research design.

CHAPTER 3

Research Design

This chapter describes the methodology used to investigate the research questions in this study. The chapter includes information about the data collection procedures, participants, instrumentation, and data analysis procedures. The researcher also outlines the trustworthiness strategies used, the ethical procedures followed, the researcher's roles and responsibilities, and the study limitations.

In this qualitative multicase study, the researcher used an organizational culture lens to explore administrator and teacher perceptions regarding opportunities, challenges, and successes in a bilingual program for ELL students. The researcher also examined how organizational culture influences bilingual ELL education. In this study, the researcher gathered information to investigate administrator, ENL, bilingual, and general education teacher perceptions about the bilingual program through the framework of organizational culture theory.

Stake (1995) noted, cases of interest in education are people and programs. When many people share a common experience, researchers can listen to their stories and collect the data needed to understand a given issue. In a case study, the researcher looks at a single case, and in a collective case study, the researcher collects data from multiple people. Stake asserted that researchers must ask the right questions to obtain the desired information. The researcher purposefully chose to use the multicase study methodology in order to obtain different perspectives on the issue of educating ELL students. The study included data gathered from an ENL teacher's experiences, a general education teacher's experience coteaching in a bilingual classroom, and the experiences of the

director of bilingual education. The researcher sought to understand how their perspectives were influenced by the organizational culture in the school district or school building. The researcher compared the data obtained from the case study interviews, observations, and collected artifacts to identify common challenges or successes for ENL teachers in a bilingual program and how the organizational culture influenced bilingual instruction.

Research Questions

The following three research questions guided this study:

RQ1. To what extent does bilingual education influence learning for English language learner students through an organizational culture lens?

RQ2. What are the opportunities and challenges ELL students encounter in the bilingual language instruction program through an organizational culture lens?

RQ3. Does organizational culture influence bilingual education or the perception of the bilingual program?

Setting and Participants

The research took place at a high school in a suburban district located outside a large metropolitan city in the state of New York. ELL students comprised 22% of the district's student population, an increase of 10% from the 2012–2013 school year when they had a total of 12% ELL students in their overall student population. Therefore, district leaders felt the need to adjust their ENL educational program, and at the time of this study, utilized a one-way (i.e., traditional) bilingual education program and a traditional ENL or English immersion education program. When a new ELL student

enters the district, they may choose the one-way or traditional bilingual education program or the traditional ENL education program. This school district must provide a bilingual education program as per the NYSED Commissioners Regulation, Part 154, which states each school with 20 or more ELL students of the same grade who speak the same home language must provide a bilingual education program.

The desired sample included five participants from the secondary bilingual program, including two general education teachers and two bilingual teachers who taught in a one-way dual language or bilingual program (see Table 1). The teachers were all certified in 9-12 secondary education with a bilingual extension or with a general education content certification. The teaching experience ranged from 2 to 13 years, with a mix of tenured and untenured teachers. The sample also included the director of the ENL and dual language/bilingual education. This person held a degree in educational leadership administration and had 15 years of experience in ENL and dual language or bilingual education. They also served as a coordinator before becoming a director this past year. The desired sample played an integral part of the organizational culture in the high school setting.

Table 1*Participant Table*

Participant	Title	Grade level	Experience
A	General education teacher	9–12	7 years of teaching experience
B	General education teacher	9–12	10 years of teaching experience
C	Bilingual teacher	9–12	13 years of ENL/Bilingual teaching experience
D	Bilingual teacher	9–12	2 years of ENL/Bilingual teaching experience
E	Director of ENL and dual language/bilingual education	Pre-K–12	In first year as the director of the ENL/bilingual program, but prior experience as an ENL/bilingual program coordinator

Note. ENL = English as a new language.

The researcher chose a high school setting for this study because the pressure of graduation raises the stakes for ELL student success. ELL students have limited time to meet state graduation requirements, which creates stress for teachers, students, and administrators. School districts are often evaluated using graduation rates or standardized test scores, and this has a ripple effect on school funding and the property values of residents in the community. An ELL student who enters the district in the middle of high school still must meet the state's graduation requirement for all 4 years. ELL students often receive blame for not succeeding when the system is not designed to meet their

needs. The implementation of bilingual education has addressed some of their needs, but as this study was intended to explore, obstacles may exist within the organizational culture that also need to be addressed. As discussed in Chapter 2, underlying assumptions and beliefs about the bilingual education program may positively or negatively affect ELL education and success. Therefore, organizational leaders must understand the underlying assumptions, espoused beliefs, and values of the organization and how they create an organizational culture that can affect students' education (Schein & Schein, 2017).

When conducting a case study, Creswell (2005) expressed a preference for selecting cases that show different perspectives on the problem, process, or event in question. Creswell called this method purposeful maximal sampling. In this study, the researcher chose purposeful, nonrandom sampling by selecting an administrator and teachers in a district that offered a bilingual program and had a student population with a 20% proportion of ELL students. The researcher chose the five participants based on their roles in the high school or district. A director of ENL/bilingual education, general education teachers, and bilingual/ENL teachers may all have different viewpoints that inherently contribute to the organizational culture. Schein and Schein (2017) defined school culture as observed behavior regularities that emerge when people interact, share key values, follow rules of behavior, and have a leadership structure. The researcher aimed to gain valuable feedback about the bilingual program through the organizational culture theory lens by selecting different stakeholders in the program.

Data Collection Procedures

Qualitative researchers conduct interviews to collect data. Structured and semistructured interviews involve verbalized questions that include relevant questions designed to elicit information relevant to a specific hypothesis. Interviews help researchers find out what participants think and how they feel about the study topic. The data sources in this study included semistructured interviews with the director of the bilingual program, two ENL teachers, and two general education teachers. The researcher conducted an initial interview, a follow-up interview, and classroom or school district artifacts and classroom observations. The interview data in this study provided valuable feedback that can help administrators make informed decisions about ELL education.

