PERCEPTIONS OF PREPAREDNESS AND PRACTICES: A SURVEY OF
TEACHERS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

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Mainstream teachers who obtained their English as a second language (ESL) certification by exam only are faced with increasing numbers of English language learners (ELLs) in their classrooms. Decreasing standards for teacher ESL certification and increasing accountability for ELLs has made teachers’ role in effectively increasing the language and academic skills of ELLs an area of major concern. This study used a survey and focus group interviews to obtain information regarding ESL-certified fourth- and fifth-grade teachers’ perceived preparedness, practices and resources needs related to meeting the academic and language needs of ELLs in general education classrooms. The results indicated that teachers reported differences in their perceived preparedness based on years teaching experience, years of ESL certification, professional development hours, and university ESL courses, but not on certification route. The results also showed that teachers reported differences in their sheltered instruction practices based on the percentage of ELLs, but not on grade, instructional design, or preparedness. The correlation analysis revealed there is a positive correlation between preparedness and sheltered practices. The study revealed that while teachers are using strategies that make content lessons accessible and comprehensible to ELLs, they are often not specifically addressing the academic language development of their students. It is recommended that districts provide teachers with professional development opportunities that specifically address second language acquisition and practical ways to develop academic language across the content areas.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Introduction

During the last 10 years, the United States, and more specifically Texas, experienced significant increases in the number of students entering public schools from homes in which children and their families speak a language other than English. During the 2004-2005 school year, Texas schools enrolled 684,307 limited English-proficient students. This number represents 15.6% of the Texas student enrollment population of 4,311,502. In the ten years from 1995-96 to 2004-2005, the number of limited English proficient students in Texas public schools increased from 479,390 to 684,007, which represents an increase of 42.7%. The Intercultural Development Research Association (2004) projects one million English language learners (ELLs) in Texas schools by 2010. The percentage of Hispanic students (44.7%) in Texas schools surpasses the percentage of Anglo students (37.7%), yet the population of teachers educating those students does not reflect the same diversity; 70.3% of teachers in Texas schools are Anglo, while only 19.5% are Hispanic.

ESL-certified mainstream teachers face an increasingly more complex situation. They must help ELLs develop the academic language and skills they need to reach high levels of academic achievement as measured by various state assessments. These assessments include the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), Linguistically Accommodated Testing (LAT), and the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS), which includes the Texas Observation Protocol (TOP) for listening speaking and writing, and the Reading Proficiency Test of English (RPTE). The challenge to ESL-certified mainstream
teachers, often prepared for certification in a two-day workshop, coupled with ELLs' inclusion on multiple assessments, provides a phenomenon to study.

Statement of the Problem

ESL-certified teachers in the state of Texas vary in their preparedness for and implementation of practices that develop English language proficiency and academic skills in the mainstream classroom. Mainstream teachers who obtained their ESL certification by exam only are faced with increasing numbers ELLs in their classrooms. Decreasing standards for teacher ESL certification and increasing accountability for ELLs has made the teachers’ role in effectively increasing the language and academic skills of ELLs an area of major concern.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine ESL-certified teachers perceived preparedness and practices for developing the English language proficiency and academic skills and knowledge of ELLs in fourth- and fifth-grade classrooms as well as to identify their perceived professional needs. Information that is gathered directly from the teachers who are on the front lines of education and who are responsible for the education of the ELLs is necessary in order to continue to improve training, resources and support so that teachers may educate ELLs more effectively.

Research Questions

This study addresses several questions and hypotheses, including:
1) How do ESL-certified fourth- and fifth-grade teachers perceive their preparedness to develop the academic and language skills of English language learners in the regular (mainstream) classroom?

   a. There is no difference in teachers’ perceived preparedness based on years of teaching experience.

   b. There is no difference in teachers’ perceived preparedness based on years of teaching ESL.

   c. There is no difference in teachers’ perceived preparedness based on hours of ESL professional development.

   d. There is no difference in teachers’ perceived preparedness based on the number of completed university ESL courses.

   e. There is no difference in teachers’ perceived preparedness based on certification route (alternative or traditional).

2) What factors influence the instructional practices of ESL-certified fourth- and fifth-grade teachers of English language learners?

   a. There is no difference in instructional practices based on teachers’ instructional levels.

   b. There is no difference in instructional practices based on type of instructional design (self-contained and departmentalized classrooms).

   c. There is no difference in teachers’ instructional practices based on the number of ELLs in a classroom.

   d. There is no difference in teachers’ instructional practices based on teachers’ perceived preparedness.

3) What is the relationship between ESL-certified fourth- and fifth-grade teachers’ of ELLs sheltered instruction practices and their preparedness to develop language and academic skills?

   a. There is no relationship between sheltered instruction practices and preparedness to develop ELLs’ language and academic skills.

4) What sheltered instruction strategies do ESL-certified fourth- and fifth-grade teachers of English language learners report they are implementing in the regular classroom to develop language and academic skills?

5) What resources, support, and/or professional development opportunities do ESL-certified fourth- and fifth-grade teachers believe they need to meet the academic and linguistic needs of English language learners?
Significance of the Study

Population projections suggest that schools and classrooms will continue to receive increasing numbers of English language learners; therefore, the need for qualified teachers will also continue to grow. Policy makers and administrators must consider teachers’ preparedness, practices and needs as they continue to make decisions regarding effectively educating ELLS and increasing their academic achievement. This study will offer to policy makers, district and school administrators, and teachers insight into the effects on regular classroom teachers of increasing accountability for ELLs’ achievement while decreasing the teachers’ ESL preparedness. With knowledge of teacher perceptions regarding their preparedness, practices and needs related to educating ELLs under NCLB, policy makers and administrators will gain the information to make better decisions, especially regarding professional development and teacher support and resources.

Rationale

The lack of qualified bilingual personnel and the large numbers of English language learners creates a need for greater numbers of ESL teachers. ELLs in bilingual/ESL programs represent 14.4% of the Texas school population; however, only 8.4% of the teachers work in bilingual/ESL programs. Bilingual/ESL teachers represented the greatest elementary teacher shortage in Texas during the 2001-2002 school year (Lara-Alecia & Galloway, 2004). The shortages of qualified bilingual and ESL teachers forced Texas to develop alternative certification programs and certification routes. One approach that Texas implemented to increase the number of teachers with ESL certification was to encourage certified Texas teachers to participate in the state ESL certification exam (TExES). In Texas, teachers already certified in
other areas can participate in and receive ESL certification by exam rather than through university coursework followed by the exam. Districts and regional service centers offer courses designed to help teachers pass the certification exam. The Region XI education service center (ESC XI), located in Fort Worth, provides the following description of their two-day ESL certificate-training course: The course “provides participants with the research foundation and content assessed in the ESL TExES examination. ESL strategies that address the unique needs of English language learners will be shared. Explanations of exam questions will be addressed as well as test-taking tips and techniques” (Education Service Center Region XI, 2006).

Teachers take an exam and receive certification, but when ELLs enter their classrooms, they are often without the resources and training necessary to meet the linguistic and academic needs of the students while also addressing the state curriculum and objectives for native English speakers. A cry heard around the state is that increasing numbers of teachers have obtained ESL certification through the Texas TExES exam, but that they have little understanding of appropriate and effective ESL strategies and second language acquisition. Statistics from the National Center for Education Statistics Schools and Staffing Survey 1999-2000 (as cited in Azzam, 2005) demonstrate less than 13% of teachers in the United States received preparation focused on educating English language learners (Azzam, 2005). In addition, there is limited understanding of the differences between the social language that develops naturally and the academic language that is required for academic success and also in the amount of time students require to develop and acquire those different proficiencies.

Teachers representing a wide variety of experiences, certification routes and understandings of second-language acquisition are leading classrooms faced with the challenge of increasing academic language proficiency and content-area knowledge as quickly as possible
in order to show positive gains on the state-mandated assessments. Teachers are expected to accomplish that task without a strong background in second language acquisition, language development, and language teaching. Classrooms are filled with teachers with little or no specialized training regarding educating English language learners (Carrasquillo & Rodriguez, 2002; Clegg, 1996; Fitzgerald, 1995; Spangenberg-Erbschat & Pritchard, 1994).

English language learners receive most, if not all, English as a second language services in English-only grade-level classrooms with ESL-certified mainstream teachers. Moreover, ELLs receive grade-level curriculum from the mainstream teacher in an English-only setting. The implementation and improvement of ESL services becomes increasingly more vital with the implementation of a more demanding accountability system for ELLs.

Title III of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Educating Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Students outlines the new expectations for the inclusion of English language learners in the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) accountability system. The purpose of Title III is “to help limited English proficient (LEP) students attain high levels of English proficiency” and “to assist LEP students attain high levels of achievement in core academic subject areas (U.S. Department of Education, 2002b).” Title III was included in NCLB due to the large numbers of LEP students entering our schools, but according to the U.S. Department of Education (USDE), their educational attainment remains low. In addition, the USDE study (2002b) found that LEP students receive lower grades, are judged by teachers to have lower academic abilities and score below classmates on standardized tests of reading and math. Therefore, NCLB states that schools are accountable for making and showing adequate yearly progress (AYP) for limited English-proficient children in both English proficiency and content-area skills and knowledge.
Although the number of ELLs increases across Texas, the number of teachers qualified to teach those children is not increasing at the same rate. In fact, a study conducted by Texas A&M University (2002) found a shortage of 2,906 bilingual/ESL teachers in elementary schools during the 2001-2002 school year. In addition, nearly 50% of teachers serving ELLS lacked full certification. Only 2.5% of ESL teachers held a degree in bilingual/ESL education (National Center for Education Statistics, 1997). This problem is a national one, as every state feels the pressure to educate greater numbers of ELLS in the shortest amount of time possible due to the No Child Left Behind mandates. As of 2001, there was a shortage of ESL teachers nationwide, represented by 3.85 on a 5-point scale (American Association for Employment in Education, 2001), with greater needs in states with consistently high numbers of ELLs. Large urban districts reported a shortage of 67% of ESL teachers at the elementary level.

School districts must fill these shortages and therefore often begin to lower standards for certification. (Menken & Holmes, 2000). As the demands on English language learners increase, the standards for teacher certification decrease. However, increasing the requirements for state licensure would create even greater shortages in these areas.

Texas is one of 29 states that implemented licensure requirements for teaching ELLs, which consists of passing the TExES certification exam. Even though creating certification requirements acknowledges the need for increased training and knowledge regarding ELLs, there are still limitations within the certification process. Mitchell and Barth (1999) assert that state licensing tests do not “certify that teachers have the breadth and depth of subject knowledge to teach all students to high standards” and “subject-area tests are too weak to guarantee that teachers have the content they need to teach students to high standards” (p. 3). To meet increasing demand for teachers, state policies also contain loopholes, which allow some teachers
to enter classrooms even if they have failed their licensing exam. By waiving requirements, states often permit teachers to enter classrooms even if they have failed their exam or failed to meet other requirements (Education Week, 2000). Therefore, even with a state licensure exam in place, there are multiple routes to bypass the state requirements.

Lack of preparation continues in the district with a shortage of on-going and appropriate professional development. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (1997), only 30% of teachers working with ELL students underwent any professional development regarding the education of ELLs and only 12.5% of the 41% of teachers of ELLs received eight or more hours of professional development related to ELLs in the three years prior to the study conducted by NCES(2002). These data suggest that teachers are often not only underqualified for their positions as teachers of ELLs, but that they also do not receive the in-depth and ongoing professional development that is necessary for student achievement. The National Center for Education Statistics (National Center for Education Statistics, 2001) found that teachers are least likely to participate in professional development opportunities related to addressing the needs of ELLs.

Teachers of ELLs require more preparation, because they are required to do more teaching. Menken and Holmes (2000) argued:

Clearly the demands placed upon teachers of ELLs are great. Not only must these teachers possess the deep subject-matter knowledge required in order for ELLs to meet grade level content standards, but they must also possess the pedagogy to enable these students to access the knowledge and skills contained in the standards, and they must have a thorough understanding of the students’ language acquisition process. (p. 4)

Given the greater demands on teachers of ELLs and their lack of appropriate certification and professional development, it is important to determine teachers’ perceived preparedness and practices in the education of ELLs in regular English-medium classroom settings.
As student demographics change, administrators and politicians create policies to address their needs, while also addressing the realities of finances and the securing of qualified staff. Rarely do teachers have the opportunity to voice their concerns and opinions, despite the fact that they are directly responsible for the education of all students, including English language learners. Due to the NCLB mandate of adequate yearly progress, teachers face increased pressure to produce high levels of performance in their ELL students. An examination of teacher concerns becomes even more important and complex as the special needs of English language learners and the lack of appropriate teacher training concerning ELLs converge. The purposes of this study include: (a) to determine how teachers perceive their preparedness to educate ELLs, (b) to identify the factors that influence teachers’ instructional practices to increase ELL language and academic skills, (c) to determine what sheltered instruction strategies teachers implement in their classrooms and (d) to identify teachers’ perceived support, resources and/or professional development needs related to meeting the academic and language needs of ELLs.

Definition of Terms

Many terms have developed to define U.S. and foreign-born students who are learning English in U.S. schools. English language learner (ELL), limited English proficient (LEP) students, and English as a second language (ESL) are all terms used to describe students and programs for students who are learning English in U.S. schools. While these terms are often used interchangeably, they do, however, convey different meanings. Title IX of the No Child Left Behind Act (U.S. Department of Education, 2002a) defines an LEP student as an individual:

(A) who is aged 3 through 21;
(B) who is enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary or secondary school; (C)(i) who is not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English;

(ii)(I) who is a Native American or Alaska native, or a native resident of the outlying areas; and

(II) who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual’s level of English language proficiency; or

(iii) who is migratory, whose native language is a language other than English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; and

(D) whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing and understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual-

(i) the state’s proficient level of achievement on state assessments;

(ii) the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English; or

(iii) the opportunity to participate fully in society. (p. 1961)

The Office for Civil Rights (2005) provides the following definitions for the acronyms ELL and ESL. English language learner (ELL) refers to “a national-origin-minority student who is limited-English-proficient. This term is often preferred over limited-English-proficient (LEP) as it highlights accomplishments rather than deficits” (Office of Civil Rights, 2005, ¶ 6). English as a Second Language (ESL) refers to “a program of techniques, methodology, and special curriculum designed to teach ELL students English language skills, which may include listening, speaking, reading, writing, study skills, content vocabulary, and cultural orientation. ESL instruction is usually in English with little use of native language” (Office of Civil Rights, 2005).

As stated previously, the terms ELL and LEP represent similar descriptions of student learners; however, LEP is used in government descriptions and statutes and suggests that students learning the English language are deficient. The term ELL denotes a more positive and empowering description of students learning the English language. For this study, the term ESL
is used to describe classroom program models. The term LEP is used for any government
descriptions and data. The term ELL is used to describe the students who are considered LEP by
the state of Texas and who participate in ESL programs.

AMAO refers to Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives as defined by No Child Left
Behind Act of 2001. English language learners must show progress in English proficiency and
attainment of English proficiency in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

AYP refers to adequate yearly progress. Districts and schools must show adequate
progress.

ELD refers to English language development.

ELL refers to English language learners. ELLs are students who speak a language other
than English and who are in the process of learning English.

ESL refers to English as a Second Language, which is an instructional design that focuses
on learning the English language as opposed to learning content area curriculum.

Mainstream refers to grade-level classes designed for native or fluent speakers of
English, in which all instruction and instructional materials are in English.

English-only refers to a school setting in which all instruction is provided through
English.

L1 refers to the first language or the native language

LAT refers to linguistically accommodated testing. LAT is the math TAKS exam that
allows teachers to provide linguistic modifications or support for ELLs in Texas schools.

LEP refers to limited English-proficient. This term is often used by the state and federal
government to identify students with English language skills deemed insufficient to perform
successfully in English-only classrooms. The term LEP has been replaced by ELL, except in state and federal documents.

*Major suburban districts* refer to school districts that are contiguous to major urban districts. If the suburban district is not contiguous, it must have a student population that is at least 15% of the size of the district designated as major urban. In some cases, other size-threshold criteria may apply. (TEA, 2004)

*NCLB* refers to the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

*Pull out ESL* refers to a program design in which students are pulled out of their mainstream classroom for a period of the day (usually 45 minutes) in order to receive support instruction from the ESL teacher.

*Push in ESL* refers to a program design in which the ESL teacher enters the mainstream classroom for a period of the instructional day (usually 45 minutes) to provide ESL services to ELLs.

*Recent immigrant* refers to students who have been in U.S. schools three years or less.

*RPTE* refers to the Texas Reading Proficiency Test of English. All ELLs in Grades 3-12 participate in this assessment every spring.