After gaining approval from the superintendent and principal in this school district (see Appendix A), the researcher interviewed five participants (i.e., four teachers and an administrator) in the high school bilingual program. The researcher conducted the interviews using a 2-phase process. The first phase involved a separate online interview with each teacher and the administrator using the Zoom platform. Each interview lasted approximately 40 min and was audio recorded and transcribed. The interviews began with questions about demographic information, teaching, learning, program history, and current ENL teaching methods used. The initial questions also addressed the bilingual program and organizational culture within the district and school building and professional development offered through the district. The interviews aligned with the research questions, so they helped the researcher gather feedback from the administrator, teachers, and students about their experiences in the bilingual program and their beliefs about bilingual education (see Appendix B).

The second interview took place face-to-face and was also audio recorded and transcribed. This interview lasted approximately 15 min and consisted of questions designed to clarify information obtained in the first round of interviews. The researcher also asked follow-up questions regarding information given in the first interview that related to the research questions. The 2-phase process took approximately 3 weeks to complete.

After gaining approval from the superintendent and principal in the school district, the researcher also scheduled an observation with two teachers in the bilingual program under study to create another data source. An observation involves gathering first-hand information by observing people and places at the research site (Bogdan & Biklen, 2016). The researcher served as a nonparticipant observer who visited the site and recorded notes without becoming involved in the participants' activities. The observations took place in the ENL bilingual classroom during a class period at the participating high school. The researcher observed the social climate of the classroom and school building as well as the relationship between the teachers and students. The observation data helped the researcher identify the organizational culture that existed, and the researcher added it to the data collected during the teacher interviews.

As the third source of data, the researcher also gathered artifacts. An artifact is an object of study (e.g., official documents produced by the school district), internal communications (e.g., a memo to staff from the director of bilingual education), or external communication (e.g., a letter to parents). The artifacts used in this study related to ELL and bilingual education. Some of the artifacts the researcher obtained included a curriculum guide outlining the bilingual course program for students, a parent letter

explaining a student's New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test scores, and external districtwide parent or guardian communication in both English and Spanish to support the bilingual population of the district such as the school website.

Data Analysis

The researcher analyzed the data from the three sources (i.e., the interviews, classroom observations, and collected artifacts) and organized, coded, and sorted it into themes. The researcher used visual techniques, such as color coding, charts, and spreadsheets to assist in sorting important themes. Once the data had been analyzed, the researcher interpreted it and developed ideas about the study findings.

After conducting the interviews and transcribing the audio recordings using a recording application called REV, the researcher analyzed the data obtained from the interviews. Categorization in data analysis involves converting descriptive information into categories. The researcher determined the categories and formulated themes and major ideas before analyzing the information. The coding process included coding categories from the research questions, such as possible obstacles, student success, administrative support, educational preparation or teacher training, and organizational culture. Some of the qualitative codes used included learning experiences (i.e., face-to-face), student and teacher challenges (i.e., time, program, pace), instructional processes (i.e., materials, procedures, instructions, support), teacher training, technology (i.e., training, support, materials), ENL services implementation, and school culture.

The researcher examined the descriptive field notes from the classroom observations, determined categories, and formulated themes before analyzing the information. Possible categories to code included classroom practices, relationships

within the classroom between teachers and students and between teachers in the same classroom, and the culture within the classroom or school environment. The researcher categorized the reflective notes taken regarding themes, quotes, and personal experiences to analyze the data gathered in the setting. The researcher used this analytic strategy to determine if common themes existed among the classroom observations.

The researcher analyzed the collected artifacts (i.e., parent letters, a curriculum guide, and district-wide communication such as the school website), determined categories, and formulated themes or major ideas that supported or contradicted data collected from the interviews and classroom observations. The researcher coded the artifact data using visual tools such as color coding, charts, and spreadsheets to help with identifying themes. The researcher examined the artifacts to search for communication strategies, evidence of support for students and families, clarity on the information being communicated, and organizational structure and culture.

Trustworthiness of the Design

Trustworthiness in qualitative research incorporates criteria, such as those identified by Lincoln and Guba (1985), to judge the quality of the research and determine if it can be trusted. The criteria used in this study to ensure trustworthiness included credibility, which refers to the confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings. Strategies to enhance credibility included the triangulation of data using multiple sources (i.e., interviews, observations, and artifacts). Other strategies included using audio recording and verbatim translation of the administrator, teacher interviews, and member checking, which involves allowing participants to look at the transcripts along with the interpretation and conclusions before publication to confirm their

viewpoints have been expressed correctly and to clear up any confusion (Shenton, 2002). The member checking in this study included allowing each interviewee to listen to the audio recording and review the scripted notes used during the interview. The participants in the classroom observations also had the opportunity to view the researcher's notes, the data collected from the classroom observations, and the data gathered from the artifacts to ensure agreement of data to support the study conclusions. The researcher kept all collected data secure and coded the interviewees' names and the settings to protect confidentiality.

Dependability represents another important criterion used to ensure trustworthiness. If another researcher wanted to repeat the study with the same participants, methods, and context, the results should be the same. The researcher reported the study processes in detail and ensured the interpretations and conclusions matched the data collected. The strategies used to ensure dependability included triangulation of data. The researcher used multiple sources of data to enhance dependability, including teacher interviews, observations, and artifacts (e.g., student work, instructional manuals, and teacher lesson plans that were collected with permission). Member checking represented another strategy to ensure dependability. This involved allowing the participants to check the transcribed audio recordings of the interviews.

Confirmability is a criterion of trustworthiness. Researchers should not base their interpretations on their own viewpoints but should instead ground them in the data. Other researchers can also confirm the findings in the research. Strategies used to enhance confirmability include triangulation of data that involves the collection of data from

multiple sources and peer review. To enhance confirmability in this study, the researcher allowed colleagues to review the data analysis and findings and provide feedback.

Transferability represents a final criterion of trustworthiness and refers to the extent to which the findings can be generalized to other situations. To ensure transferability, the researcher in this study used thick and vivid descriptions in the presentation of the findings.

Research Ethics

This researcher obtained permission from the superintendent and principal in the district where the study took place (see Appendix A). I asked for their permission to interview the director of bilingual education, two ENL or bilingual teachers, and two general education teachers using an online meeting platform after school hours. The superintendent and principal also granted permission for the researcher to conduct a face-to-face follow-up interview in the school setting.