*Sheltered instruction* refers to teaching content to English language learners in strategic ways that make the concepts comprehensible while promoting the students’ academic English language development (Short & Echevarria, 2005, p.10).

*SIOP* refers to a model that provides concrete examples of the features of sheltered instruction that can enhance and expand teachers’ instructional practice. The protocol is composed of 30 items grouped into three main sections: preparation, instruction and review/assessment (Echevarria, Short & Vogt, 2004, p.13).
TELPAS refers to the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System, which assesses LEP students’ progress in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Delimitations and Limitations

This study has several delimitations. The first and most significant delimitation is the focus on fourth- and fifth-grade teachers. Therefore, generalizability is limited. Teachers’ perceptions and practices in both the younger (K-3) and older grades (6-8 or 9-12) may be significantly different from those for teachers in fourth or fifth grades. Early elementary grades often offer bilingual programs and middle and high schools increasingly offer newcomer programs for recent immigrants. However, fourth- and fifth-grade students often do not have access to bilingual or newcomer programs, and are therefore are placed in mainstream classrooms.

A second delimitation of this study is the focus on major suburban districts in north Texas. Because this study excludes the urban, rural, and small suburban districts, generalizability is limited. This delimitation does offer an advantage. While large districts often have the greatest teacher shortages, they also often create alternative programs for ELLs. For example, the two largest districts in the area of this study implemented newcomer programs for recent immigrants in Grades 3-5. This study offers extensive insight into the major suburban districts with increasing numbers of ELLs.

A third delimitation of this study is the focus on two regions within one state. Because each state has different numbers of ELLs, different certification routes, and different English language program requirements, the findings may not be generalizable to other states.
There are two significant limitations involved in this study. The first limitation of the study is the response rate. Due to the voluntary nature of the survey, the response rate may be low. Another obstacle to achieving a high response rate is the districts’ policy on teacher anonymity. The survey will be sent to teachers through the district administrators, which eliminates the possibility of directly contacting respondents for both the initial distribution of the survey and for any necessary follow-up distributions for non-response. In addition, response bias is an issue. Since response rates are expected to be low, there may be overrepresentation or under-representation of certain groups of people. Therefore, the survey responses may be biased.

A second limitation of this study is the accuracy and honesty of the teachers’ responses. Responses to a self-administered survey limit teachers’ full understanding and provide no opportunity to ask for clarification or to clarify their response.
CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In a discussion of teachers of recent immigrant English language learners (ELLs) in mainstream settings, it is necessary to address a variety of relevant topics. These topics include academic language acquisition, effective programs and teaching practices for ELLs, and the characteristics of mainstream classrooms with ELLs. It is also necessary to examine English as a second language (ESL) approaches and methods that develop content-area and English language skills, as well as appropriate professional development content for teachers of ELLs. These factors all contribute to more effective teaching and educational settings for ELLs.

Second Language Acquisition in Classrooms

Jim Cummins is a leading researcher in the field of second language acquisition, known for his threshold hypothesis, interdependence hypothesis and language hypothesis in basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). The threshold and interdependence hypotheses address the role of the first language on second language acquisition and cognitive development. The acronyms BICS and CALP refer to a distinction introduced by Cummins (Cummins, 1979a, 2000; Cummins & Swain, 1987) between basic interpersonal communicative skills and cognitive academic language proficiency. The distinction was intended to draw attention to the very different time periods typically required by children to acquire conversational fluency in their second language, as compared to grade-appropriate academic proficiency in that language (Cummins, 2001a). BICS refers to conversational language that is used in informal social settings: playgrounds, cafeterias, schoolbuses, and social activities in the classroom. These situations usually provide students with
context clues and visual support; they are cognitively undemanding. Students may develop conversational fluency in their second language in as little as six months to two years (Cummins, 1981b). These language skills are developed at home and in informal situations. They develop naturally without formal instruction.

CALP, on the other hand, refers to the language and cognitive skills that are necessary to participate and perform in the mainstream classroom curriculum and on standardized tests. These language skills and concepts are learned and developed within the context of the classroom and cover a variety of subjects. The CALP skills rely on the learners’ ability to perform in a cognitively demanding and context-reduced environment. Cognitive and academic language may take five to seven years for second language learners to develop (Cummins, 1981a). Many authors (Freeman & Freeman, 1992; McKeon, 1995; Met, 1995; Rigg & Allen, 1989) refer to the length of time students need to acquire academic language in their discussion of the difficulties language minority students face in mainstream classrooms and their levels of language proficiency. While many students have the language skills to be socially successful, they lack the academic language proficiency that is needed to be academically successful. This dilemma becomes even more relevant in the inclusion of English language learner students in standardized assessments.

Cummins first introduced the notion of BICS and CALP in 1979 in his paper titled “Cognitive /Academic Language Proficiency, Linguistic Interdependence, the Optimum Age Question and Some Other Matters.” His distinction highlights the differences in the time students need to develop different linguistics skills. Yet schools and practitioners informally assess ELLs based on their conversational skills, and often mistake conversational fluency for academic fluency. When this mistake is made, students are often exited from language support programs;
however, without the necessary support, students are at risk of failure. Cummins also uses an iceberg as a metaphor for BICS and CALP. The “visible” language proficiencies of pronunciation, basic vocabulary and grammar, which are manifested in everyday interpersonal communicative situations, are above the surface, but the cognitive/academic language proficiency (CALP) required to manipulate or reflect upon these surface features outside of immediate interpersonal contexts is below the surface (Cummins, 1981a).

Cummins developed a quadrant model to show the categories of language tasks related to BICS and CALP. Cummins designed the quadrant model with the horizontal line indicating the range of contextual support and the vertical line indicating the cognitive communicative situations. The contextual support ranges from context embedded to context-reduced, and the cognitive involvement ranges from demanding to undemanding. A context-embedded task includes visual and oral clues to help the students, while a context-reduced activity offers no clues and students must rely solely on language. The activities that are both cognitively demanding and context-reduced are the most difficult for second-language learners. The model suggests that second-language learners begin in Quadrant A, which includes activities that are context-embedded and cognitively reduced. For example, following directions, art and music classes, basic conversations, and buying lunch in the cafeteria would be considered Quadrant A, or cognitively undemanding and context-embedded activities. The students then move through Quadrants B and C until they arrive in Quadrant D, which includes activities that are cognitively demanding and context reduced. For example, lectures, standardized tests, and reading and writing represent cognitively demanding and context reduced, or Quadrant D, activities. Conversational abilities in Quadrant A develop quickly, while the academic functions of Quadrant D are more difficult to acquire, because they demand high levels of cognitive
involvement, but are not supported by contextual clues. The essential aspect of academic language proficiency is the ability to make complex meanings explicit in oral or written modalities by means of language itself (Cummins, 2000). CALP is defined as those dimensions of language proficiency that are strongly related to literacy skills, whereas BICS refers to cognitively undemanding manifestations of language proficiency in interpersonal situations.

![Cummins' quadrant model](image)

*Figure 1. Cummins' quadrant model.*

Faltis (Faltis, 1993) refers to Cummins’ framework in a discussion of teaching language in the content areas. Faltis discusses using the quadrants to identify the potential difficulty for second-language learners during some activities depending on the linguistic and cognitive demands of the activity in contrast to learners’ proficiency level. In addition, Faltis states that the Cummins’ framework of the dimension of language in content instruction allows us to take a macro-level view of the language demands placed on second-language learners and to use that information to select learning activities that reflect and support learning objectives. Cummins’ framework of BICS and CALP and the four quadrants has been referred to in discussions of the variations of language in academic contexts and how the variations affect students’ learning and language usage in academic settings (Freeman & Freeman, 1992; Hall, 1996; Lessow-Hurley, 1996; Leung, 1996; McKeon, 1995; Met, 1995; Rogers & Pratten, 1996).
Virginia Collier has conducted extensive research on the age and rate of academic language proficiency as well as second-language acquisition in academic settings. Her series of studies (Collier, 1992; V Collier, 1995; V. Collier, 1995; Collier & Thomas, 1989) found results similar to those of Cummins (Cummins, 1981a). Collier (1995) notes the following:

In U.S. schools where all instruction is given through the second language (English), non-native speakers of English with no schooling in their first language take 7-10 years or more to reach age and grade level norms of their native English speaking peers. Immigrant students who have had 2-3 years of first language schooling in their home country before they come to the U.S. take at least 5-7 years to reach typical native-speaker performance. (p. 4)

Wong Fillmore (1991) also found that students require 2-5 years to acquire social or oral language and that that time frame does not include the acquisition of reading and writing skills in the second language, which would take significantly more time. Wong Fillmore also asserts that the oral language acquisition will require more time if optimum conditions are absent. Just as Cummins explains the need for context-embedded and cognitively reduced settings for developing a second language, Wong Fillmore stresses the need for language learners to realize the importance of the second language and being motivated to learn the language. In addition, the language learner must have access to and frequent contact with speakers of the target language who know the language well enough to model and correct it. Finally, it is necessary to create a social setting that fosters interaction in the target language.

In discussions of social and academic language, the distinction is not merely a different or more difficult set of vocabulary terms. In fact, Shuy (1978, 1981) suggests that BICS refers to the pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary, while CALP refers to the semantic and functional meanings or the skills needed to understand the meanings of the language. Cummins (1979a; Cummins, 1981a) states that CALP are the words, phraseology, grammar and pragmatic conventions for expression, understanding and interpretation. Collier (1995) contends that
CALP is the phonology, vocabulary, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics and discourse of the language. Collier also explains that at the same time that the students are attempting to acquire an understanding of the previously mentioned linguistic functions, the same functions are increasing across subjects throughout each grade level. In addition, each subject has its own vocabulary, grammar, and discourse patterns. Wong Fillmore (1991, 2005) asserts that teachers must not merely cover content, but must also address the language used in the delivery of content in both the text and classroom lessons. She asserts that there must be a focus on language. Wong Fillmore (2005) argues:

"English language learners must acquire the language skills needed for everyday communication—skills that native speakers of English usually bring to school—as well as those needed for subject-matter learning. Children do not learn this kind of language on their own through immersion in an English-speaking environment. Mastering academic English—and thus surviving high-stakes tests—requires instructional activities that actively promote language development in the context of learning intellectually challenging content." (p. 47)

Collier (1995) has also addressed the interrelationships among sociocultural, linguistic, cognitive, and academic dimensions of language acquisition through the creation of a figure that symbolizes the overall process of language acquisition within the context of school. Collier asserts the four components are interdependent and if one of the components is neglected, it will have detrimental results for the other components. The cognitive, linguistic, and academic components are developmental and ongoing. It is the sociocultural component that allows the developmental components to improve and expand. These social and cultural processes arise out of past and present experiences and situations. By nature, learning in school is social. Combining the social and cultural aspects of school learning with the experiences and culture of the language learner requires schools to implement pedagogy and administrative structures that support students’ academic and language acquisition (1995).
Features of Effective ESL Programs and Schools

There is a plethora of research regarding effective programs that support English language learners. August and Hakuta (1997) synthesized the results of thirty-three research projects regarding effective schools and classrooms for English-language learners. The results of the 33 studies posited the development of ten attributes of effective schools and classrooms to include a supportive school-wide climate; school leadership, customized learning environment, articulation and coordination within and between schools; use of native language and culture; balanced curriculum; explicit skills instruction; opportunities for student-directed activities; instruction activities that enhance understanding; opportunities for practice; systematic student assessment; staff development; and home and parent involvement.

A positive school-wide climate, or “ethos”, is one of the determining factors of success for ELLs. The three key manifestations of the ethos include valuing the linguistic and cultural differences of the students, high expectations for academic achievement and integration of students in the school system. Teachers demonstrate valuing students’ language and culture through their attempts to learn the language of the students and through encouraging students to
continue to develop their native-language skills. In addition, high expectations permeated both the classrooms and school. The restructuring of schools, and therefore programs for ELLs and all students, creates an atmosphere in which all students are able to participate in the overall school experience.

A second attribute of exemplary schools and classrooms is school leadership. School leadership, often the principal, in effective schools makes ELLs’ academic success a priority, oversees and develops curricular and instructional improvement, hires qualified staff, involves staff in improvement efforts, and creates a productive environment (Chatfield, 1986; Lucas, Henze, & Donato, 1990).

A customized learning environment also helps ELL students succeed. However, this attribute is vaguely defined. Due to the immense diversity of students and programs, the researchers cannot characterize which approach or program design is best for ELLs under all conditions. There are simply too many factors to consider when implementing programs and one design will not be equally effective in all situations. Therefore, schools and districts must identify which models suit their needs and make adjustments accordingly.

The fourth key attribute for effectively educating English language learners is the articulation and coordination within and between schools. The researchers of the 33 studies found that it is necessary to have clear communication between levels of language development classes, between language programs and other school programs, and between the different levels of schooling.

Exemplary schools for ELLs make use of native language and culture and have a balanced curriculum that contains both basic skills and higher order skills for student success. Carter and Chatfield (1986) originally found that basic skills, objectives and testing were key
attributes of effective schooling. Berman, McLaughlin, McLeod, Minicucci, Nelson and Woodworth (1995, as cited in August and Hakuta, 1997, p. 178) found that it is also necessary to incorporate a “meaning-centered thematic curriculum.” The research suggests that explicit skills instruction is still a key feature of effective schools. Many of the studies in the August and Hakuta (1997) study report that effective schools exhibited significant amounts of time allotted for skills instruction.

The studies also found that effective classrooms and schools incorporate student directed activities that promote student interaction and collaboration. Researchers also suggest that the use of instructional strategies to enhance understanding leads to the academic achievement of ELLs. One such strategy includes developing metacognitive skills, which ELLs can use to “think about and prepare for a task, monitor themselves as they complete the task, and evaluate the outcomes helps [them] deal with context reduced tasks (Dianda and Flaherty, 1995:8, as cited in August and Hakuta, 1997, p. 180). In addition, implementing routines, using strategies that make instruction comprehensible, adjusting language for proficiency levels, using explicit discourse markers, calling attention to language, explicitly discussing vocabulary and structure, incorporating explanations and demonstrations, building background knowledge, accessing prior knowledge, and using manipulatives and realia, which are real objects and authentic materials, (Gersten, 1996; Mace-Matluck, Hoover, & Calfee, 1989; Saunders, O'Brien, Lennon, & McLean, 1996; Short, 1994; Wong Fillmore, Ammon, McLaughlin, & Ammon, 1985) help to build ELLs’ understanding and therefore increase academic achievement.

Exemplary programs also establish opportunities for ELLs to practice what they learn. This element refers to building redundancy into lessons or revisiting the content in meaningful and varied ways. Creating opportunities for practice also addresses interactions with fluent
English speakers by providing extended dialogue. Four studies on student achievement (Chatfield, 1986; Goldenberg & Sullivan, 1994; Slavin & Madden, 1994; Slavin & Yompolsky, 1992) found that school sites implemented systematic assessment of student achievement.

Staff development associated with exemplary schools and classroom practices provided teachers with training to resolve instructional issues related to bilingual and ESL education. In addition, the staff development also provides opportunities to encourage content-area teachers to develop their English language development strategies, therefore expanding the knowledge of ELLs across classrooms and grades. Home and parent involvement also improved student achievement because schools encouraged parents to become involved in all areas of student education. Schools in which parents are invited and included in the schools are more effective; parents must become members of the school’s community.

In addition to the compiled analysis of August and Hakuta (1997), Dentler and Hafner (1997) also assembled synthesized results of research to form a list of components related to effective instruction and the academic achievement of ELLs. The purpose of compiling this list of categories was to compare successful and unsuccessful districts. Dentler and Hafner developed categories that lead to an ideal instructional delivery system for English language learners. The first category relates to teacher quality. Fullan (1990) and Olsen and Mullen (1990) independently found that teachers must be qualified in their field, teacher ethnic/linguistic profiles should match that of their students; there is a need for effective staff development; and positive attitudes and morale must be present.

Dentler and Hafner (1997) describe school quality in terms of standards, assessment, and instructional organization. The research from standards and assessments focused on achievement outcomes, incorporation of authentic classroom assessment, development of a shared vision of
instructional goals and high expectations for all children (McLaughlin, Shepard, & O'Day, 1995). The instructional organization of a delivery system must also include equal access to core curriculum, grade-level and subject articulation, flexible groupings, team-teaching, peer and cross-age tutoring, collaborative planning and decision-making as well as the avoidance of tracking and ability grouping (Elmore & McLaughlin, 1988; Oakes, 1990). The instructional quality of the programs also combines features into general categories: strategies and approaches, access to second-language programs, and access to chapter 1 programs. Strategies and approaches of ideal instructional delivery systems should include basic and advanced skills taught through meaningful tasks, the use of manipulatives and realia, connections with students’ cultures, active student participation, and it should be literature-based and holistic (Brophy & Good, 1986). Access to second-language programs includes a comprehensive bilingual program, an ESL or sheltered instruction program, availability of primary language materials, sufficient numbers of bilingual teachers and aides, and the incorporation of the students’ primary language to build comprehension and integrate English-language development (Berman et al., 1992; Garcia, 1992).