After receiving permission from the superintendent and principal of the high school where the study took place to contact the bilingual education administrator and the teachers (see Appendix A), the researcher sent each participant an emailed consent form detailing the nature of the study. The form included the study's potential benefits, such as identifying and improving current teaching practices and exploring teachers' and administrators' pedagogical beliefs about the best teaching methods for ENL students and how these methods may influence their instructional practices. The invitation also included a statement explaining that all collected data would be kept confidential and used only for research purposes. The invitation stated that participation in the study was voluntary and that the participants' names and other identifying information would be

kept confidential. The researcher sent the email invitation to each participant 1 week in advance of the interviews, stating clearly how much time their participation would involve, the total number of interviews, the length of each session, and whether or not there were any risks associated with their participation. The invitation also asked the participants to confirm their availability for the interviews on the dates and times provided by the researcher. The researcher asked the participants to sign a letter of consent to participate in the study (see Appendix C).

Researcher Role

Reflexivity represents an important part of research that allows the researcher to reflect upon their role in the study and how their personal experiences and culture can influence their interpretations of the data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this study, the researcher played the role of a pre-K–12 director of counseling located in a school district on Long Island. The researcher’s district of employment lay outside the study. The researcher had worked in multiple districts and had experienced different school and district cultures. The researcher also had direct experiences with ELL students and ENL teachers. This experience spanned from when an ELL student first entered the district until they graduated or left the district for other reasons. The researcher managed the master schedule and worked closely with the principals, the assistant superintendent responsible for curriculum, the director of ENL dual language/world language, and ENL teachers to implement ENL services to the ELL students in the district. The researcher had attended multiple workshops to review the NYS Part 154 regulations. Therefore, the researcher had a considerable understanding of the changes in regulations and NYS’s expectations of the district, school, and teachers.

The researcher made an effort to discard any unintentional bias and used the following strategies to overcome personal bias on the subject of ENL/bilingual educational programs through an organizational culture lens. The researcher tried to limit bias by reflecting on the data collection process and findings to consider if they had been skewed in any way. The researcher used member checking to overcome any bias and followed up with each participant in the second interview to confirm their understanding of the participant's perspective and teaching experience. This process enabled the researcher to ensure they had correctly noted each participant's perceptions and experiences so the researcher could be confident they had the necessary knowledge to make statements about the findings.

This research topic grew from an objective desire to learn more about ENL education, bilingual education, and other successful methods or programs and how organizational culture can influence the efficacy of bilingual educational programs.

Chapter 4 reports the results of the study, including the data from the interviews and artifacts. The researcher coded the data into categories related to the research questions and provided a triangulated analysis.

CHAPTER 4

In this study, the researcher explored perceptions of a bilingual program through the lens of an organizational culture theory. The researcher aimed to understand the opportunities and challenges teachers and students face in a bilingual education program and the benefits or disadvantages perceived by all stakeholders. The researcher also examined how perceptions of bilingual education influence ELL education. This chapter presents the findings from the data collected during interviews with two high school ENL or bilingual teachers, two high school general education teachers, and one director of ENL or bilingual education. These participants worked in a suburban district on Long Island with 22% ELL students and 57% Hispanic or Latino students in the 2021–2022 school year. These percentages each represented an increase of 10% from the 2012–2013 school year. The district utilized transitional bilingual education for the ELL population. NYSED Regulation Part 154 stated that districts where a school has 20 or more ELLs of the same grade level speaking the same home language other than English must establish a bilingual education program. A TBE, as defined by NYSED, offered students of the same home language the opportunity to learn to speak, understand, read, and write in English while continuing to learn academic content in their home language. Educators use the student’s home language to help them progress academically in all content areas while they acquire English. Educators in TBE programs increase the amount of English instruction over time while also providing home language instruction. The data also includes information from classroom observations and artifacts obtained from the district.

Participant A worked as a high school general education teacher, teaching Grades 9–12, and had 8 years of teaching experience. Participant B worked as a high school

general education teacher, teaching Grades 9–12, and had 10 years of teaching experience. Participant C worked as an ENL/bilingual education teacher, teaching Grades 9–12, and had taught for 13 years. Participant D worked as a high school ENL/bilingual teacher, teaching Grades 9–12, and was in their second year of teaching at the time of this study. Participant E had served for less than 1 year as the director of ENL/bilingual education but had served as an ENL/bilingual education coordinator and teacher in a previous district for over 14 years. The teacher participants were 50% female and 50% male and had varying levels of experience. The director of ENL/bilingual education was female and had previous administrator and teaching experience in ENL/bilingual education.

To What Extent Does Bilingual Education Influence Learning for English Language Learner Students Through an Organizational Culture Lens?

The participants in this qualitative multicase study provided many examples of how bilingual education influenced learning for ELL students through an organizational lens. Participant E explained:

Students and their families have a choice when they enter the school district about entering the transitional bilingual program or the traditional ENL program, an English immersion program, where all classes are taught in English. Families are able to watch a video created by the state that explains the bilingual program and then they learn about what it will look like in this school. Since almost all ELL students speak Spanish, it is easier for the district to offer a lot of bilingual courses.

During their new teacher orientation program this past August, new staff received a crash course given by the director of ENL/bilingual education about ENL/bilingual programs offered to ELL students. Participant B stated:

Professional development programs in the past that taught teachers new teaching strategies that would benefit new ELL students trying to acquire a new language. Some of the strategies were simple but effective. Feedback about the professional development was positive. Professional development related to ENL/Bilingual education has been sporadic over the last 5 years.

Participant A stated the bilingual track was new within the last 2 years and explained the goal of the program was to move the students into the mainstream classes by their third or fourth year in high school. Participant A stated: “It would be very hard to place the students in mainstream classes if we didn’t have this program.”

Participant A added that the bilingual program could help ELL students acclimate to their new educational environment. Most students in the program shared the experience of having recently arrived in the United States. Participant A explained that ELL students who had been in the United States for 1 or 2 years naturally become mentors to the students who had more recently arrived in their bilingual program.