The George Washington University Center for Equity and Excellence (DiCerbo, 2000) outlined the following six guiding principles for the effective instruction of English language learners in their Promoting Excellence series. The six principles state:

1. LEP students receive instruction that builds on their previous education and cognitive abilities and that reflects their language proficiency levels.

2. LEP students are evaluated with appropriate and valid assessments that are aligned to the state and local standards and that take into account the language acquisition stages and cultural background of the students.

3. LEP students are held to the same high expectations of learning established for all students.
4. LEP students develop full receptive and productive proficiencies in English in the domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, consistent with expectations for all students.

5. LEP students are taught challenging content to enable them to meet performance standards in all content areas, including reading and language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, the fine arts, health, and physical education, consistent with those for all students; and

6. The academic success of LEP students is a responsibility shared by all educators, the family, and the community (p. 3)

In his work outlining the current program designs for educating English-language learners, Genessee (1999) found that instructional programs for linguistically diverse students all shared common characteristics. Genesee (1999) explains that programs for ELLs include the following components:

1. Extensive and ongoing parent involvement
2. Ongoing, appropriate, and state of the art professional development
3. Instructional personnel who can implement strategies that integrate language acquisition and academic achievement at the same time
4. Strategies that promote proficiency in English (and the primary language, where applicable) for academic purposes, including literacy
5. Strategies such as sheltered instruction that ensure that academic instruction through the second language is meaningful and comprehensible to second language learners
6. Assessment methods that are linked to instructional objectives and that inform instructional planning and delivery
7. Developmentally appropriate curriculum and instructional materials and aids
8. High standards with respect to both language acquisition and academic achievement
9. Strong and knowledgeable leadership among classroom, school, and district personnel
10. Human resources to coordinate communication between parents and schools (p. 2)

English Language Learners in Mainstream Settings

The term mainstreaming is used with reference to three diverse approaches to teaching students in U.S. schools. The first refers to special education students in grade-level classrooms.
The second refers to exiting students from bilingual or ESL programs and their integration in grade-level classrooms taught completely in English. The third reference to mainstreaming addresses situations in which non-English speaking students are placed in English-only grade-level classroom with few modifications made for them (Carrasquillo & Rodriguez, 2002). For the purposes of this investigation, I will restrict the term mainstreaming to the placing of non-English or limited-English speaking students in grade-level English-only classrooms. This program design involves placement of English language learners in an English-only setting with native and fluent English speakers. The instruction is planned and delivered for advanced proficiency levels and not for students beginning to learn English. The English language learners must develop an understanding of course content at the same time as they are struggling to understand the language (Carrasquillo & Rodriguez, 2002).

Carrasquillo and Rodriguez (2002) describe four desiderata for mainstream classrooms for English language learners. The first desideratum states, “mainstreaming should provide a full range of educational opportunities to all students, eliminating social and racial barriers” (p. 6). This suggests not only creating a social environment that accepts and includes everyone, but also the insistence on high standards for everyone.

The second principle states, “Mainstreaming should provide opportunities for English language learners to interact socially with English-proficient peers” (p. 7). Classrooms provide English language learners access to authentic, meaningful language. Academic and social language develops in mainstream settings, but language cannot provide all of the meaning. It is necessary that the language and environment make the content more comprehensible (Krashen, 1999).
The third desideratum is that “Mainstreaming should provide opportunities for groups to function effectively once successful instructional strategies are employed” (p. 8). This depends on the notion that students can develop linguistically and academically through active involvement. The implementation of appropriate instructional practices within a mainstream setting can improve English language learners self-esteem, academic achievement, and social skills. The use of interactive, cooperative, heterogeneous groups focused on cognitively demanding tasks can build community and cognitive skills (Carrasquillo & Rodriguez, 2002).

The fourth desideratum is that “Mainstreaming should provide opportunities for all teachers to consider the language demands of all the students in the classroom” (p. 9). Mainstream teachers with diverse linguistic levels must develop an awareness of, and instructional practices for meeting, the different linguistic and cultural needs of the students (Carrasquillo & Rodriguez, 2002).

While mainstream settings and teachers can provide English language learners with an effective instructional environment, there are also negative factors that must be considered when mainstreaming ELLs. Mainstreaming often places students in overcrowded environments with little concern for, or consideration of, their special linguistic needs. Inclusion in these environments does not accelerate the language-acquisition process, as Cummins (1979, 1987, 2000), Collier (1987, 1989, 1992, 1995, 1997) and Wong-Fillmore (1991) have determined through their research. Mainstreaming ELLs also poses a risk that teachers may develop negative opinions or feelings toward students as the teachers realize that students cannot and do not speak English. They then tend to blame the student, which is an oversimplification of a larger issue related to the education of ELLs (Trueba, 1987).
An additional key factor is the development or destruction of self esteem (Hamayan, 1990). Negative effects can develop when students are ignored, intentionally or unintentionally, because the teachers are unable to communicate with them. Students may feel that they are not members of the educational community where they reside. Carrasquillo and London (1993) also identified factors that lead to positive self-esteem and therefore success in academic life. Teachers can build ELL students self-esteem by (a) incorporating respectful, accepting, concerned treatment of students; (b) the provision for opportunities for the modification of experiences that accord with values and aspirations; and (c) the way in which teachers respond to students’ questions and explanations (Carrasquillo & Rodriguez, 2002).

Mainstream teachers play a central role in linguistic, social, academic and cultural development of English language learners (Carrasquillo & Rodriguez, 2002; Chaudron, 1988; Hamayan, 1990). Research on mainstream teachers’ roles in students’ development identified six functions of teachers that lead to increased development (Carrasquillo & Rodriguez, 2002; Hamayan, 1990). The first role is that of a mediator or facilitator of learning. The teacher must continuously plan and implement curriculum and instruction that meet the academic and linguistics needs of ELLs. Teachers are also the facilitators in the acquisition of English. Teachers must implement strategies that integrate language and content. The teacher is also a model of a proficient English language user and a representative of mainstream culture. Teachers must mediate the socialization and acculturation of the students and must also become advocates for the ELLs’ needs and strengths.
Characteristics of Teachers of English Language Learner Students

Based on the new accountability structures enacted with NCLB, mainstream teachers of ELLs are required to help students develop both social and academic linguistic competence in addition to academic content-area knowledge and skills. In order to help students develop linguistically, cognitively and academically, teachers should possess specific attributes (Darling-Hammond, 1996; Goodlad, 1990; Grant, 1994; Tikunoff et al., 1991) which include: organization and effective delivery of instruction, knowledge of second-language acquisition processes, knowledge of students’ developmental language practices, familiarity with students’ native language and cultural background, familiarity with students’ learning and cognitive styles, effective classroom management, high expectations for their students, facilitators of parent involvement (Carrasquillo & Rodriguez, 2002).

Garcia (1996) identified important teacher characteristics based on Tikunoff’s (1983) significant bilingual features (SBIF) study. Tikunoff suggests that teachers must identify objectives and state what students must do to perform the stated objectives. These practices included high expectation for students and resulted in a greater sense of efficacy among teachers. The SBIF study also asserts that teachers must incorporate active learning, which manifests itself as clear communication, high levels of engagement, progress monitoring and the implementation of immediate feedback.

Garcia (1992) describes the results of his descriptive study regarding teacher effectiveness in four central themes, which include knowledge, skills, disposition, and affect. In reference to knowledge, Garcia found that effective teachers participated in and graduated from programs for teachers of English language learners and had mastered the state prerequisites. Those teachers also had experience working with ELLs and routinely participated in staff
development opportunities sponsored by the school and on their own time. Effective teachers also demonstrated knowledge about educational philosophies and an ability to express the rationale behind the implementation of the philosophical strategies. Additionally, they demonstrated their skills by implementing thematic approaches and incorporating collaborative, active learning opportunities (Garcia, 1996) The disposition or characteristics of the teachers included creativity, resourcefulness, commitment, energy, and persistence, as well as a willingness and ability to collaborate. The best teachers continually seek more effective and efficient ways of meeting students’ needs and alter instruction to meet those needs. The last criterion of effective teachers included affect. The teachers exhibited high expectations for their students and based their teaching on the students’ language and culture in order to build self-esteem (Garcia, 1996).

Professional Development for Teachers of English Language Learner Students

Another crucial component in the effective education of ELLs is professional development (August & Hakuta, 1997; Barron & Menken, 2002; Clair & Adger, 1999; Dentler & Hafner, 1997; Echevarria & Graves, 1998a; Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly, & Driscoll, 2005a; Garcia, 1996; Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 1997, 2000; Goodwin, 2002; Menken & Holmes, 2000). Unfortunately, it becomes increasingly obvious that teachers of ELLs do not receive the professional development that they, and therefore their students, require. A recent study of California teachers (Gandara et al., 2005a), found that teachers with 26%-50% ELLs in their classrooms had participated in one, or fewer, professional development opportunities in the previous five years. In addition, 43% of teachers with more than 50% ELLs had participated in at most one in-service focused on instruction for ELLs. Teachers also reported that the quality of
the professional development, when offered, was poor. The presenters often had little if any knowledge of ELLs, and therefore could not provide the necessary or appropriate information for teachers. The teachers also stated that presenters often addressed adaptations of the curriculum for ELLs as an afterthought, if at all. This finding is especially disconcerting when considering the lack of qualified teachers and the large numbers of ELLs (Echevarria & Graves, 1998b).

A lack of focused professional development pervades school districts across the United States. Even though there is a lack of research about effective professional development for teachers of ELLs, there are some key components that researchers suggest should guide the formation and implementation of professional development. First and foremost, professional development should be comprehensive, focused and sustained; there must be time and resources to allow the knowledge and skills to develop (Clair & Adger, 1999; Dentler & Hafner, 1997). Dentler (1997) suggests that districts provide time, support, and information for teachers to learn, practice and experience success with new instructional strategies. Professional development opportunities that simply espouse short-term or quick solutions do not provide teachers with enough new knowledge to educate ELLs effectively.

Teachers require a comprehensive development program that combines theory and practice and addresses both content and language development (August & Hakuta, 1997; Clair & Adger, 1999; Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 1997; Menken & Holmes, 2000). Teachers need to build an awareness of the functions of language in content areas as well as an understanding of the role of language in education. Staff development should provide teachers with an understanding of the tools, materials and techniques for second-language learning; they need concrete strategies for working with ELLs (Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 2000; Goodwin, 2002; Menken & Holmes, 2000).
Another important task of professional development for teachers of ELLs is to build an understanding of the role of the first language and culture in learning. Teachers must be aware of how best to utilize what knowledge students bring to the classroom as well as how to establish collaborative environments (Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 1997). Teacher awareness becomes increasingly important as the number of ELLs grows and certification standards decrease to fill teacher shortages. Goodwin (2002) suggests that programs for teachers must implement a focus on differentiating instruction to meet the multifaceted needs of English language learners. Teachers must develop and implement a variety of ways to access and increase student knowledge. In addition, teachers must have an understanding of second-language acquisition theories, as well as instructional strategies that provide support for ELLs in mainstream settings. This knowledge must be shared through meaningful professional development programs. Another aspect of preparing teachers to work with ELLs focuses on the importance of building a connection between the school and home and between the teachers and parents. All of these dimensions of second-language teaching should be addressed in a way that offers ongoing opportunities for collaboration and collective problem-solving. Professional development experiences should allow teachers to learn and work professionally in the same way they hope to teach (Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 2000).

Sheltered Instruction

The communicative approach to teaching English as a second language is student-centered and focuses on both communication and the meaningful acquisition of knowledge (Herrera & Murry, 2005). The sheltered instruction (SI) method of the communicative approach addresses content-area knowledge and language development, by increasing language
proficiency through grade-level content. SI lessons address both content and language objectives and use specific strategies to make the content more accessible for students of different proficiency levels. When considering the dual mandate of increasing ELLs’ language proficiency and academic skills and knowledge, as mandated by NCLB, within systems where native language instruction is unavailable, it seems that the sheltered instruction method most aptly addresses the development of both language and content. Sheltered instruction is often also referred to as “specially designed academic instruction in English” (SDAIE), but for the present investigation, the term “sheltered instruction” is used.

Sheltered instruction is a method of making content more comprehensible or accessible by using techniques that provide context for the content (Brown, 2001; Crawford, 1991; Echevarria & Graves, 2003; Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2004; Freeman & Freeman, 1992; Gersten & Jimenez, 1998; Kottler & Kottler, 2002; Peregoy & Boyle, 2001; Short & Echevarria, 2005). According to O’Grady, Archibald, Aronoff and Rees-Miller (2005), SI is “based on the theory that second language acquisition is more effective when learners use the language to interact with content material rather than learn about the language, and sheltered instruction programs combine instruction in content courses with English language instruction” (p. 428). Sheltered instruction appears in English medium grade-level settings with native and non-native English-speaking students (Genesse, 1999; Ovando, Combs, & Collier, 2006).

Sheltered instruction, while often cited as a method for intermediate- and advanced-proficiency students (Peregoy & Boyle, 2001), is actually for all proficiency levels, because teachers are able to effect instructional modifications to make the content comprehensible and accessible for all levels (Echevarria & Graves, 2003; Echevarria et al., 2004; Herrera & Murry, 2005). Sheltered instruction uses pedagogical strategies in subject-area English instruction to
provide ELLs with access to grade-level curriculum (Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 1997; Scarcella, 1990; Simons & Connelly, 2000). Through the use of pedagogical strategies, ELLs are able to acquire academic English language skills and content-area knowledge, and are able to move beyond conversational English skills in order to increasing their academic achievement (V Collier, 1995; V. Collier, 1995; Cummins, 1979a; Wong Fillmore & Snow, 2002). Echevarria and Graves (2003) discuss the common features of sheltered instruction and effective instruction, and the methods incorporated in sheltered instruction that “make sheltered instruction more than just good teaching” (p. 54). The shared features include: (a) pacing, (b) strategies, (c) scaffolding, (d) student engagement, (e) content objectives, (f) vocabulary review, (g) hands-on materials, (h) feedback provided, (i) meaningful activities, (j) links to past learning, (k) review and assessment, (l) clear explanation of tasks, (m) supplementary materials, (n) higher-order thinking skills, and (o) variety of grouping strategies (p. 54).

In addition to the shared effective instruction features listed above, Echevarria and Graves (2003) explain that sheltered instruction must also pay attention to the following issues in making grade-level content more accessible for ELLs: (a) wait time, (b) key vocabulary, (c) adapted content, (d) language objectives, (e) clarification in L1, (f) appropriate speech for each proficiency level, and (g) student background experiences (p. 54).

Genesse (1999) describes the salient pedagogical features of sheltered instruction as characterized by clearly defined language and content objectives, the use of supplementary materials to make content more clear and meaningful, scaffolding, interactions among students and between students and teachers, and meaningful activities that are hands-on and correspond to grade-level content. In addition, the lessons should integrate knowledge and concepts through listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Herrera and Murry (2005) describe hands-on learning
situations, cooperative learning, guarded vocabulary, and visuals as the common themes in sheltered instruction.

There is great variability regarding the implementation of sheltered instruction programs, due to a lack of a specific model of sheltered instruction that improves the academic achievement of ELLs. Therefore, Echevarria, Graves and Short (2000) developed the sheltered instruction observation protocol (SIOP). The model is based on the research of effective practices and the theoretical basis that language acquisition is enhanced through meaningful use and interaction (Echevarria et al., 2004). In 1996, the United States Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement funded the Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence (CREDE) to conduct a study of sheltered instruction (Echevarria et al., 2004; Herrera & Murry, 2005). During that research, Jana Echevarria, Deborah Short, and MaryEllen Vogt developed the sheltered instruction observation protocol (SIOP), which is a field-tested model that explicitly identifies effective components of sheltered instruction. These components categorize effective practices for increasing language and content knowledge of ELLs in English-medium academic settings.

The research conducted between 1996 and 2003 sought to identify critical aspects of sheltered instruction and to develop a model of professional development that would increase teachers’ effective use of sheltered instruction in classrooms. Yet there was little consensus about what an effective sheltered-instruction lesson should include and what it should look like in classrooms. Short and Echevarria (2004) conducted a study intended to develop an explicit model of sheltered instruction and used the model to train teachers in sheltered instruction and to evaluate teacher change and the effects of sheltered instruction on English language learners’ language development and content knowledge. After field testing the SIOP, the researchers
established that it was valid and reliable (Guarino et al., 2001). They used writing samples from students whose teachers were trained in SIOP and from students whose teachers were not trained in SIOP to determine whether students of SIOP-trained teachers showed greater gains than did students whose teachers were not trained in the SIOP model. The students of SIOP-trained teachers showed greater gains overall and greater gains from one testing session to the second session (Echevarria et al., 2004; Short & Echevarria, 1999). Based on identified key features of professional development (Darling-Hammond, 1998), the researchers created a model for professional development for implementing SIOP in classrooms with ELLs.