Participant A noted another cultural influence, describing how ENL/bilingual teachers tend to have more empathy or understanding for the students entering their classes than mainstream teachers who have less experience with entering ELL students. Participant A stated:

I do think that our ENL/bilingual teachers have a certain level of understanding and empathy that a mainstream teacher may not have. Not that the mainstream

teacher lacks it, but they just don't have the same understanding and day-to-day experience of working with the immigrant students. Knowing what they are going through in addition to learning a language, a culture, and learning to have institutional literacy. They have extra responsibilities in addition to their course content.

The researcher overheard statements in a classroom observation that supported the statement made in the interview data regarding ENL/bilingual teachers supporting the ELL student experience. The artifacts collected in this study (i.e., video tutorials about the ENL/bilingual education programs) also reflected the need to educate students and their families about the U.S. education system.

Participant D stated that the school's general education teachers presented a positive attitude toward the ENL/bilingual program "because they know they can reach out to the ENL/bilingual teachers for support and teaching strategies when the ELL students are transitioned from the bilingual program into mainstream classes."

Participant C stated:

Although many teachers have positive feelings about the bilingual program, there are some teachers who believe students need more time in English-only classes and less time in bilingual classes to acquire necessary English language skills to pass required New York state regents exams to meet diploma requirements. ELL students entering high school have very limited time and the faster they can learn English, the faster they will be able to succeed on required NYS Regents exams.

During an observation of a bilingual history class, the researcher noted that students appeared very comfortable learning the course content while speaking in their

home language. A few students even answered some questions in English, as requested by the teacher, in this relaxed environment. The researcher noted ELL students seemed comfortable enough in the class environment to practice their English-speaking skills. The researcher also observed that students asked many questions in their home language, and the teacher responded in their home language to deepen their understanding of the lesson content. Students received a project-based lesson where they had to move about the room and answer questions on paper at different stations around the room. Students discussed their answers with each other but in their home language and recorded their answers in English on clipboards given to them by the teacher. At the conclusion of the lesson, the teacher asked questions in English and expected the students to reply in English. During the class observation, the researcher noted that someone recited the Pledge of Allegiance in both English and Spanish over the school's intercom system. All students in the bilingual history class stood for the Pledge of Allegiance in both English and Spanish.

The artifacts collected by the researcher included letters to parents written in both English and Spanish regarding their child's placement in the ENL/bilingual program and letters to parents in both English and Spanish regarding their child's New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test to determine their English language development and proficiency. Collected artifacts also included the videos shown to students and families that explained the bilingual education program and the traditional ENL instructional program. By showing these videos to the entering students and their families, the district allowed them to make an informed decision regarding their student's education. This choice of program can be empowering to both the student and family.

What Opportunities and Challenges Do ELL Students Encounter in the Bilingual Program Through an Organizational Culture Lens?

The participants reported varied social and academic challenges related to immigrating to a new country and acclimating to a new school system. The academic challenges related to resources, time needed to complete graduation requirements, and teaching strategies for teachers to meet all student needs. Another challenge involved assimilation among all student groups within the school. The bilingual program enabled ELL students to learn course content while also learning English. The bilingual program provided the opportunity for ELL students to enter the school system without the pressure of having to learn English immediately. The bilingual teachers helped students acclimate to their new school setting.

Participant C stated:

One of the challenges for ELL students is the disruption in bilingual education due to the transient ELL student population. Teachers can be distracted in bilingual classes attending to new students throughout the year. Teachers start with foundational knowledge in the beginning of the school year. When new students enter the class throughout the year, the teacher is constantly trying to meet their needs while also trying to keep moving along in the course content for the students who have been in attendance the whole year.

Participant A stated: Some entering ELL students have experienced trauma in their move to this country and have trouble acclimating to their new home and school setting. Some ELL students also experience a different type of poverty in the U.S. and find it difficult to live in our society among peers with varying levels of socioeconomic status. Many ELL students and families leave their home

country due to problems they faced in their country but then face a new set of problems as an immigrant in the U.S.

Another challenge to the program involved finding textbooks and resources in other languages for each subject. Participant C stated: “Some subjects are easier than others to find resources. Many teachers are using digital resources instead of textbooks, but it can be challenging to translate documents and time-consuming to gather materials in foreign languages.” Participant C also reported: “Finding resources in science is especially tough.”

The artifacts data revealed that not all resources on the school website were translated into Spanish for the ELL students and families. Participant B stated:

Project-based learning lessons are hard for entering ELL students because they have a hard time understanding how to follow instructions in the new school environment. Having daily classroom routines to follow offers ELL students a sense of structure and is easier for them to follow along.

An institutional challenge emerged in the data related to the assessment tool used to measure English language proficiency. Participant A stated: “The [New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test] does not distinguish between language knowledge and content knowledge. It can be hard to determine an accurate level of proficiency in each area for the student.” Artifacts, such as letters to families regarding understanding New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test scores also showed the absence of the breakdown regarding content knowledge versus language proficiency.

A social challenge in the bilingual program involved the ELL students' limited opportunities to mingle with other students who could serve as language models. The limited exposure to other students also presented a barrier to socializing with the general education student population. Participant B stated:

ELL students who play on a sports team have more interaction with their general education peers and, therefore, may feel more comfortable branching out to meet other students through clubs, et cetera. ELL students who do not play sports tend to stick with their ELL friend group.

The authors of the *Extracurricular Activities and Clubs Guide* that the researcher retrieved from the school website wrote the document in English. ELL students who may be interested in joining a club or extracurricular activity may find a translated guide helpful.

Communication with families and family engagement also presented challenges. General education teachers and administrators who do not speak in the student's home language may struggle to communicate with families of ELL students and vice versa. Either electronic or human translation services could help, but not all participants in the study reported using them to communicate with families. Participant D stated: "Our ENL/Bilingual Director has set up a phone translation service and a system where teachers can request translation services to assist with parent communication." Participant B added: "Since some students are older and may be living independently from their immediate family, they are responsible for making decisions about their education and outside of school." Participant A further explained:

Not all teachers are aware of the ELL students' situation and therefore may not be able to provide empathy when needed or realize that the student has much bigger issues to deal with, such as putting food on the table, rather than doing homework or striving to get into a 4-year college.