SIOP is an observation tool as well as a planning tool for teachers. SIOP contains features of sheltered instruction that can enhance and expand teachers’ instructional practice with English language learners (Echevarria et al., 2004). Short and Echevarria (2005) describe SIOP as a lesson planning and delivery approach composed of thirty instructional indicators grouped into eight components:

1. Preparation
2. Building background
3. Comprehensible input
4. Strategies
5. Interaction
6. Practice/application
7. Lesson delivery
8. Review/assessment

These eight components are grouped into three critical aspects, which include preparation, instruction and review and assessment. The thirty instructional strategies included in
the SIOP model represent both the features of effective instruction and sheltered instruction and aim to develop grade-level skills and knowledge and English-language development (see Appendix A).

Echevarria, Vogt, and Short (2000) assert that the indicators for preparation identified in sheltered instruction include defining content and language objectives, choosing appropriate content, identifying supplementary materials, adapting content, and planning meaningful activities. Content objectives should be based on district and state content standards and should be expressed directly and simply to ELLs, verbally and in writing. Language objectives, which may focus on vocabulary, comprehension skills, writing skills, functional language skills, or specific grammar points, also must be presented orally and in writing for ELLs. Content concepts should be based on district guidelines and should be grade-appropriate. While the content should be adapted or modified, it should not be diminished, and the integrity of the content standards should remain intact. Supplementary materials should be chosen that “create context and support content concepts” (p. 27). Content should be adapted in ways that make the information accessible to all students without “watering down” the content. The authors suggest, “to the extent possible, lesson activities should be planned that promote language development in all skills while ELLs are mastering content objectives” (p. 36).

Instruction for a sheltered lesson includes six subsections: (a) building background, (b) comprehensible input, (c) strategies, (d) interaction, (e) practice/application, and (f) lesson delivery. Building background refers to linking concepts to students’ backgrounds and experiences, linking past learning and new concepts, as well as emphasizing key vocabulary (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2000, p. 40). Key vocabulary includes “key terms that are critical to understanding the lesson’s most important concepts” (p. 49). These terms should be
contextualized, explicitly addressed, and not merely presented as a list of terms to copy and define. In addition, key terms refer to school language or the terms used in classrooms that explain instructions, such as define, predict, and clarify. These terms must also be overtly taught to ELL students.

Comprehensible input is essential in a sheltered lesson and refers to “making adjustments to speech so that the message to the student is understandable. This input is important and should be measured throughout the lesson to ensure students are taking in and understanding what is being communicated to them” (Echevarria, Vogt & Short, 2000, p. 60). This input in a sheltered lesson refers to using appropriate speech for the proficiency levels of the students. Appropriate speech has to do with the rate of speech and enunciation, but also with the use of simple or complex sentence structures, vocabulary, and idioms. The authors state, “English language learners are better served when teachers use language that is straightforward and clear, and is accompanied by a visual representation” (p. 63). Comprehensible input also refers to the need for clearly explained academic tasks. The authors suggest, “It is critical for ELLs to have instructions presented in a step-by-step manner, preferably accompanied by a visual representation or demonstration of what is expected” (p. 66). While this statement is true for all students, it is especially true for ELLs, who need the extra linguistic support. An additional element of comprehensible input refers to the use of techniques that increase students’ access to and understanding of the content. The techniques include the use of demonstrations, modeling, visuals, gestures, body language, and hands-on activities.

Another component of sheltered instruction is the instruction and use of strategies that aid students, more specifically ELL students, in the learning, retention, and retrieval of information. Echevarria, Vogt, and Short (2000) assert that these strategies should be explicitly taught,
modeled and scaffolded to increase student understanding and acquisition of skills and knowledge (p. 79). These strategies include problem-solving, predicting, organizing, summarizing, categorizing, evaluating, and self-monitoring. Verbal and procedural scaffolding are also critical to instruction in a sheltered lesson. Verbal scaffolding requires teachers to “use prompting questioning and elaboration to facilitate students’ movement to higher levels of language proficiency, comprehension, and thinking” (p. 83). This scaffolding utilizes paraphrasing, think-alouds, and reinforcing contextual definitions. Procedural scaffolding incorporates a system that allows for teaching, modeling, practicing and applying new skills and knowledge, and also provides the opportunity to work as a whole group and in increasingly smaller groups focused on increasing independence. SIOP lessons also require the planned implementation of questions that increase higher levels of thinking. Too often teachers, in an attempt to decrease the linguistic demands on ELLs, also decrease the level of questioning. The authors suggest (p. 86) that with careful planning and forethought, questions can be created that are at an appropriate proficiency level, but still encourage and require higher levels of thinking.

Sheltered lessons require the use of interactions that provide ELLs with sufficient opportunities to use their developing English language skills. These opportunities include interactions between students and the teacher, grouping configurations, wait-time, and use of the first language to clarify concepts. It is essential in sheltered lessons that teachers allow and expect students to participate in discussion of concepts. In addition, teachers implement strategies that require students to elaborate their responses and increase their linguistic production. Grouping configurations also contribute to the academic and linguistic advancement of ELLs. It is necessary to utilize a myriad of groupings, which should be both homogeneous and heterogeneous, but should not consistently be based on proficiency level. Student interaction is
amplified through the increased and consistent use of wait time. Echevarria, Vogt and Short (2000) suggest including opportunities for ELLs to clarify concepts in the native language, using an instructional aid, peer, or support materials.

Sheltered instruction also relies on the amount and type of practice and application that are created for ELLs, based on the use of manipulatives, applying content and language knowledge, and integrating all language skills. Whenever possible, ELLs need access to hands-on materials or manipulatives that allow them to make abstract concepts more concrete. Students also need opportunities to apply the content and language in meaningful ways and to participate in activities that integrate reading, writing, listening and speaking about the content covered in the lesson.

Lesson delivery of sheltered instruction refers to clearly supporting content and language objectives in the lesson, engaging students consistently and continuously in the entire lesson and appropriately pacing the lesson for the students’ proficiency levels. As previously stated, planning SIOP lessons requires the identification of clear content and language objectives. In lesson delivery, it is necessary not only to state the objectives, but also to ensure that the lesson actually does address and support the identified objectives. Echevarria, Vogt & Short (2000) assert that “effective sheltered instruction teachers need to plan to use the entire class period efficiently, teaching in ways that engage students, and making sure students are engaged in activities that specifically relate to the material on which they will be assessed” (p. 135). Pacing is also a component of sheltered lessons and refers to presenting lessons at a rate that is quick enough to keep students’ interest and attention but not so fast that they are overwhelmed.

The third section of a SIOP lesson is review and evaluation. In review and evaluation, teachers must give a comprehensive review of key vocabulary and content concepts, provide
feedback to students, and conduct assessment of student comprehension and learning, not only at the end of a lesson but throughout the lesson. Feedback can be based on formal or informal assessments and can be provided through a myriad of means. The feedback is intended “to clarify and correct misconceptions and misunderstanding” (Echevarria, Vogt & Short, 2000, p. 151).

The thirty indicators, based on the three main SIOP sections of preparation, instruction and evaluation and assessment, develop academic skills and knowledge and language proficiency. The SIOP and its thirty indicators offer mainstream teachers a guide for planning and delivering lessons that meet the multiple needs of mainstream classrooms with ELLs. These indicators provide teachers with a way to access grade level content material using pedagogical strategies and language modifications. Echevarria, Short and Vogt (2000) state “The sheltered instruction model brings together what to teach by providing an approach for how to teach it” (p. 12).

Survey Research Studies on Teachers of English Language Learner Students

Three recent research studies (Boyd, 2004; Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly, & Driscoll, 2005b; Karabenick & Noda, 2004) used survey methods to understand teachers of English-language learners. In her 2004 dissertation, Boyd examined the degree to which teachers with increasing numbers of ELLs changed their teaching practices. Boyd created a survey focused on research-based effective teaching practices for both ELL and non- ELL students and then asked teachers to what degree they had increased or decreased the use of those practices during the three years of ELL population growth. In addition, Boyd attempted to determine whether years of teaching experience, ethnicity, highest degree earned or hours of participation in professional
development influenced teachers’ practices. Through her survey research of kindergarten through fifth grade teachers in four schools, Boyd found that teachers had increased their implementation of the identified effective practices to a significant degree; however, teacher characteristics and demographics did not influence or impact teacher responses to a significant degree.

Karabenick and Noda’s (2004) study also implemented survey methods to identify teacher beliefs, attitudes, practices, and needs regarding educating English-language learners in a large district facing increasing numbers of ELLs. The researchers identified the following knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors related to educating ELLs: (a) teacher efficacy; general and ESL; (b) mastery and performance approaches to teaching; (c) second-language learning; (d) relationship between language and academic skills; (e) bilingual / bicultural education; (f) assessment of ELLs; (g) ELLs and collaborative instructional approaches; (h) ELLs and classroom resources and time on instructional tasks; (i) interactions between ELL and non-ELL students in the classroom; (j) teacher beliefs about ELLs’ parents; (k) school climate for ELLs; (l) teacher attitudes toward ELLs; (m) general sociocultural attitudes; and (n) bilingual resources. The focus of the study was to identify and document similarities and differences in teacher responses, as well as to understand the differences between the teachers with positive and negative attitudes toward educating ELLs. The researchers found that teachers typically demonstrated positive attitudes toward ELLs; however, there were also significant differences. Teachers with more positive attitudes toward ELLs often thought that the first language aids school performance and does not hinder the acquisition of the second language. They also expressed the belief that bilingualism is of benefit for the students and that second-language learners should be tested in their native language. In addition, teachers with more accepting
attitudes toward ELLs also express the belief that ELLs do not require additional time and resources.

Based on the responses of the teachers, the researchers offered suggestions for future professional development that included second-language acquisition and its relationship to academic success, parental involvement, multicultural/diversity training, district assessment and placement procedures, the varied dimensions of bilingualism and bilingual education (i.e. legal, social, political and pedagogical dimensions), and time and resource management. In addition, the researchers discussed the need for the district to increase awareness of the districts’ resources and support services and to increase teacher support.

The study by Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly, and Driscoll (2005) also addressed teachers of ELLs at both elementary and secondary levels in 22 districts in California. The main tool for gathering data was a survey and the researchers supplemented their data through four focus groups. The research study focused on (a) teachers’ challenges in classrooms with ELLs, (b) how teachers view their knowledge and preparation in effectively educating ELLs, and (c) what professional development and support the teachers need to address the stated challenges. The researchers piloted the survey in the winter of 2003 and implemented the survey, in both Internet and paper- and pencil- formats, in the spring of 2004. From the surveys, the researchers highlighted the findings in three categories: teacher challenges, effects of teacher certification and professional development and need for teacher support: The authors found:

(a) The teachers focused on what they could do to improve student learning and in general did not blame the students or their families for low achievement. (p. 6)

(b) Communication with students and their families was of utmost importance to teachers. The inability to connect with parents, inform them of standards, expectations and ways to help was the most commonly named challenge for those teaching in K-6. Seventh – 12th grade teachers most often mentioned communicating with, understanding and connecting with students as the greatest challenge they faced. (p. 6)
Having enough time to teach ELL students all of the required subject matter, including English-language development, presented the second greatest teaching challenge for elementary teachers. (p. 7)

Teachers expressed frustration with the wide range of English-language and academic levels often found in their classrooms. (p. 8)

Teachers expressed the lack of tools to teach, including appropriate assessment materials and instruments as a challenge. (p. 9)

The more preparation that teachers had for working with English language learners, the more likely they were to cite challenges involving shortcomings in instructional programs and resources for these students. (p. 10)

Greater preparation for teaching English learners equaled greater teacher confidence in their skills for working with these students successfully. (p. 12)

Over the last five years, many ELL teachers had little or no professional development designed to help them teach these students and the quality of training was uneven. (p. 13)

Teachers most often chose paraprofessional help, more time to teach and to collaborate with peers, and better English language development materials when presented with choices of additional assistance for their teaching. (p. 16)

Summary

This chapter addresses the current research related to the education of English-language learner students. Research suggests ELL students’ academic and language skills must be specifically addressed in grade-level settings, using grade-level materials and appropriate teaching strategies. The research discusses effectively educating ELL students through the implementation of planned programs, school environments, ESL methods that develop language and academic skills and knowledge, and professional development. Recent survey research with teachers of ELLs also discusses the teachers’ preparedness, practices and professional development needs; however, there is still a need for further research in the area of teaching ELLs.

The study by Boyd (2004) researched the degree of implementation of effective practices with ELLs. That study, however, focused on the implementation of general effective practices.
based on the work of Brophy and Good (1986). The practices identified by Brophy and Good, and therefore Boyd’s study, do not specifically address effective practices for developing English-language proficiency and academic skills, especially in a mainstream, grade-level setting. Even though Boyd’s study contributes to the understanding of educating ELLs, it does not address practices that simultaneously develop content area knowledge and English-language proficiency in mainstream settings. This proposed study will further develop the work of Boyd by specifically identifying teachers’ perceived implementation of practices identified to increase academic language and skills.

The research of Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly, and Driscoll (2005) discusses the challenges, preparedness and professional development needs of California teachers of ELLs, in all grade levels and program designs. Their study, in its examination of teacher preparedness, used teacher-certification as the measure for preparedness. Participants in the study represented Cross Cultural, Language and Academic Development (CLAD) certification, Bilingual, Cross-Cultural, Language and Academic Development (BCLAD) or neither certificate. CLAD certification requires course work in first- and second-language acquisition, language development and content instruction methodologies, and cultural diversity. BCLAD certification extends the CLAD certificate and requires course work in methodology of first-language instruction, culture of emphasis and language of emphasis. Preparedness is based on the level of certification and comparisons of teacher needs, challenges, and efficacy are all made based on these three categories of preparedness. Teachers rated their preparedness to address six areas: (a) pedagogy, (b) English-language development, (c) English reading, (d) English writing, (e) primary language reading, and (f) primary language writing. Their study does not specifically address teachers’
perceived preparedness in developing ELLs’ academic and language skills in mainstream classrooms, nor does it specifically address effective teaching practices for ELLs.

The proposed study aims to build on components of previous research of teachers’ preparedness and ESL practices. As stated previously, the study intends to identify the teachers’ perceived preparedness and inclusion of teaching practices to develop both language and content area skills. In addition, the study focuses on teachers who are responsible for providing ESL and grade-level content material in mainstream settings, and more specifically in grade levels that are increasingly impacted by the dual mandates of NCLB and the Texas accountability system.
CHAPTER 3

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The Research Design

This study utilized a survey and focus groups to obtain and interpret information about teachers’ perceptions of their preparedness and practices related to teaching English language learners (ELLs). The 19-item Web-based survey gathered information regarding teachers’ demographic information (i.e. certification, years of experience, number of students) as well as perceptions of preparedness, teaching practices, and professional development needs. The focus groups further investigated teachers’ perspectives about teaching ELLs in mainstream settings.

The Research Context

Data for this study were gathered from October 2006 to February 2007. The study included seven major suburban districts in Region X and Region XI in north Texas. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) defined major suburban districts as “school districts in and around the major urban areas. Major suburban districts are contiguous to major urban districts. If the suburban district is not contiguous, it must have a student population that is at least 15 % of the size of the district designated as major urban. In some cases, other size-threshold criteria may apply” (Texas Education Agency, 2004, ¶ 3). There are thirty large suburban districts in Regions X and XI, but only seven districts were included in this study. Of the remaining 23 districts, 21 declined to participate and two districts were not asked to participate. The 30 districts showed between 66.1% and 779% increases in the percentage of limited English proficient (LEP) students, as defined by the TEA, during the span from the 1995-96 school year through the 2004-2005 school year (Appendix B and C). At the same time, total district enrollments showed
growth ranging from 0.0% to 105.2%. These districts also enrolled between fifty-seven and 12,397 LEP students district-wide during the 2004-2005 school year, with a total student enrollment between 1,347 and 55,781 during the same year (Appendix B and D). Many of the districts showed a large increase in the percentage of ELLs during the past ten years, even in cases in which the total enrollment for the district did not change over the ten-year span (Appendix B and C).

Two large suburban districts in Region X and XI were excluded from the study due to lack of sufficient LEP student enrollment. While other districts showed large increases in LEP enrollment during the ten years, one district’s LEP student population only increased by 36% or from 14 LEP students in 1995-96 to 19 LEP students in 2004-05 for the entire district. The other excluded district increased its LEP population by 2700%. However, that only represented an increase from one LEP student in 1995-96 to 27 LEP students in the 2004-2005 school year.

The Research Participants

The participants for this study were fourth- and fifth-grade mainstream teachers from the seven participating districts. Potential participants held an ESL certificate and taught English language learners in their classrooms for at least part of the school day. Comprehensive demographic information about the participants was not available. The survey asked participants to provide some demographic information regarding experience, but it did not ask for age, ethnicity, or gender. Statistics from the TEA Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) report for 2004-2005 described Texas teachers as 77.1% female and 22.9% male. Of that statewide demographic group, 70.3% are white, 19.0% are Hispanic, 8.9% are African-American, 1.0% are Asian/Pacific Islanders, and 0.3% are Native Americans. Beginning teachers
represented 7.7% of all teachers, 28.7% had 1-5 years teaching experience, 19.4% had 6-10 years experience, 24.5% of teachers had 11-20 years and 19.7% of teachers had more than 20 years of experience. Therefore, it was predicted that the majority of the participants would be white females with fewer than 10 years teaching experience. Based on survey results, 38.9% of the teachers had five or fewer years teaching experience, 28.9% had 6-10 years experience and 32.2% had 11 or more years of teaching experience. Fourth-grade teachers represented 44.3% of the respondents and 55.7% were fifth-grade teachers.

Fourth- and fifth-grade classroom teachers were chosen based on students’ participation in the Texas standardized exam, Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) in an elementary school. Third grade also participated in TAKS testing, but many school districts offered bilingual programs in third grade. Therefore, there were fewer mainstream teachers with English-language learners in third grade. The teachers who participated in this study represent ESL-certified teachers of fourth- and fifth-grade, English-only classrooms with English language learners. One hundred and eleven participants responded to the survey, but 21 surveys were discarded because participants failed to finish the survey and their responses were incomplete.

Upon completion of the survey, participants were asked if they would be willing to participate in a focus group interview. Twenty-five participants expressed a willingness to participate and ultimately, thirteen teachers attended the focus group interviews; four teachers were in the first group and nine were in the second group. The interview sessions were held in neutral locations (i.e. hotel conference rooms) in the Dallas-Fort Worth area and were divided based on geographic convenience.
Instruments Used in Data Collection

Data were collected through a researcher created Web-based survey, which is managed by SurveyMonkey.com© (see Appendix E). The survey was composed of three sections: teacher and classroom information, teachers’ perceived preparedness and practices, and teachers’ needs. The first section of the survey gathered information about teachers and type of classrooms. The initial questions asked teachers to identify whether they taught in a fourth- or fifth-grade classroom and whether they were self-contained or departmentalized. The questions in the first section also intended to identify the number of ELLs each teacher instructed in a day, as well as the total number of students the teacher instructed daily. This information provided the percentage, and not only the number, of ELLs instructed by each teacher. This section also addressed teacher experience and certification, through questions asking participants to specify the number of years of experience they have, in general, and as an ESL-certified teachers. Teachers were asked if their certification was obtained through a university-based degree and certification program or through an alternative certification program. Teachers also supplied information regarding how many hours of professional development and how many university courses they have completed that directly addressed educating English language learners. The second section of the survey used an open-ended question to identify teachers’ perceived needs for educating ELLs. The third section of the survey examined teachers’ perceived preparedness to address ELLs’ (a) academic needs and (b) English-language development needs.

A large portion of the survey was devoted to identifying the practices teachers use with their ELLs to increase academic skills and knowledge as well as English language proficiency in grade-level, English classrooms. This section of the survey required a set of indicators that address both language and content-area teaching practices for ELLs. Therefore, the thirty
indicators described in the SIOP model (Echevarria & Graves, 2003; Echevarria et al., 2004; Short & Echevarria, 1999) constituted the basis for identifying the inclusion of effective teaching practices. Teachers were asked whether they perceive themselves to be prepared to use each of the sheltered instruction strategies in their instruction. They also were asked to identify which practices they consistently used in their classrooms and lessons.

Content validity was tested through a pilot study in September 2006. The survey was given to fourth- and fifth-grade teachers who were not included in the study sample. The pilot-study participants were asked to provide feedback about the clarity and quality of the survey items (Gall et al., 1996). They were also asked if the instructions were clear and if they were able to effectively and efficiently provide their responses (Jaeger, 1997). Pilot study participants were also asked the amount of time that was necessary to complete the survey (see Appendix F). Based on the feedback from the pilot study, the scale for preparedness and practices was changed from two to three levels.

In addition to the survey, two 90-minute focus groups were conducted. During the sessions, seven questions were posed to the entire group and participants were given paper and a pen to take notes and write responses. After a few moments of think-time, each participant had an opportunity to answer the question aloud. The focus group questions (see Appendix G) were developed based on the responses in the survey. The focus group interviews intended to gather in-depth information and extended responses to support the data gathered through the survey. The interviews sought to capture teachers’ perceptions of their professional experiences and understanding of educating ELLs.
Procedures

As stated previously, twenty-eight districts were asked to participate in the survey and focus groups. Of the twenty-eight districts, seven provided formal permission to ask teachers to participate. Upon district approval, there were two routes in securing the teachers’ participation in the survey: direct contact with the teachers or contact through a district liaison. Some districts provided the teachers’ names, email addresses, and the researcher sent an e-mail message, which contained the Website URL for the survey. Teachers then visited and completed the survey at their convenience if they chose to participate in the study. Other districts did not provide teachers’ names and email addresses; therefore, the district ESL coordinator or a district administrator distributed the email with the survey link to the teachers. The email with the survey information was sent from a district administrator to school administrators because many districts do not have a compiled list of ESL-certified teachers. After one week, a follow up for non-response was conducted similarly; the researcher sent a reminder email directly to teachers or to the district liaison, who re-distributed the reminder message.

To encourage and increase participation, teachers had the opportunity to enter their name in a drawing for $50.00. Upon completion of the survey, teachers were asked if they would be willing to participate in a focus group interview. Teachers who expressed interest in participating were initially contacted by phone; follow-up communication was sent via email. After finalizing teachers’ interest in participating, the focus groups were conducted in January and February 2007. Teachers that participated in the focus group received $50.00 reimbursement for their time and travel expenses. They also had the opportunity to enter their name in a drawing for an additional $100.00.
Teachers remained anonymous throughout the study. Teachers did not identify themselves at any time during the survey. Teachers received an email with the survey Website address and did not identify themselves in any way once they entered the site. Their email addresses were in no way connected to the actual survey instrument and survey data. At the end of the survey, teachers were automatically taken to a new survey link to provide contact information for a prize drawing. Participants were asked about their interest in participating in the focus group. Their contact information was not connected to their survey responses in any way. Focus group participants will remain anonymous. Names have been excluded and identifiable information has been deleted from interview transcripts.

Data Analysis

All survey responses were gathered through SurveyMonkey.com©. After the participants entered the survey Website, responded to the survey questions, and submitted the survey electronically, the data were automatically stored in the researcher’s secure survey account. The data were then exported to Excel and were coded to format the data for SPSS analysis. The data were then exported to SPSS. When possible, variables were categorized to create groups with similar sample sizes to facilitate analysis. When only two levels were available, those categories remained the same. Table 1 provides the variables, their categories and the percentage of responses for each category of the variables.
Table 1

*Levels and Percentages of Independent Variables*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>% Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Years Teaching Experience</td>
<td>0-5 Years</td>
<td>38.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6-10 Years</td>
<td>28.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11 or more years</td>
<td>32.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years ESL-certified</td>
<td>0-5 Years</td>
<td>64.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 or more years</td>
<td>35.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL Professional Development Hours</td>
<td>0-10</td>
<td>31.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11-24</td>
<td>35.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25 or more</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University ESL Courses</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>48.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 or more</td>
<td>51.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certification Route</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>67.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alternative</td>
<td>32.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>44.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>55.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Design</td>
<td>Self-contained</td>
<td>43.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Departmentalized</td>
<td>56.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% ELL students</td>
<td>0-20%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21-47%</td>
<td>32.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>48-100%</td>
<td>34.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The preparedness to meet language and academic needs each had four categories, which were coded as follows: 3 = very much, 2= much, 1= a little, and 0 = not at all. The preparedness to implement sheltered instruction strategies included 30 indicators. Respondents were asked to enter their level of preparedness using the following indicators: 0 = not at all prepared, 1 = somewhat prepared, and 2 = very much prepared, resulting in a preparedness score that ranged from 0 to 60. Thirty indicators across three levels; 0 = never, 1= sometimes, and 2 = consistently regarding practices implemented, resulted in a range of scores from 0 to 60.
I analyzed and presented quantitative findings based on the use of descriptive statistics (i.e. frequencies) as well as analysis of variance (ANOVA), multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), and a correlation analysis. The dependent variable for the ANOVA was the participants’ reported use of sheltered instruction practices. The independent variables included grade level, instructional design, percentage of ELLs, and academic and language preparedness. The dependent variables for the MANOVA included preparedness and sheltered instruction preparedness. The independent variables included years teaching experience, years ESL-certified, hours of ESL professional development, university ESL courses and certification route. The level of significance or the alpha (α) level for the ANOVA and MANOVA analyses was set at .05.

The qualitative data gathered during the focus group interview were recorded and transcribed. I then read the transcripts and grouped responses in a matrix based on similar replies. The groups created the categories for analysis. During the interpretation of the coded data, Delamont (1992, as cited in Coffey and Atkinson, 1996) “suggests that one should be looking for patterns, themes, and regularities as well as contrasts, paradoxes, and irregularities. One can then move toward generalizing and theorizing from the data” (p. 47). For the purpose of this study, the generalizations that emerged from the focus group data were used to support and extend the data obtained during the survey. The information gathered in the open-ended survey question about teacher needs was also addressed using the same methods.

As stated earlier, this study intended to answer the following questions:

1. How do ESL-certified fourth- and fifth-grade teachers perceive their preparedness to develop the academic and language skills of English-language learners in the regular (mainstream) classroom?

In the null hypotheses, the μ represents the mean, the first subscript is the categories of the independent variable, and the second subscript is the dependent variable.
a. There is no difference in teachers’ perceived preparedness based on years of teaching experience.

\[ H_0 = \mu_{11} = \mu_{12} \]
\[ \mu_{21} = \mu_{22} \]
\[ \mu_{31} = \mu_{32} \]

b. There is no difference in teachers’ perceived preparedness based on years of teaching ESL.

\[ H_0 = \mu_{11} = \mu_{12} \]
\[ \mu_{21} = \mu_{22} \]

c. There is no difference in teachers’ perceived preparedness based on hours of ESL professional development.

\[ H_0 = \mu_{11} = \mu_{12} \]
\[ \mu_{21} = \mu_{22} \]
\[ \mu_{31} = \mu_{32} \]

d. There is no difference in teachers’ perceived preparedness based on the number of completed university ESL courses.

\[ H_0 = \mu_{11} = \mu_{12} \]
\[ \mu_{21} = \mu_{22} \]

e. There is no difference in teachers’ perceived preparedness based on certification route (alternative or traditional).

\[ H_0 = \mu_{11} = \mu_{12} \]
\[ \mu_{21} = \mu_{22} \]

In order to accept or reject each of the null hypotheses for Research Question 1 and thereby answer Research Question 1, multivariate analysis of variance was required. In MANOVA, the null hypothesis states that there is no difference between the vectors of means of the dependent variables across the groups. In each case, there were two dependent variables,
which include preparedness to meet academic needs and language development needs, presented as an interval score from 0 to 3. The second dependent variable was preparation to implement sheltered instruction practices, presented as an interval score from 0 to 60. In each hypothesis, there was one independent variable with multiple categories. Hypothesis 1a. states there is no difference between the vectors of means of the dependent variables of preparedness across the independent variable categories of years of teaching experience. Hypothesis 1b is similar to 1a; however, instead of comparing groups based on the years of teaching experience, it examines the groups based on the years of teaching ESL. Hypothesis 1c states that there is no difference between vectors of means of the dependent variables of preparedness across the independent variable categories of hours of professional development. Hypothesis 1d states there is no difference between the vectors of means of the three dependent variables of preparedness across the six categories of the independent variable of university based ESL courses. Hypothesis 1e states that there is no difference between the vectors of means of the dependent variables of preparedness across the two categories of certification.

The possible range for sheltered instruction preparedness was from 0-60. One extreme outlier with a score of 9 was identified and further investigation suggested that the reported score represented an error; the respondent did not read the question and responses, misunderstood the question, and/or incorrectly entered his/her response. MANOVAs are robust to violations of the assumptions but they are sensitive to outliers and it is recommended to either transform the data or remove the outliers. Because the data are reasonably normally distributed, the extreme value of 9 was removed from the analysis, which reduced the sample size to 89 responses with a range of 29-60.

The scores for academic preparedness and language preparedness were on a scale from 0-
3. Based on the correlation listed in Table 2, academic preparedness was averaged with language preparedness to create one variable, renamed Preparedness, for the MANOVA analyses. Morgan (2004, p. 163) suggests that if the correlations between dependent variables are highly correlated, .06 or above, it is important to consider making a composite variable or eliminating a variable. The correlation between academic preparedness and language preparedness was .710, which represents a high correlation, and therefore the two variables were averaged together to avoid redundant information and to increase the degrees of freedom.

Table 2

**Correlation between Academic and Language Preparedness**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Academic Preparedness</th>
<th>Language Preparedness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic Preparedness</strong></td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language Preparedness</strong></td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.710(**)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

2. What factors influence the instructional practices of ESL-certified fourth and fifth grade teachers of English language learners?

   a. There is no difference in teachers’ instructional practices based on instructional level.

      \[ H_0 = \mu_1 = \mu_2 \]

   b. There is no difference in teachers’ instructional practices based on instructional design (self-contained and departmentalized classroom).

      \[ H_0 = \mu_1 = \mu_2 \]

   c. There is no difference in teachers’ instructional practices based on the number of ELLs in a classroom.

      \[ H_0 = \mu_1 = \mu_2 = \mu_3 \]
d. There is no difference in teachers’ instructional practices based on teachers’ perceived preparedness.

\[ H_0 = \mu_1 = \mu_2 = \mu_3 \]

\[ H_0 = \mu_1 = \mu_2 = \mu_3 \]

\[ H_0 = \text{There is no interaction between the two independent variables of preparedness.} \]

These hypotheses required an analysis of variance to test the null hypotheses. ANOVA analysis was utilized because there were two or more independent variables with only one dependent variable. The null hypotheses stated that the means of each group were equal. In each hypothesis, there was only one dependent variable, sheltered instruction practices, which was presented as an interval score. The null hypothesis for 2a states the means of the two groups of the independent variable grade are equal. The null hypothesis for 2b states the means of the two groups of the independent variable grade level design are equal. The null hypothesis for 2c states the means of the four groups of the independent variable for the number of ELLs are equal.

While question 2d still required the use of ANOVA to accept or reject the null hypotheses, it required a factorial ANOVA instead of a one-way ANOVA, due to the inclusion of two independent variables. A factorial ANOVA requires three null hypotheses. The means of the three groups of the independent variable regarding preparedness to meet ELLs’ academic needs are equal. The means of the three groups of the independent variable regarding preparedness to meet ELLs’ language needs are equal.

3. What is the relationship between ESL-certified fourth- and fifth-grade teachers’ of ELLs sheltered instruction practices and their preparedness to develop language and academic skills?

   c. There is no relationship between sheltered instruction practices and preparedness to develop ELLs’ language and academic skills.
This hypothesis required a correlation analysis. For this analysis, the language and academic preparedness scores were averaged and used to create the Preparedness variable. The correlation was conducted using the preparedness variable and the variable for reported use of sheltered instruction practices.

4. What sheltered instruction strategies do ESL-certified fourth- and fifth-grade teachers of English language learners report they are implementing in the regular classroom?

This question was answered using descriptive statistics that focused on the mean and median, for sheltered instruction practices. In addition, patterns were organized and summarized in order to describe the collected data regarding the type of practices used. This question was analyzed based on the responses to the survey question asking teachers to identify the sheltered instruction practices that they consistently implement in their instruction.

5. What resources, support, and/or professional development opportunities do ESL-certified fourth- and fifth-grade teachers believe they need to meet the academic and linguistic needs of English-language learners?

This was answered based on the results of the open-ended survey question asking teachers to identify resources, supports and professional development that they need to better meet the academic and language development needs of the ELLs in their classrooms. The data collected from this question were analyzed for patterns and themes in the teacher responses.