Artifacts collected by the researcher included parent letters in both English and Spanish with information about understanding the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test scores and how administrators use the score to place the ELL student in the appropriate educational program as per NYSED regulations. The district communicates this important educational information to parents in their home language.

Some ELL students in the bilingual program encounter challenges exiting the program to move into general education courses. Participant B stated:

If too much of their home language is used in the bilingual program, then their English proficiency is delayed. The goal of the program to increase English instruction as they move along in the program, but if they do not learn English fast enough, meeting course requirements and passing required Regents exams in English can be difficult and also delay graduation.

Participant D stated:

A benefit to the bilingual program is pairing newer ELL students with students who have been in the district longer. They learn from their peers who is able to relay information in their home language. The ELL students can relate to one another's difficulty acclimating to the new school environment.

Participant A added:

The ENL/bilingual teachers are more sympathetic to the ELL students' plight and can modify instruction to meet their social emotional and academic needs.

Socially, the ELL students tend to stick together and can communicate comfortably in their home language.

In one benefit of the bilingual program, ELL students who participate in it experience less pressure to learn English at the entering or emerging level while trying to learn course content. Participant C reported: "General education teachers are relieved ELL students are entering their classes once they have attained a certain language proficiency level, and the pressure to teach an entering or emerging level ELL student falls on the ENL/bilingual teachers instead." Participant C added: "By the time the ELL student transitions to the mainstream classes from the bilingual program, they are in a better place to be successful in the class."

The data collected from classroom observations also showed ELL students have the opportunity to learn the course content in the home language and to practice English-speaking skills in front of peers who are in similar stages of English language acquisition. The researcher noted that students appeared to be comfortable practicing their English with their bilingual teacher and in front of their ELL peers.

How Does Organizational Culture Influence Bilingual Education?

All five participants in this study reported both ENL or bilingual and general education teachers were very supportive of the bilingual program. Participant A stated:

General education teachers are very supportive of ELL students but sometimes have difficulty distinguishing language acquisition from cognitive ability. A

student's lack of class participation may be due to a hesitation to speak English in front of their peers rather than comprehension of the course material.

Participant B discussed past efforts to pair ELL students with general education students taking Spanish foreign language classes so they could have language exchanges. The high school also celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month with a heritage festival where all students could participate and learn about Hispanic culture.

Two of the participants reported hearing either first- or second-hand about a few negative comments from staff members. These included objections to the Spanish version of the Pledge of Allegiance or a political comment related to illegal immigration and the financial burden it puts on society and the school system. The researcher did not find evidence of these statements in the other data collected from artifacts or classroom observations.

Participant A stated:

Although ELL students are integrated with the general education students in elective classes and physical education, they are segregated for most of their day in their ENL or bilingual classes. A few years ago, all ENL/bilingual classrooms were located in one section of the building, which isolated ELL students from the general education students. The ENL/bilingual classrooms are now located in the subject area hallways where they mix with general education students in hallways.

Participant E reported:

The high school makes an effort to engage families in meetings to discuss student progress and has a bilingual liaison who can assist families with setting up a parent portal account and set up meetings with teachers, counselors, and parents.

There are also electronic translation services teachers can use when contacting a parent.

Artifacts collected by the researcher included many resources and communication items, such as videos and district letters to parents in English and Spanish that relayed information about educational progress and educational programming offered through the ENL/bilingual program.

Participant D stated:

I chaperoned last year's homecoming dance, and a lot of my ELL students were there. One of the student association advisors asked the DJ to play Latin music so the ELL students could feel a bit included. And once they got comfortable and heard that, it was almost like everybody came together.

The researcher noted in the class observation notes that the school had two bilingual secretaries in the main office to address and greet anyone entering the building in their native language. Participant C stated: "The district has made an effort to build a culture that celebrates bilingualism."

Hiring staff that resemble and share cultural similarities with the ELL student population can influence bilingual education. Participant E stated:

This district does really well and is very progressive in their thinking when it comes to hiring. Hiring practices sets a culture and a sense of okay, we are doing this. If a Teacher Assistant is working on their teaching certificate, the district will encourage them to also work toward their bilingual certificate.

Participant E added:

If you have a positive and proactive look at how you are meeting the needs of your population, then that kind of seeps through, and students are not made to feel that they are less than anyone else, that they are just as important. I think that affects student achievement because personally, I would work harder if I felt like someone was there for me and looking out for my needs. So, it would be the same for the ELL students.

Conclusion

The results of the study indicated that organizational culture influenced ENL/bilingual education and ELL students on a social, personal, and academic level. The data aligned with Schein's organizational culture 3-level model theory (Schein, Schein, 2017).

Level 1 in Schein's (2017) organizational culture theory (i.e., artifacts, visible structures and processes, and observable behavior) emerged in the data collected from artifacts in this study regarding the support structures in place for communicating with ELL families. These structures included translation services that produced translated letters and videos in the ELL students' and families' home languages. Other visible structures and processes noted in the interview data included the implementation of the bilingual program and support services designed to help ELLs learn English and course content before they have to enter the general education courses needed for graduation. Data also included a statement about the district's hiring practices and the recommendation that administrators hire more bilingual staff and teachers to reflect the student population and support the ELL students.

Level 2 in Schein's (2017) organizational culture theory (i.e., espoused beliefs and values, ideals, goals, values, and aspirations) emerged in the data collected during interviews regarding general education teachers' relief that entering and emerging ELL students first enter bilingual/ENL courses before entering general education courses. Data collected in interviews also showed that bilingual/ENL teachers could be more understanding of the challenges ELL students face as they enter the U.S. education system. The data collected in interviews and in artifacts collected also reflected the difficulty ELL students experience socially assimilating to the general student population due to multiple factors despite attempts by the school to facilitate this process (e.g., school dances, athletic teams, the guide for extracurricular activities).