This study intended to identify teachers’ preparedness to work with ELL students and the sheltered instruction practices teachers use in their instruction. The research questions were answered using a self-administered, Web-based survey, given to fourth- and fifth-grade ESL-certified teachers in major suburban districts in Region X and XI in north Texas. A follow-up focus group interview was also conducted with a portion of the survey participants. The Web-
based survey generated data, which were analyzed through descriptive statistics, ANOVA, and MANOVA, and a correlation analysis with alpha levels of .05. The focus group data and an open-ended survey question were analyzed using qualitative analysis techniques.
CHAPTER 4
RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

As stated in Chapter 1, this study examined ESL-certified teachers’ perceived preparedness and practices to develop the English language proficiency and academic skills and knowledge of ELLs in fourth- and fifth-grade classrooms and to identify their perceived professional needs. This chapter is organized in terms of the five research questions posed in Chapter 1. The results of statistical analysis, the compiled focus group interview responses as well as direct quotes from teachers are presented to illustrate the findings for each of the research questions.

Research Question 1

Research Question 1 examined how ESL-certified fourth- and fifth-grade teachers perceive their preparedness to develop the academic and language skills of English language learners in the regular (mainstream) classroom. The null hypothesis for 1a stated there is no difference in teachers' perceived preparedness based on years of teaching experience. A multivariate analysis of variance was conducted to assess whether there were differences between the three groups of years teaching experience (0-5 years, 6-10 years, and 11 or more years) on a linear combination of preparedness (academic and language) and sheltered instruction preparedness. A statistically significant difference was found between the three groups of teaching experience, Wilk’s $\Lambda=.841$, $F(85,170) =3.857$, $p=.005$, $\eta^2=.083$. The eta value, .29, represents a medium effect size (Cohen, 1988).

Follow up ANOVAs indicated that both preparedness and sheltered instruction preparedness were significantly different for teachers with different numbers of years of teaching experience.
experience; Preparedness represented as $F(2,86)= 3.760, \, p= .027, \, \eta^2=.09$ and Sheltered Instruction Preparedness represented as $F(2,86)=5.326, \, p=.007, \, \eta^2=.12$, respectively. Tukey post hoc tests indicated that the group with the lowest number of years of teaching experience and the group with the highest number of years of teaching experience demonstrated a statistically significant difference on their perceptions of their preparedness ($p=.021$). Similarly, there was a statistically significant difference between the two lower groups of years of teaching experience and the most experienced teachers on SIOP preparedness.

Hypothesis 1b examined whether there was a difference in teachers' perceived preparedness based on years of ESL certification. The MANOVA showed that there was a statistically significant difference between the two groups of ESL certification on the linear combination of preparedness and sheltered instruction preparedness, Wilk’s $\Lambda=8.75, \, F(2,86)=6.135, \, p=.003, \, \eta^2=.125$. The eta, .35, represents a large effect size (Cohen, 1988). The follow up univariate ANOVAs indicated that there were statistically significant differences for preparedness and sheltered instruction practices on the number of years of ESL certification, $F(1,87)=12.136, \, p=.001, \, \eta^2=.14$ and $F(1,87)=5.950, \, p=.017, \, \eta^2=.07$ respectively. Teachers with a higher number of years with ESL certification reported higher levels of preparedness compared to teachers with low number of years with ESL certification.

Additionally, the null hypothesis for 1c stated that there is no difference in teachers' perceived preparedness based on hours of ESL professional development. The MANOVA results indicate that there was a statistically significant difference between the groups of professional development hours based on a linear combination of preparedness and sheltered instruction preparedness; Wilk's $\Lambda=.831, \, F(85,170)=4.109, \, p=.003$, multivariate $\eta^2=.09$. The eta of .30 represents a medium to large effect size (Cohen, 1988). Follow up univariate ANOVAs indicate
that the differences between preparedness and SIOP preparedness were statistically significant based on the teachers’ hours of ESL related professional development, $F(2,86)=3.765, p=.007, \eta^2=.12$ and $F(2,86)=6.411, p=.003, \eta^2=.15$ respectively. Post hoc analyses on the ANOVAs showed that there was a statistically significant difference between teachers with high numbers of ESL professional development hours and teachers with low numbers of ESL professional development hours, $p=.002$, on SIOP preparedness. Teachers in the two lower groups of ESL professional development hours reported statistically significant differences in their levels of preparedness, $p=.007$ and $p=.046$.

Hypothesis 1d intended to determine whether there was a difference in teachers' perceived preparedness based on the number of completed university ESL courses. The MANOVA results indicate that there was a significant difference between the groups of ESL courses based on a linear combination of preparedness and sheltered instruction preparedness, Wilk's $\Lambda=.8929, F(2,86)=3.299, p=.042, \eta^2=.07$. Follow-up univariate ANOVAs indicate that preparedness and SIOP preparedness were significantly different based on the teachers’ ESL courses, $F (1, 87) =3.994, p=.049, \eta^2=.05$ and $F (1, 87) =6.255, p=.014, \eta^2=.07$ respectively. Therefore, teachers with more ESL courses reported higher levels of SIOP preparedness and preparedness to meet the language and academic needs of their ELL students.

Hypothesis 1e examined whether there is a difference in teachers' perceived preparedness based on their certification route (alternative or traditional). The MANOVA results indicate that there is not a significant difference ($p>.05$) between traditionally certified and alternatively certified teachers on a linear combination of preparedness and sheltered instruction preparedness, Wilk’s $\Lambda=.987, F (2, 85) =.571, p=.567, \eta^2=.013$. The univariate ANOVAs showed that
In addition to statistical analyses, information regarding teaching preparedness was also gathered during focus group interviews. Specifically, teachers were asked three questions related to their perceived preparedness to teach ELLs in general education classrooms: 1) Why did you obtain your ESL teaching certificate, 2) What aspect of English language development is the greatest challenge for you, and 3) What academic area is the greatest challenge for you to teach? During the discussion about reasons for obtaining their ESL certificate, the participants overwhelmingly responded they were asked by school or district administrators to acquire their certificate by participating in and passing the TExES ESL exam. In fact, teachers explained that some districts have implemented a deadline for all teachers to become ESL-certified. A small number of the teachers reported that they had the opportunity to participate in district or university courses in preparing for the exam. The teachers who took a university course stated that they felt the course prepared them to pass the test and also provided them with strategies and information they could use in their teaching. Those who participated in a district course explained that they believed the course was strictly intended to provide practice and information to pass the TExES exam. In some cases, districts paid for the training course, the exam, and to have the endorsement added to their Texas teaching certificate. However, that was not true for all teachers and not all teachers received any training intended to help them pass the TExES exam.

Though district directives were the reason for pursuing the certification, a number of teachers expressed their awareness of and interest in the need for ESL certification. One teacher also indicated that she chose to pursue ESL certification during her college coursework, so that she would be more employable in California. The following quotes illustrate the major theme
that emerged from the teachers’ responses about their ESL certification. A complete transcript of
the focus group interviews is included in Appendix H.

Teacher 1: ….our district paid for the testing and paid for your certificate, and they
offered an ESL certification course and I thought, coming from a Title I school most of
our kids were ESL. But what I didn’t realize is that the course only taught you how to
pass the test. It didn’t give you any kinds of strategies on ESL and I did it because I
wanted to do the best thing for my kids. It really didn’t help me at this point.

Teacher 2: My principal at the time, he strongly wanted everyone to become certified, so
what he did was, he said ok all of you…starting with the fourth grade, all you fourth
grade teachers, I’m going to pay for you to be able to take time out.. and it was so
wonderful because we got to get out of school and go have these sessions with the
professor there and we got the course hours if we wanted to pay for the extra course
hours and basically we took the class and then he paid for that or the school paid for that
and then the district would pay for the test and then we paid for the certificate.

Teacher 3: I got my ESL certification because I see, saw the need in the classroom. I had
ESL students and I didn’t know if I was meeting their needs. So it was bothering me so
much I might as well just go and get certified in… so that because… I was worried about,
ummm were they, were they low because I wasn’t doing what I was supposed to be
doing, to do and no one seemed to know because I was the only one on the fourth grade
that had them in my classroom.

Teacher 4: When I was hired they asked me to get it the next summer. If we hire you
now, will you try to get it over the summer and so yeah, I said yeah.

Teacher 5: Well, I have several reasons….I had trouble coming from my background,
relating with the kids and I recognized it immediately and it was something I kept going
okay, that’s my problem and when I came to (district name), uhhh, the children had just
become more Hispanic and I had felt again more and more that need to improve myself
and then the district asked everyone to get it and I thought, I need this very badly, so…

The second question, related to preparedness, asked teachers to identify language
development challenges. Similar to the discussion regarding certification, teachers expressed
common responses within and across the focus group interviews when they were asked about the
language development challenges they face when working with ELLs. The majority of the
teachers expressed frustration with their ELLs’ lack of academic language, with a specific focus
on written expression. In addition to the concerns they shared about academic language, many
teachers also expressed concerns about the emphasis on Spanish within and outside of schools and its impact on students’ acquisition of English. Many teachers indicated a strong belief that an emphasis on Spanish and therefore a lack of focus on English impeded students’ English language acquisition and made English language development more difficult.

The following quotes demonstrate teachers’ struggles with their students’ English language development and Table 3 provides a comprehensive summary of the focus group responses about language development challenges.

Teacher 1: Written expression… the sounds and especially with the writing and we’re spending three hours a day on writing nowadays. And very turns out to be bery with a b. The y sound is an e on the end and not being able to write a sentence because they don’t know the language structure well enough is a real challenge…. So just the written expression.

Teacher 2: I wrote down spelling and just English conventions, irregular verbs… I guess that’s more writing since I’m fourth grade, but yea, spelling, they just come to fourth grade and the rules about i before e except after c, and just things that I feel like they’ve just lost along the way, ummm, maybe they know how to spell it in Spanish, I don’t know.

Teacher 3: I think my biggest challenge is relating academic language and the things we read about and talk about to their real world experiences, because they’re very limited experiences.… I mean, they just, they have very different experiences than the literature that we read a lot of times…. So, their language, their experiences are very different from school language.

Teacher 4: I have the same thing… lack of background and cultural knowledge. I feel like when I read orally to them, I’m more of, not a narrator of the story but an explainer of the words, and so I find that when I read I’m not only changing words for synonyms, but sometimes I’ll add on a sentence as though the author had it in there as an explanation.

Teacher 5: And then the other thing that I have trouble with sometimes is teaching the idioms, like don’t throw the baby out with the bath water….And all kinds of things that are historical and yet they have not had any experience with those. So sometimes when I am trying to explain in my simple language the idiom comes out that I have to turn around and explain in that way too.

Teacher 6: At home they speak Spanish and English and some of their parents, even if they are not classified ELL, because of the way the paperwork was filled out or whatever, their parents maybe only speak Spanish. So when they go home, even though their
Spanish isn’t very good, that’s what they hear and see and they watch, you know, Spanish television and they go to Fiesta and they, I mean that’s their culture, there’s Spanish everywhere, you know, so you know they get English for six or seven or eight hours a day and ….Yeah. I think that even if they are not considered ELL, it’s a struggle for our kids in that aspect, because all of our kids are exposed to Spanish more than English in their day to day life…most of them.

Teacher 7: I don’t want to take away their native language, but when you are trying to teach reading it’s really hard if they don’t practice it.

Teacher 8: And we really, and we understand them on the social level, they’re doing awesome, we get the academic language and we you know, where they are, and then they go home and they are speaking their native language at home so they are not practicing anything they learn. That native language is going and they come back to speak the social language and then the academic language seems to keep getting further behind.

Teacher 9: And then they go home and everything I talk about in class and then they just go home and speak Spanish and they don’t practice it.

Table 3

*Reported Language Challenges*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language Challenges</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic language</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written expression</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High frequency words</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbs (tense and irregular verbs)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sounds (<em>b</em> for <em>v</em>)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence structure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students can say it, but cannot write</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science Vocabulary</td>
<td>Complexity of terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figurative Language</td>
<td>Idioms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple-meaning words</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of background knowledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emphasis on Spanish</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native language at home and in community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not practice at home what they learn at school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of time for English language development in schools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Bilingual classrooms in lower grades (Spanish TAKS in 3rd grade) | (table continues)
Table 3 (continued).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language Challenges</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>Parents think students’ social English skills are enough to be academically successful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative instruction</td>
<td>Vocabulary development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The third question related to preparedness asked teachers what content area is the greatest challenge for them to teach their ELLs. Teachers explained that reading, writing, and science are their most challenging content areas to teach, due to the dependence on academic language. The following quotes display teachers’ explanations of the challenges they face in content-area lessons. Table 4 summarizes participant responses.

**Teacher 1:** Well, and think about this, writing is a hard concept to teach, I’m not even talking about the mechanics. It is very hard even for your regular kids, to say okay let’s teach and make sure you have a voice, and you can teach how to organize it, but when it all sits it all comes down to you’re trying to explain something to a child, he has no clue where he’s, what it’s coming from. No clue, so it’s like a foreign concept and what they’re thinking in the back of their mind is, or what I think they are thinking in the back of their head, is let me get through this language arts and get back to something I, you know.

**Teacher 2:** I would say writing… verbs, syntax, write with voice… some of my ELLs are pretty decent writers by now to this point because they’re following the formula, they’re just formula writers…they’ll pass, hopefully, the test but they have no voice or creativity, they’re just trying to get it down on paper. If they can say it out loud…beautiful, but writing…

**Teacher 3:** I think that too. As a fourth grade teacher we’re under the pressure of TAKS and it’s easiest when I get them brand new because they don’t have to take it and it’s the ones that have been here awhile, they just need time and you know with any writer, time to develop and grow and mature, just like any English speaker, and so it’s just more time to set there and teach. And do…I see that the verbs aren’t correct, spelling problem and set there and conference and conference and conference and that’s the hardest thing because you say, “Ohhh be descriptive, ohhh, use figurative language,” well they don’t have that basis as I was talking about….

**Teacher 4:** The kids in our grade level, because there are so many of them that are ELL are much lower and they are going to take the TAKS test. We spend three hours a day on writing and one hour a day on math. And that’s our day. We haven’t taught science since Christmas, social studies since Christmas, reading since Christmas.
Teacher 5: I think reading is the hardest, as an upper level, well I don’t have the patience to sound out words and to teach reading, and that’s why I like teaching the older kids because you learn through reading and I think it is hard to do the abstract higher level thinking skills. I think it’s harder anyway, but especially kids with limited vocabulary because they can’t even understand the basic meaning of a sentence much less analyze …

Teacher 6: The reading itself has no relevancy. If you are learning science, it happens because this happens here and this happens here. If you are teaching history it’s because these things happened a long time ago and how you tie it into… well reading is a story, blah, blah, blah… it’s very hard.

Teacher 7: For me it’s science, just because of the dependence on academic language, … and now that the push is for everyone to pretty much take it in English, umm, it’s very much a challenge, especially for those words that don’t really translate better, that one’s Germanic and not Latin enough.

Teacher 8: Science is harder for me because that vocabulary is really, I mean these words are really hard, the ones we are trying to teach them, and it’s so many of them. I mean we’re talking so many and I guess in fifth grade they just throw it all at you at the same time, and you’re kinda, what should I focus on? You know, they’re good with animals and biology and all that so I’m going to go with landforms, but then they’re struggling with that, so you want to do it well, but it is so much. You’re …and so I just stick with the ones in fifth grade, landforms and ecosystems and I don’t go back to kinder, first and third to review all that vocabulary.

Table 4

Reported Academic Challenges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Descriptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Different rules for L1 and L2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Syntax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writing with voice, description, and/or creativity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dependence on strong listening skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writing about academic topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TAKS pressure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students’ limited vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Homonyms and multiple meaning words</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(table continues)
Table 4 (continued).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Descriptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Background knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of relevance- not about a concept but telling a story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Passage length</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of fluency and sight words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unable to understand basic meaning of a sentence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unable to implement higher level thinking skills:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• making inferences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• drawing conclusions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• analyzing the text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• finding the gist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAKS pressure</td>
<td>Using punctuation to have time to understand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Complexity of terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Numerous concepts in upper grades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Review lower grade material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introduce new concepts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Question 2

The second research question asked what factors influence the instructional practices of ESL-certified teachers of English language learners. The null hypothesis for 2a states that there is no difference in teachers’ instructional practices based on teachers' instructional levels (fourth or fifth grade). The difference between fourth- and fifth-grade teachers’ reported use of sheltered instruction practices was not significant based on an ANOVA, $F(1,86)= .025$, $p= .876$, $\eta^2<.001$. The mean sheltered practices for fourth grade teachers was 52.54 ($SD=7.91$) and 52.30 ($SD=6.522$) for fifth grade teachers.
Similarly, Hypothesis 2b explored the possible difference in teachers' instructional practices based on type of instructional design (self-contained and departmentalized classrooms). The difference between self-contained and departmentalized teachers’ reported use of sheltered instruction practices was not statistically significant, $F (1, 88) = .273, p = .603, \eta^2 = .003$. The mean sheltered instruction practices for teachers in self-contained classrooms was 52.89 ($SD = 6.889$) and the mean was 52.10 ($SD = 7.267$) for departmentalized classroom teachers.