Level 3 in Schein's organizational culture theory (i.e., basic underlying assumptions, unconscious, taken-for-granted beliefs and values, and determined behavior and perception) emerged in data collected from interviews where participants reported they had heard first- or second-hand that teachers or staff made comments that are not supportive of the ELL student population or bilingual programs. Although the school recited the Pledge of Allegiance in two languages on the announcements each day to include ELL students in this patriotic school tradition, the interview data showed some staff expressed underlying negative feelings toward the inclusion of the Spanish version. Other first- or second-hand comments mentioned by participant A, involved the suggestion that ELL students burdened the educational system and the claim that "Teachers and staff sometimes underestimate the ELL students' cognitive ability due to their English proficiency. ELL students may understand English even though they cannot communicate in English." The increase in the ELL student population has required

schools to adjust longstanding educational programs, and change can be hard for many people. A positive underlying assumption reported by participant E in this study was “If ELL students feel supported by the school system, they will want to succeed.”

Chapter 5 presents the implications of the findings, the limitations of the study, and recommendations for future practice and research.

CHAPTER 5

In this qualitative multicase study, the researcher aimed to discover the impact of organizational culture on ENL/bilingual education. The researcher gathered data using interviews with ENL or bilingual teachers, general education teachers, and a director of ENL or bilingual education. The researcher also collected data through classroom observations and the study of artifacts obtained from the school.

The main purpose of this study was to explore perceptions regarding opportunities, challenges, and successes in a bilingual program for ELL students and examine how an organizational culture influences ELL education in the bilingual program. The researcher gathered information to investigate the perceptions of ENL or bilingual teachers, general education teachers, and the director of the bilingual education program through the lens of an organizational culture theory framework. This chapter presents a discussion of the findings as they relate to previous research regarding the impact on ENL or bilingual education through an organizational culture theory background.

Implications of Findings

Overall, the findings suggested the organizational culture in a school influences bilingual education for ELL students. Many opportunities and challenges existed for ELL students and ENL or bilingual teachers and general education teachers. Organizational culture also influences the perception of the success or failure of the bilingual program. The results align with Edgar Schein's (2017) 3-level model organizational culture theory, in which he describes the structure of culture. The levels include a) artifacts, visible structures and processes, and observable behavior; b) espoused beliefs and values, ideals,

goals, values, and aspirations; and c) basic underlying assumptions, the unconscious, taken-for-granted beliefs and values, and determined behavior and perception.

Research Question 1 stated: To what extent does bilingual education influence learning for English language learner students through an organizational culture lens? The results of the study showed the bilingual education program can help ELL students acclimate to their new educational environment. Bilingual/ENL programs provide ELL students with an opportunity to be with peers who may have similar cultural experiences; they can communicate in the same language with these peers and may have similar stories of immigrating to the United States. Participants also reported that bilingual/ENL teachers tend to be more understanding of the challenges and circumstances facing ELL students.

Research Question 2 stated: What are the opportunities and challenges English language learner students encounter in the bilingual language instruction program through an organizational culture lens? The participants in the study reported the bilingual instruction program benefits the ELL students by allowing them time to learn the course content in their home language while learning English at the same time. Participants also reported a challenge of the bilingual program can involve difficulty exiting the program to learn English in an ENL instructional program or English immersion program in order to pass required English-only exams needed for graduation. Another challenge for ELL students involves assimilating into the general student population because they have limited exposure to general education students while they are in the bilingual/ENL programs.

Research Question 3 stated: Does the organizational culture influence bilingual education or the perception of the bilingual program? Data from the interviews, class observations, and artifacts review showed the overall perception of the bilingual program was positive, but some underlying beliefs existed. These beliefs suggested that when ELL students were not fluent in English or did not participate in class, some underestimated their ability to understand course content. Others believed these students presented a financial burden to the school system. Some teachers lacked awareness of the average timeline for English acquisition and may have felt ELL students should remain in ENL/bilingual instructional programs longer than necessary.

Underlying assumptions can affect behavior and perception, so organizational leaders must understand the underlying assumptions, espoused beliefs, and values of the organization's members so they can create an organizational culture that can positively influence the positive or negative impact of the work at hand (Schein & Schein, 2017).

Relationship to Prior Research

The Influence of Bilingual Education for ELL Students Through an Organizational Culture Lens

Administrators must provide professional development or ENL education preparation in their administrative programs to ensure effective ENL instruction in their schools or districts. Judkins (2018) examined the ELL-focused knowledge of school-site administrators in a midwestern district to identify what impacts administrator knowledge of ELLs and the potential impact of years of experience, professional development participation, and the percentage of ELL students at their schools. Ironically, principals

with more experience expressed more self-criticism of their knowledge, but they actually had more knowledge than they self-reported in the survey regarding ELL education.

The hiring of a director of ENL/bilingual education demonstrated the district's commitment to ENL/bilingual education. The director implemented and monitored programs of instruction to increase ELL students' academic success.

A systemic obstacle to academic success for ELL students involved the pressure for school districts to teach to the test rather than focus on what academic skills ELL students need (Menken, 2006). The No Child Left Behind Act and, eventually, the Every Student Succeeds Act imposed testing requirements that limit school districts and force them to teach only content contained in standardized tests so students do well enough to qualify the school and district for federal and state funding. Under this mandate, school districts lack the time needed to focus on alternate curricula and language instruction because ELL students must pass the tests required by the government.

The participants in this study mentioned the pressure of the timeframe allotted for ELL students to learn the course work and exam material needed for graduation. They also stated the benefits and challenges of having a bilingual program in which ELL students could learn what they needed to know to meet graduation requirements.

Opportunities and Challenges ELL Students Encounter in Bilingual Instructional Programs Through an Organizational Culture Lens

In an effort to meet the needs of the growing ELL student population, educators must creatively develop instruction programs for ELL students. Watkis (2020) explored how beginner high school ELL students developed literacy skills using multimedia and multimodal resources. In this qualitative case study, the author gathered data through

interviews with ENL teachers and students. The data revealed three themes: learning in a social context, using home language to support learning, and the necessity to use multimedia and multimodal approaches to make content accessible. Watkis noted that many mainstream teachers have misconceptions about language acquisition and the optimal conditions needed for the student to acquire English. Some teachers also had misconceptions about the English proficiency level of ELL students based on their social language skills and ability to interact in various settings. As the ELL student population has increased dramatically in the United States, educators should explore multiple ways to develop literacy skills. The participants in this study described some of the same perceptions and beliefs by general education teachers and ENL or bilingual instruction teachers noted by Watkis.