In order to accept or reject the null hypothesis stating that there is no difference in teachers' instructional practices based on the percentage of ELL student, an ANOVA was used. The analysis revealed a statistically significant difference between teachers’ reported use of sheltered instruction practiced based on the percentage of English-language learner students for each teacher, $F(2,87)=6.305, p=.003, \eta^2=.14$. The eta of .38, according to Cohen (1988), represents a large effect in most instances. The mean sheltered practices for teachers with 0-20% ELLs is 49.24 ($SD=9.319$), the mean for teachers with 21-47% ELLs is 52.70 ($SD=5.359$) and teachers with more than 47% ELLs have a mean of 55.31 ($SD=4.362$).

Because the independent variable in the ANOVA analysis (i.e. percentage of ELL students) had more than two levels, it was not clear which difference was statistically significant. The Tukey post-hoc test was used to determine which group or groups were statistically significant in their reported use of sheltered instruction practices. The Tukey post-hoc test indicated that there was a statistically significant difference ($p=.002$) between the smallest and largest groups of ELLs, with the high percentage of ELL classes scoring higher on reported SIOP practices than the group with the smallest amount of ELL students. No significant difference was found between the high and medium percentage ELL groups or when comparing the medium and small ELL percentage groups.
Hypothesis 2d states that there is no difference in teachers' instructional practices based on teachers' perceived preparedness. Table 4 shows the means and standard deviations for SIOP practices for the three levels of academic preparedness and three levels of language preparedness. There was not a significant interaction between language and academic preparedness on reported use of sheltered instruction practices ($p=.469$). In addition, there was not a significant main effect for language or academic preparedness on sheltered practices, $F (1, 84) = .528, p=.469, \eta^2=.006$. Based on the analysis, there is no difference in teachers’ instructional practices based on their preparedness.

Table 5

*Dependent Variable: Total SIOP Practices*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Preparedness</th>
<th>Language Preparedness</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>$n$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>46.00</td>
<td>9.423</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4814</td>
<td>7.626</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50.88</td>
<td>8.030</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>52.33</td>
<td>3.882</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>52.47</td>
<td>5.646</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>56.58</td>
<td>3.810</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the analyses mentioned previously, during the focus group interviews, teachers were asked how they determine the practices they use to meet the language and academic needs of their ELLs. The common responses that emerged from the discussion included student observation and guided reading groups. Table 6 offers a complete description of the responses.

*Teacher 1:* This is not professional, but, I have to tell you, it’s a gut instinct….but if I had tried one of these strategies and it’s not working, I go to my bag of tricks, if I try, then I go to my bag of tricks…
*Teacher 2:* I call it kid watching. In other words seeing what’s worked with the kid before and what hasn’t worked, and it’s basically just like any other type of learner that I have the regular children.

*Teacher 3:* I know I cannot do it by the paper and pencil assessment, but one thing I do with my students is when I talk to them, I look into their face and their eyes and you can tell if they’re getting it or if they are puzzled about something. And then I hone in on that one and ask them questions about it….what don’t they understand and they know that, I tell them all the time I’ll stay with you until the cows come home, but I want you to understand what we’re talking about. And then you can see the light bulb go off whenever it comes through and whatever it takes to make them understand, I will stop and help them.

*Teacher 4:* Uhh, most of us do by teacher observation and that comes with years of practice and experience and we do base it on the child or the group of children because we know each year the class makeup and personality changes as well as what you can and can’t do with them. And also I think most of us read the TEKS on the one hand and look at our children and say okay, we’ve got to get these together….what exactly tricks in my bag do I know that can get these two together and stick.

*Teacher 5:* They want to be with the group, so that’s important I think, reading groups, without the reading groups I don’t think I would be able to assess them because like she said, we do tests every week, the TAKS series and the TMBS and there are …..and by the time you get the information because (school assessment system) is kinda slow sometimes, the results are not fast enough—perhaps not accurate.

*Teacher 6:* My school, at least, does a lot of guided reading, so when I have my ELLs in my, in at least two of my groups, do different strategies to make sure they are understanding summary and things like that, and sometimes I just fly by the seat of my pants.

Table 6

*Reported Ways to Determine ELLs’ Needs*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Determining student needs</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questioning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience or Practice</td>
<td>Knowing potential challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trial and Error</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gut Instinct</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching their reactions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(table continues)*
Table 6 (continued).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Determining student needs</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guided reading groups</td>
<td>Discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skills instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Focused interaction with students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal assessments</td>
<td>Benchmarks and weekly assessments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TEKS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TELPAS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Offers a good starting point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Better because teachers complete them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase students’ comfort level</td>
<td>Build a rapport with students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students say what they need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portfolios</td>
<td>Show growth and areas of need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Builds confidence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Question 3

The third research question explored the relationship between ESL-certified fourth- and fifth-grade teachers’ preparedness to develop academic and language skills and their sheltered instruction practices. The null hypothesis stated that there is no relationship between preparedness to develop academic and language skills and sheltered instruction practices. To investigate if there was a statistically significant association between preparedness and practices, a correlation was computed and a positive correlation was found. The Pearson $r$ was calculated $r_p=.48, p=.000$. The direction of the correlation was positive, which means that teachers who have higher levels of perceived preparedness tend to report more consistent use of sheltered instruction practices. Using Cohen’s (1988) guidelines, the effect size is large. The $r$ squared indicates that approximately 23% of the variance of sheltered instruction practices can be explained by preparedness.
Research Question 4

Research Question 4 sought to examine what sheltered instruction strategies ESL-certified fourth- and fifth-grade teachers of English-language learners report they are implementing in the regular classroom to develop language and academic skills. In response to this question, focus group participants offered a variety of answers. The responses were grouped based on supplementary materials, instructional strategies, their approaches to teaching, or the extensions to the lessons. Supplementary materials refers to the tools teachers use during lessons to present content and make it more comprehensible. Instructional strategies are the practices teachers implement during lessons to help students understand content. Approaches to teaching represent the types of lessons teachers plan. Extensions refers to the ways teachers address needs beyond the lesson. Table 7 provides a comprehensive summary of participant responses.

Teacher 1: I teach fourth grade and I have found that with my class this year, that I have to have a lot of hands on, and I do all this (hand motions) when I am talking. The thing that has helped me the most spelling words. I go through each individual word, I give them a sentence for it. They know they can ask me if they don’t understand. One time we had cucumber and they did not know, because I have a child from Pakistan I have one from Korea, and one of mine is from El Salvador and the others are Hispanic. So, I brought the newspaper and the Spanish, the Mexican grocery and then when she did that and I brought a cucumber, she knew what it was. They are so comfortable in my classroom that if they want me to explain something, they don’t mind putting their hand up and if I can’t tell them, the other students will try to help me. And then I’ll just bring something in to explain it to them. Because I told them, no question is a dumb question. And they have been picking it up so much better.

Teacher 2: And then we do a lot of vocabulary flip charts. You know, the word and draw a picture of it, real life definition, and things like that so they can kinda have a concrete model.

Teacher 3: I agree that probably three quarters of my class is ELLs, some are ESL, some are bilingual, I have gifted, I have special ed, I have everything in my class, so I treat my whole class as an ESL basically just speaking slower but I agree it’s the vocabulary… the vocabulary and just constant… and when they are in my classroom they speak at least enough English to be able to understand. I agree… pictures, graphic organizers, visual cues, things like that.
Teacher 4: We, with math and science we have word walls and a lot of it, you know where one, we teach the concept like translation or you know rotation and all that, then we also have little pictures of things that go along with it, so that’s a good, you know. Sometimes we review (made the motion of flipping flashcards), we have just a quick, just to make sure they don’t lose the words, we’ll have the vocabulary review.

Teacher 5: So I take like a second grade math problem and instead of putting second grade numbers there, I put fifth grade numbers…. That’s what I’ve had to do to help them because so many of them don’t have that language base even for appropriate grade level instruction if they could have that… so that’s what I do.

Teacher 6: So, we do a lot of acting out, we do a lot of synonyms, I like to do… before, we take the words and we’re looking at the name of a person or place or thing, do we see word parts, we do the word chunks, root words, just a combination, whatever word there is, ok how can I hook them. Is it better to have a root word lesson? Or is it better to have one on proper nouns and common nouns, just…

However, one teacher explained what she does not do.

Teacher 7: I feel bad though because I don’t really, my kids are really like sink or swim group, I don’t have time to do all that, especially with ranges from special ed. to gifted, if you spend a lot of time doing flash cards, my gifted kids are like I’m bored to death, and none of them are pull out, no one pulls them out, and so I don’t pre-teach the vocabulary, when I’m talking about the lesson, we take notes on it and I’ll make sure that I mention and that’s about the only pre-teaching they have, so mine is more like a sink or swim situation

Table 7

Reported Practices to Develop Language Skills in Content Area Lessons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Specifics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use of supplementary</td>
<td>Pictures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>materials</td>
<td>Visual clues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Videos/ Multimedia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Concrete models, realia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graphic organizers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Word walls</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Online translation dictionaries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Modified materials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(table continues)*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Specifics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Acting out words and ideas</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Access prior knowledge</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Read aloud</strong></td>
<td>Stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Math problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Teach vocabulary</strong></td>
<td>Pre and post teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Review terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Strategies</td>
<td><strong>Make connections between words</strong></td>
<td>Cognates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Root words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Word Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Language use</strong></td>
<td>Simpler language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Slower speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Spanish Translations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Wait time</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Allow students to ask questions</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Build students’ confidence</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extensions</td>
<td><strong>Tutoring</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Mini lessons</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Lower level instruction</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approaches to Planning</td>
<td><strong>Integrated lessons</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Interactive lessons</strong></td>
<td>Role-playing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hands-on experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Group work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>New experiences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally, survey respondents also provided information about their usage of sheltered instruction practices. Based on the 30 indicators of the sheltered instruction observation protocol (SIOP), the survey participants reported whether they consistently, sometimes, or never use the teaching practices. The most consistently used practices included emphasizing key vocabulary, delivering lessons that support content objectives, using techniques to clarify content concepts,
clearly explaining academic tasks and providing opportunities for students to use self-monitoring strategies. The least consistently used strategies included providing hands-on materials or manipulatives, using scaffolding techniques, adapting content to all proficiency levels, clearly defining language objectives and providing opportunities to clarify key concepts in their native language. Table 8 provides the number of respondents for each degree of use for the 30 instructional practices.

Table 8

Reported Use of Sheltered Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practices</th>
<th>Consistently</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1  Clearly define content objectives</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  Clearly define language objectives</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  Choose content concepts appropriate for age and educational background level of students</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4  Identify supplementary materials to make the lesson clear and meaningful</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5  Adapt content to all language proficiency levels</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6  Plan meaningful activities that integrate lesson concepts with language practice opportunities for reading, writing, listening and/or speaking</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7  Link concepts to students' life experiences</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8  Link past learning and new concepts</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9  Emphasize key vocabulary</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Appropriate speech for ELLs' proficiency level</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Clearly explain academic tasks</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Use techniques to clarify content concepts</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Opportunities for students to use strategies (e.g. problem solving, predicting, organizing)</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Use scaffolding techniques throughout lesson</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Use a variety of question types</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Provide opportunities for interaction about lesson concepts with elaborated responses</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Use grouping configurations that support language and content objectives</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(table continues)*
Table 8 (continued).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practices</th>
<th>Consistently</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18 Consistently provide sufficient wait time for student responses</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Provide opportunities for students to clarify key concepts in their first language</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Provide hands-on materials and/or manipulatives</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Provide activities for students to apply content and language knowledge</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Use activities that integrate all language skills</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Deliver lessons that support content objectives</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Deliver lessons that support language objectives</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Students engaged in 90-100% of the lesson</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Pace the lesson appropriately for students' ability level</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Provide comprehensive review of key vocabulary</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 Provide comprehensive review of key content concepts</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Regularly provide feedback to students on their output (language, content, work)</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Conduct formal and informal assessment of student progress toward attaining content and language objectives</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Question 5

Research Question 5 explored what resources, support and/or professional development opportunities ESL-certified fourth- and fifth-grade teachers believe they need to meet the academic and language needs of English-language learners. Teachers were asked to identify their needs in an open-ended survey question. During the focus-group interviews, teachers were also asked to discuss what they have received that has been helpful or effective and what they still need to meet the language and academic needs of their ELLs. Teachers articulated what has been helpful for them as mainstream teachers with English-language learners. The responses from the
teachers in the survey and focus groups were organized into categories based on training, materials to support content concepts, support staff, and administrative support. Teachers identified training that addressed practical classroom strategies as the most helpful. They also identified support staff who are able to work with teachers and students. Teachers described administrators who create welcoming campus atmospheres with high expectations as valuable for their work with ELLs. They also explained that materials and programs that help them present and support core content concepts were beneficial. The following quotes represent teachers’ responses to what has been helpful. Table 9 offers the comprehensive responses from teachers.

Teacher 1: My district, they provided SIOP training and it wasn’t just come and let us read what the service center has sent us. It was really good—led by teachers, who have been there, I think they are more consultants with the district, but anyway, they, there was an expert from the elementary and high school and we came in and we had days that we had subs. It wasn’t like on Saturdays or after school, we came and it was a make and take, of course I credit a lot of it because it was teachers. When you have teachers give, in the classroom, workshops, it was awesome. That was good. I would say our district has given us hands-on workshops, make and take, reviewing new strategies by real teachers, this fall we had them and it was great.

Teacher 2: I think one of the biggest things that has helped me is the (ESL) training, because, while I know these techniques, I don’t have them completely memorized yet. This has so many lists and ideas, I don’t have to keep coming up with all of the things that uhh my own ideas… I already know what’s going on and can look at the list and pick out the things that work.

Teacher 3: The bilingual teacher is a wonderful resource to go to and say I have tried everything I know and I’m still not reaching this kid. He started out on a first-grade level, we’re now to a second grade level, you know he’s reading orally… wonderful lady to go to and sometimes just having the person to speak their language, oh, it’s wonderful.

Teacher 4: We have an ESL teacher on our campus that sees the ones who are in greatest need, but she makes contact with us, “What can I do to help you?” So that is, but I’m seeing that across the district, because of money, next year two campuses… money is a scary thing out there that they worry about.

Teacher 5: Our district, at least our school, has reading specialists where my lowest readers and often my ELLs umm go there for an extra hour longer of reading on top of
the reading they get with me. And that is I know lots of districts and schools that don’t …you’re kids come to your classroom and then you’re done, they’re yours, good luck. But umm, at our school, everyone is willing to help and it is a culture of everyone is in it together. I think that comes down from the district or at least from our school. A culture of success, expectations, and ummm, everyone is expected to do their job and the administrators facilitate that and expect that.

Teacher 6: I’ll also say this, we have …this is something that is real important that we do in our school, is we have a ELL meeting at the beginning of school with parents and it is the principal will speak but there’s actually a parent that comes and speaks ….There were the parents that were here legally and the ones that were here illegally. But, those parents came to support the kids. Many of them did not speak English, the faculty was there, we had chips and dips and snacks. Ummm, we usually do it right after school starts. And I think that is a big push. If kids’ parents feel comfortable that we are here for your kids, and now that we have a bilingual person, who can actually communicate in the ARDs with them, a novice idea, a novel idea, can really help us understand what is being said parents nodding, you know. Ummm, I feel like there is a higher expectation.

Teacher 7: Along the same lines, the district that I came from that was a Title 1, we worked, they worked so long to bring in the parents and not only would we have the ESL night, in school every month, and those parents would come and have lunch or supper and we would have a talk where we would come in and we knew those parents and maybe we would not be able to communicate, we would have a translator and they would bring their children and we would have someone watch them so those parents felt very, very, very comfortable at the schools and it was because the administrators and we had to accommodate those, not had to because you want to feel comfortable where your kid goes to school, especially being in a brand-new country.

Teacher 8: I’ve got a lot of stuff. Our curriculum is online and there are a lot of resources with that and also ESL strategies that are on there that are helpful. I love Avenues, there’s so many things that we do with that that are curriculum-based and content-based. My students each have a video IPOD with microphones and that has just been an awesome tool for them.

Teacher 9: I was also going to say the hands-on materials that the district provides for math and science is good. A lot of districts don’t have that, the manipulative kits, I don’t, they’re good… there hasn’t been a lot of solid training on using those with the curriculum, at least math.