Organizational Culture Influences the Perception of Bilingual Education

Flores and Smith (2008) explored attitudinal beliefs of teachers toward ELL students. The authors examined teachers' attitudinal beliefs regarding ethnicity, linguistic proficiencies, number of minority students in class, and the teachers' preparation for diversity. The findings suggested that no single factor tested (i.e., ethnicity, years of service, diversity training) was strong enough by itself to affect the negative cultural and language attitudinal beliefs. The researchers concluded that all teachers, regardless of ethnicity, needed exposure to diverse environments and professional development designed to help them navigate issues related to diversity. The authors argued teachers must acquire some second-language proficiency when working with a large ELL population. Such proficiency may result in more positive attitudes toward ELL students. Flores and Smith also suggested that the recruitment of teachers with a similar

background to their student population can increase ELL student achievement (Flores & Smith, 2008).

Horton (2018) focused on school climate and culture in New York and New Jersey public schools and their relationship to student achievement in high- or low-performing schools. The study included participants who taught high school in Grades 9–12. The results indicated that high-performing schools had a school culture and climate that included a high degree of trust, collaboration, and engagement among all members of the school. These schools also had supportive building principals. Lower performing schools had a more closed climate where the teachers felt the principals were rigid and unresponsive to teachers' and students' needs. Teachers also felt their principals burdened them with unnecessary busy work and were not supportive. Horton explained the implications were that the schools with consistently high achievement had open school climates and collaborative school cultures as opposed to lower performing schools, which had closed climates and school cultures.

Participants in this current study reported ELL or bilingual teachers had a deeper understanding of the issues facing ELL students due to their experience with ELL students and their ability to communicate with them in their home languages. Therefore, ELL and bilingual education teachers can make deeper connections with ELL students, which will support their success in the classroom. Participants also reported a school culture that supports the bilingual program and the ELL students and displays this support in their hiring practices and artifacts, such as letters and other communications with ELL families regarding educational programs for ELL students.

Limitations of the Study

This study had two limitations. Sample bias may have occurred because the researcher selected the participants for their teaching or administrator roles in the high school. Selecting additional participants with other roles in the high school may have offered a different perspective regarding organizational culture and perceptions of the bilingual program related to ELL student success.

The second limitation involved the possibility of respondent bias, which could have played a role in this study because all participants worked in the same high school and may have felt pressure to give a popular answer that colleagues would agree with rather than a true opinion. Regardless of the limitations, this research strengthens previous research in the area of perceptions of ENL or bilingual education through an organizational theory lens. It does so by providing a direction for future research on how to shape organizational culture to ensure the success of ELL students in ENL or bilingual education programs.

Recommendations for Future Practice

High school administrators can offer additional professional development to general education teachers and ENL or bilingual teachers to increase their knowledge of best practices and effective instructional methods to enhance successful language acquisition. Professional development should also inform all teachers about the expected outcomes and timelines for language acquisition and how to ensure a smooth transition from a bilingual education program to an English-only education program. An increase in teacher knowledge will quell false ideas and beliefs about ELL students and increase support for this student population within the organizational culture.

Administrators can also offer more opportunities for ELL students and general education students to connect and foster relationships to promote one cohesive student body. As stated in the research, ELL student athletes tend to assimilate into the general education student population more easily, but school administrators should find creative ways for ELL students who are not athletes to connect with their general education peers. If administrators can promote one cohesive student body, they will also change the organizational culture. In the new environment, ELL students may feel more accepted and supported and may be more motivated to learn English quickly, facilitating their high school success.

Senge (1990) argued that life isn't made of separate elements; rather, the world is made of countless different elements that come together to form systems. By trying to separate those elements from each other, you misrepresent how the world works and thus make it impossible to really understand what you're observing. This brings us to the fifth discipline: "systems thinking." In an organization when each person or group only pays attention to their own task. As a result, the different parts of the organization may interfere with each other without realizing it.

Administrators should remain mindful of the organization or system as a whole and understand how all stakeholders in the school community can help to make up the organizational culture. Administrators should adopt a systems mindset before implementing professional development and other support systems for ELL students.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future researchers can build upon this study in multiple ways. Researchers can conduct a study in other parts of the country to verify these results by determining if the

opinions and beliefs stated by these participants resemble those of participants in other geographic regions. Researchers can also include ELL students and their families in their studies to add their perceptions of the bilingual program and how it influences their success or failure in high school and ability to meet graduation requirements. Last, researchers could conduct a longitudinal study over a 4-year period with the same student subjects to examine their journey from entering as an ELL student through graduation. The results would be informational and may impact administrative decisions in the ENL or bilingual educational program.

Conclusion

The data collected in this research supported the idea that organizational culture influences perceptions of ENL or bilingual education. The data collected align with Edgar Schein's (2017) 3-level model organizational culture theory.

ENL or bilingual education programs can benefit ELL students and help them meet graduation requirements within the time restrictions given to them when they enter the school system. Organizational school culture impacts how ELL students integrate socially within the school population, how the school system supports their social-emotional needs, and how well they perform academically and meet graduation requirements. The bilingual program presents both challenges and opportunities for ELL students and their teachers. The data collected in this study support the idea that teachers generally appreciated the bilingual program and how it helps entering ELL students prepare for the mainstream classes needed for high school graduation. However, organizational culture influences the ENL/bilingual programs and the success or failure of students in them.

In conclusion, the data collected in this study, as well as in Horton's 2018 study, showed ELL students benefit from ENL or bilingual education in a school climate where educators are knowledgeable about the benefits, challenges, and expectations of the ENL/bilingual program and where ELL students feel welcomed and supported by all school community members.

APPENDIX A REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

May, 2023

Superintendent Name
School District
Address
City, State

Dear xxx,

I am currently a Doctoral student at St. John's University. I am writing to request your approval and support in conducting a multi case study that will examine perceptions of bilingual education through an organizational culture theory framework. This research will also examine teacher and administrator experiences and the challenges or opportunities for ELL students in a high school bilingual program. This study will help educators further understand possible barriers for ELL students and ENL/general education teachers and provide administrators information as to where additional professional development may be needed.

I am writing to you to request your permission to conduct interviews with two high school ENL teachers who teach in a bilingual program, two high school general education teachers and the Director of bilingual education in your district during the 2023–2024 school year. If permission is granted, I will provide you with a copy of the invitation sent to the teachers and administrator to participate in this study. Everyone that agrees to participate in this study will be given a pseudonym in order to maintain their anonymity. The interviews will be conducted in person or via zoom or on google meet after school hours. In order to protect participants confidentiality, none of the participants email addresses, IP addresses, or individual responses will be identified or tracked.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request. If you would like to grant permission, please email the approval to martha.tuthill20@stjohns.edu. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 631-988-3205 or contact my faculty sponsor, Dr. Barbara Cozza at cozzab@stjohns.edu

Respectfully,

Martha Tuthill

APPENDIX B INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

(T) – Teacher Question

(A) – Administrator Question

Introduction	General Background Information
	(T) How long have you been teaching ELL students? (A) How long have you been a bilingual program administrator?
	(T) When/where did you get your TESOL certification? (A) Where/when did you get your administrative degree?
	(T) Are you dual certified in another subject/area?
	(T) Do you coteach ENL classes or teach stand-alone classes?
	(T) What grade level do you teach?
	(T) How many ELL students do you currently teach? (A) What percentage of students are in the bilingual program?
	(T) Have you taught ELL students in another district? (A) Have you been an administrator of a bilingual program in another district?
Research Questions	Interview Questions
What instruction methods support learning for English Language Learner (ELL) students at the entering or emerging proficiency level?	(T) Have you taught in both a bilingual/dual language and an ENL English immersion instruction program for ELL students? (A) Does your district offer both a bilingual program and a traditional ENL (English immersion program)?
	(T) (A) Are both general education students and ELL students in the bilingual education classes?
	(T) (A) Has your school offered professional development for

	coteaching strategies between ENL and general education teachers?
	(T) (A) Has your school offered professional development for bilingual or stand-alone ENL instruction?
	(T) (A) Do you have a teaching strategy that works well with your ELL students or general education students?
	(T) Is there a teaching strategy you used in the past that was not successful with your ELL students? Can you think of an example?
	(T) Can you think of a success story in relation to a teaching strategy used in the classroom?
	(T) (A) What kind of formal and informal data do you use to inform your instruction daily?
	(T) (A) What kind of data do you study in both languages (English and the home language)?
	(T) (A) How do you use the data to drive your future instruction for the various English proficiency levels of students?
	(T) (A) How do you make sure you are looking at student data through a bilingual lens?
What are the challenges ELL students encounter in a bilingual language instruction program in your experience?	(T) (A) In your opinion what is the biggest challenge ELL students face in a bilingual/dual language education program?
	(T) (A) Does your school offer bilingual textbooks or material in the student's home language?
	(T) (A) Is there a subject that is easier for students to succeed in at the entering or beginner proficiency level?
	(T) (A) Does your school offer translation services for teachers to communicate with ELL families?

	(T) (A) Do your ELL students assimilate well into the general student population?
	(T) (A) What are some examples of how your ELL students have assimilated into the school community?
	(T) (A) Is there a negative or positive attitude from the general education teachers when an ELL student is added to their roster?
	(T) (A) Does your school conduct ELL student/family academic progress meetings annually?
	(T) (A) Is your PTA inclusive to ELL families?
School Culture Information	(T) (A) Do you know how long the bilingual program has been in your district or school?
	(T) (A) In your opinion is there a positive or negative attitude from the staff, students or community regarding the bilingual program?
	(T) (A) Do you have examples of some of the positive comments teachers, students or community members have made about the bilingual program?
	(T) (A) Do you have examples of some of the negative comments that teachers, students or community members have made about the bilingual program?
	(T) (A) In your opinion is there a lack of understanding of the benefits of the bilingual program amongst staff, students and the community?
	(T) (A) Is there a difference in professional development offered for teachers between the bilingual program or other educational needs in the school?
	(T) (A) Do you know what percentage of general education students are in the bilingual program?

	(T) (A) Is there a good relationship between coteachers in the bilingual program?
	(T) (A) In your opinion, is more professional development needed for coteaching in the bilingual program?
	(T) (A) What do you think would help or is helping to foster positive feelings about the bilingual program?
	(T) (A) What do you think would help remove negative feelings about the bilingual program (if there is any?)
	(T) (A) Do you think the positive or negative feelings about the bilingual program affect the educational program and student academic achievement?

APPENDIX C INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN INTERVIEWS

St. John's University

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in a research study about your experience teaching English Language Learner (ELL) students.

This research will require approximately 60 minutes of your time. During this time, you will participate in 2 interviews that will take place in person or digitally with questions regarding your experiences and your perceptions about the bilingual program in your school. The first interview will be to gather information about your background and more in-depth questions regarding experiences in your school's bilingual education program. The second interview will be a follow up to summarize the information gathered. Both interviews will be recorded.

There are no anticipated risks or discomforts related to this research. You may find the interview to be rewarding, as you can share your experiences with a nonjudgmental interviewer. By participating in this research, you may also benefit others by helping educators understand the experiences in bilingual education.

Several steps will be taken to protect your anonymity and identity. While the interviews will be recorded, the recordings will be erased once they have been transcribed. The transcriptions will not contain your name and any identifying information from the interview will be removed. The transcriptions will also be kept stored securely in the office of the Principal Investigator available only to the Principal Investigator.

If you have any questions about the purpose of this investigation or research, you may contact the Principal Investigator, Martha Tuthill at martha.tuthill20@stjohns.edu. You may contact my faculty advisor Barbara Cozza, at cozzab@stjohns.edu

Your signature acknowledges receipt of a copy of the consent form as well as your willingness to participate.

_____ Printed Name of Participant

_____ Signature of Participant

Date

_____ Signature of Investigator

Date

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