Teacher 10: I don’t teach ESL as a certain subject during the day but I’ve used Avenues stories that go along with the science curriculum. They have songs in there that the kids enjoy and they use.
Table 9

*Helpful Resources Teachers Have Received*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Resources</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Specifics</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Professional Development</strong></td>
<td>Types of Training</td>
<td>ESL</td>
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<td>Gifted and Talented</td>
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<td>F &amp; P Guided Reading</td>
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<td>R. W. Writing Academy</td>
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<td>Cheryl Cox Training</td>
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<td>Strengths of Training</td>
<td>Teacher presenters</td>
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<td>Hands-on training</td>
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<td>Practical strategies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Time to practice</td>
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<td>Modeling</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Online Curriculum</strong></td>
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<td>IPODs</td>
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<td>A/V equipment</td>
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<td><strong>Technology</strong></td>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>Computer programs:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• BrainPop</td>
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<td>• A to Z Reading</td>
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<td>• Ellis</td>
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<td>• Online dictionaries</td>
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<td>• P. A. Series</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Resources</strong></td>
<td>Programs</td>
<td>Avenues:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Picture Cards</td>
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<td>• Student Anthology</td>
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<td>• EAYC</td>
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<td>Reading Together</td>
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<td>SOAR to Success</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>Math manipulatives</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Science kits</td>
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<td>TAKS Booklets</td>
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<td>Thinking Maps</td>
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<td><strong>Support</strong></td>
<td>Support Staff</td>
<td>Extra help in the classroom</td>
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<td>Bilingual teacher on campus</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Pull out tutors</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>ESL lead teacher on campus</td>
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*(table continues)*
Table 9 (continued).

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Resources</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Specifics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Support (cont.)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Translation services</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Parent support and cooperation</strong></td>
<td><strong>High expectations</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Administration</strong></td>
<td><strong>Positive leadership</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Culture of success</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Teamwork/campus support</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Welcoming atmosphere</strong></td>
<td><strong>ESL parent meetings</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Cultural ambassadors</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Parents feel comfortable</strong></td>
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</table>

Teachers were also asked to identify what they think they still need to better meet the language and academic needs of their ELLs. The open-ended survey and focus-group questions provided a great deal of information about what teachers believe they need. Similar to what they reported that they have, teachers explained that they want training that offers practical strategies for the classroom and also training that moves beyond beginning proficiency students and addresses issues and strategies for intermediate proficiency students. They also reported needing additional materials that support content concepts and that help to develop the varied proficiency levels of their students. Teachers also identified collaboration and observations of ESL teachers as an important need. Additionally, teachers expressed a need for support staff that can tutor or offer extra instruction for struggling students. The following quotes illustrate the teachers’ perspectives about their needs and Table 10 provides a compiled list of the participant responses from both the survey question and the focus group question about perceived needs.

*Teacher 1:* I’m always looking for a fun, hands-on way that I can teach vocabulary. Or you know fun, hands-on way that I can teach writing. I like it when teachers share, teachers who are really in the classroom.
Teacher 2: Strategies. They say they need a lot of scaffolding. Well, what does that mean? Show me how to scaffold.

Teacher 3: Strategies for INTERMEDIATE ESL students in upper elementary. Please no more “getting to know you” activities or flip books!

Teacher 4: Must have more content materials provided on ELLs’ level to use to aid their understanding of daily lessons- there is never enough time to make visuals.

Teacher 5: OK, what I would like is the vocabulary lists from the district. I hate going in and looking at stuff and choose this word or this word if you’re really that concerned about it, you come up with the list and that will make it much easier. Because this is time-consuming, and it’s easy in science and it’s easy with, you know, some of these other things, but in reading, in Tier 2, what do they need to know?

Teacher 6: I think just the opportunity to see more teachers, really good ESL teachers in action.

Teacher 7: Contact with other ESL teachers—to share ideas and strategies

Teacher 8: Probably what would be the most helpful for me, because I don’t speak Spanish in any way, and knowing what kind of things are I had no idea that the Spanish speakers thought that V was B, and the first time I was doing it, I was like, what is the deal here. Those kinds of things, someone to come and explain and work with me on those and analyze some of my kids’ writing and sit with me in a guided reading group and explain to me why they are not getting that. Because we do guided reading for example, I have no idea what vocabulary words my kids might not, won’t know.

Table 10

Teachers' Reported Resource Needs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Specifics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>Types of Training</td>
<td>Teacher led</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td></td>
<td>Hands-on</td>
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<td>Practical strategies</td>
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<td>Modeling</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Opportunities to practice</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Training Topics</td>
<td>Current information</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spanish for teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher choice for needs</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ESL Requirements and Laws</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(table continues)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Specifics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Professional Development (cont.) | Training Topics (cont.) | Developing vocabulary  
Differentiating Instruction  
ESL:  
• Writing  
• Intermediate ESL  
• Comprehension  
• Problem solving  
• Higher-level skills |
| Resources | Curriculum for ELLs | IPODs  
Film  
PowerPoint presentations  
Computers  
Websites |
| | Current professional literature |  |
| | New math book |  |
| | Comprehensive vocabulary list |  |
| | Money for materials |  |
| Resources | Materials | Flashcards  
Materials to support content  
Visual aids  
Games  
Manipulatives  
Dictionaries  
Bilingual materials  
Center activities |
| | Reading | Leveled Readers  
Library Books (matching interest and reading level for 4/5th grade ELL students)  
Phonics curriculum |
| Support | Support Staff | Bilingual teacher  
Pull-out, small group tutoring |

*(table continues)*
Table 10 (continued).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Specifics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td></td>
<td>Network with ESL teachers</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Observe ESL teachers</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ESL assistance and guidance</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Administrator guidance</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Parent support</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td></td>
<td>Planning</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Small group instruction</td>
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<tr>
<td>ELLs and Special Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stop pulling ELLs out of the classroom</td>
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<tr>
<td>No needs</td>
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In conclusion, the survey and focus groups implemented during this study yielded many results. Teachers reported differences in their perceived preparedness based on years of teaching experience, years of ESL certification, hours of ESL professional development and university ESL courses; however, there were no differences in preparedness based on certification route. Teachers identified academic language for reading, writing, and science, and a lack of exposure to English as challenges they face in addressing the language and academic development of their ELL students. The results also indicated that the percentage of ELLs in a classroom influenced the practices teachers implement, but grade level, instructional design, and perceived preparedness did not. Teachers reported that they use observation, guided reading groups and formal and informal assessments to determine the practices to use with their ELL students. A correlation analysis found that there is a positive correlation between preparedness and practices. Teachers who reported higher levels of preparedness to meet the language and academic needs of their ELLs also reported more consistent implementation of sheltered instruction practices. In the
survey and focus groups, the vast majority of teachers identified two strategies - specifically addressing vocabulary and using techniques to make the content concepts clear (e.g. visuals, gestures, and body language); however, the results also show that teachers do not consistently identify language objectives or adapt content to all student proficiency levels. While teachers often stated that they had helpful training and resources, they also stated that they want training based on current topics and with practical suggestions for classroom instruction. Teachers also reported they would like to have more support for networking with other teachers, to have more support staff to help with small-group instruction and/or tutoring and supplementary materials to support teaching content concepts.
CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION

The final chapter of this dissertation restates the statement of the problem of the study and offers the researcher’s interpretation of the findings, connections to previous research and suggestions for further research. As noted in the first chapter, certified English as a second language (ESL) teachers in the state of Texas vary in their preparedness to and implementation of practices that develop English language proficiency and academic skills in the mainstream classroom. Increasing numbers of mainstream teachers who obtained their ESL certification by exam only are faced with increasing numbers of English language learners (ELLs) in their classrooms. Decreasing standards for teacher ESL certification and increasing accountability for ELLs has made teachers’ role in effectively increasing the language and academic skills of ELLs an area of concern.

In order to address this topic of growing concern, a survey and focus-group interviews were conducted with fourth- and fifth-grade ESL-certified teachers to determine how they perceive their preparedness and practices to help ELLs develop English-language and academic skills. In addition, the study asked teachers to identify what resources, support, and professional development they need to better address language and content in the mainstream classroom.

Interpretation of the Findings

One significant finding from the results of this study relates to teachers’ challenges in and practices for developing academic language in mainstream classrooms. Teachers report that they are less prepared to meet the language needs of their students than they are to meet the academic or content-area needs of their students. As stated in the previous chapter, teachers identified
developing academic language in writing, reading, and science as the greatest challenge for increasing the language and academic skills of ELLs. Teachers explained that the complexity of writing, including voice, syntax, and vocabulary, is difficult for their students to grasp and therefore difficult for them to teach. Similarly, reading poses the same challenges. Teachers discussed the fact that students do not have sufficient vocabulary or understanding of language structures to understand the content area texts they are expected to read and analyze in the upper elementary grades. As one teacher explained, “I feel like when I read orally to them, I’m more of, not a narrator of the story, but an explainer of the words, and so I find that when I read I’m not only changing words for synonyms, but sometimes I’ll add on a sentence as though the author had it in there as an explanation.” In addition to the academic language for reading and writing, teachers reported that science vocabulary, specifically the complexity and number of important terms, is another challenge.

Interestingly, though teachers cite academic language as the barrier to content-area success, they do not report using many practices to address language in their lessons. Based on the results of the survey and their reported practices, teachers use practices to make content more accessible or comprehensible to their ELLs, but they use few practices to address academic language development. In the survey and focus groups, teachers reported consistently addressing key vocabulary. Teachers also discussed making connections between words (synonyms, antonyms, cognates, and so forth) in their lessons. Yet defining language objectives for their lessons was one of the least consistently used practices for teachers. Similarly, planning meaningful activities that integrate content concepts with language-practice opportunities for reading, writing, listening and speaking was among the least consistently used practices. Short and Echevarria (2005) explain, “Implementing several of these (sheltered) strategies is not
sufficient to ensure ELLs academic success. Without systematic language development, many (students) never gain the academic literacy skills needed to succeed in mainstream classes, to meet content standards, and to pass standardized assessments” (p.10). Bielenberg and Wong-Fillmore (2005) also explain that “children do not learn this kind of language on their own or through immersion in an English speaking environment. Mastering the academic English – and thus surviving high-stakes tests- requires instructional activities that promote language development in the context of learning intellectually challenging content” (p.47).

Based on the responses in the survey and focus group interviews, teachers are apparently making a concerted effort to help their students understand the content-area concepts in lessons. Both the practices identified in the survey and those discussed in the interviews demonstrate an understanding of and attempt to develop their students’ academic skills by making the content more comprehensible for ELLs. However, beyond teaching vocabulary, teachers employed few practices for specifically addressing academic language. As explained in the second chapter of this study, academic language consists not only of the vocabulary of the language, but “the phonology, grammar, vocabulary, semantics, pragmatics and discourse (formal thought patterns) of English across all four language skills- listening, speaking, reading and writing” (Collier, 1995, p. 9) as well.

The focus on academic language and second-language acquisition becomes even more relevant for teachers of ELLs when teachers say they need more information in order to be able to distinguish the difference between second language acquisition stages and language errors and a special education issue. As one teacher explained, “I need to have some assistance in being able to more quickly discern which students have just a language difficulties and when there is a resource issue involved.”
Similarly, increased understanding of second-language acquisition and the role of the first language in the development of the second language is imperative. The teachers in the focus group interviews identified their students’ exposure to Spanish and the lack of focus on English as one of the challenges in developing English language skills. Reasoned one teacher, “I don’t want to take away their native language, but when you are trying to teach reading, it’s really hard if they don’t practice it.”

Karabenick and Noda (2004) reported that teachers “expressed ambivalence with respect to the effect of L1 usage in the home on the speed and efficiency with which ELL learners acquired a L2.” These researchers determined that “this ambivalence signaled a need to offer professional development sessions that incorporated second-language acquisition theory complete with techniques to build bridges between the home (L1) and second or majority language (L2)” (p. 62). Teacher responses in this study confirm findings from Karabenick and Noda, that teachers, in general, do not possess a solid theoretical foundation regarding the role of the first language in second language acquisition. The comments below from one study participant highlight the complexities of the problem:

I would love to see more of an awareness from the K-3 teachers of where the kids need to be at the time they hit fourth and fifth grade. I think everybody at my school wants to help, but I cringe when I walk down the hallways, the K-2 hallways and they’re just speaking Spanish. I cringe, because I just don’t think in the long run that is where they need to be helping and I think those same helpful people, if they knew, they would be doing more English.

Understanding the role of second-language acquisition and academic language in academic success as well as a lack of teachers’ attention on developing English language skills and competency, offers a clear direction for universities, school districts and schools: teachers must be trained on and understand the importance of addressing and developing ELLs’ academic language skills. In order to provide ELLs with an effective education, teachers must have a clear
understanding of second language acquisition, including the developmental stages and common errors among second-language learners.

Another significant finding relates to the correlation between teachers’ preparedness to meet their ELL students academic and language needs and the sheltered instruction practices they report that they use consistently. As was stated in the previous chapter, there is a positive relationship between teachers’ reported preparedness and their practices, suggesting that the more prepared teachers are, the more consistently they use sheltered practices. This result is also supported by Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly and Driscoll (2005), who found that more prepared teachers had greater confidence in their ability to meet the needs of ELLs. A logical policy implication of this finding is that more prepared teachers should be chosen for the ESL positions.

The statistically significant differences between teachers’ reported use of sheltered instruction practices based on the percentage of English language learner students were similar to Boyd’s (2005). Such a result suggests a policy that ELL students needs would be better addressed if ELLs were clustered together with the most prepared teacher, rather than splitting them up between many teachers with varying degrees of preparedness.

In addition, the results of this study show that teachers reported differences in their perceived preparedness based on years of teaching experience, years of ESL certification, hours of ESL professional development and university ESL courses. Therefore, in order to place ELLs with the most prepared teachers, districts should develop class assignment policies based on those criteria. Considering the lack of qualified ESL teachers and the growing numbers of ELLs, districts and universities should immediately address the need through in-service professional development and pre-service university courses.
Because teachers reported less preparedness for the addressing of English-language development and challenges with academic language, universities must begin infusing pre-service methods courses with an understanding of strategies for the development of academic and language skills specific to each content area: language arts, science, math, and social studies. Mainstream teachers are increasingly held accountable for meeting the needs of diverse populations and therefore college education courses should prepare all teachers to meet the same challenges by incorporating second-language theory and practice into the methods courses. Educating ELLs cannot be thought of as a specialty within the field of education; it simply is the state of education.

Similarly, school districts should also address ELLs in their content area professional development. While increasing in-service training is both costly and time consuming, integrating the education of ELLs into professional development sessions offers a viable solution. If teachers are responsible for efficiently meeting all the needs of ELLs, districts cannot treat their education as a separate experience, but must treat it as an integrated experience. This philosophy suggests that professional development experiences for language arts, math, science and social studies, should not only address the general education student, but the diverse learners within the general education classroom.

Teachers in this study repeatedly expressed a need for training that is based on practical strategies training, that models appropriate instruction and addresses intermediate and not just beginning English proficient students. One survey respondent explained that “The ESL seminars often are theory-based and do not apply to the real classroom environment.” Therefore, universities, service centers, districts, and/ or schools should develop practical and interactive
training sessions that address ESL methodology, second-language acquisition and how to instill and develop language objectives and skills in content-area lessons.

Suggestions for Future Research

The results of this study suggest the following research questions merit investigation.

1. How do districts decide where to place ESL students?

2. What topics have been addressed in teachers’ ESL professional development and which were the most beneficial?

3. What are teachers doing in mainstream classrooms to meet the language and academic needs of ELLs?

4. How are universities and alternative certification programs preparing generalist certification pre-service teachers to teach ELLs in mainstream settings?

5. What level of understanding do university methods instructors have regarding second language acquisition and ways to develop language and content skills in mainstream settings?

Future research should aim to determine who is teaching ELLs by identifying how the students are placed in classrooms; that is, are they dispersed among the grade-level classrooms, clustered in small groups or placed in self-contained ESL classrooms. Examining the training and preparation of the teachers by not only asking how many professional development hours and university courses have been taken, but also finding out the content of the training and teachers’ perceived benefits from the training is also important.

Because the survey used in this study was self-administered, there are limitations to the specificity of the responses about teacher practices. Therefore, the next stage of this research should include observations of and interviews with teachers. Classroom observation focused on determining what teachers are actually doing to meet the academic and language needs of ELLs would be beneficial. Repeated observations and interviews offer the chance to verify how
language is addressed and how content is made accessible to ELLs. In conjunction with the observations, interviews with school and district personnel could offer insight into what teachers are doing as well as what districts are doing to support and prepare teachers for the changing school populations.

An additional area for future research extends to the universities. As suggested earlier, districts rely on universities to prepare teachers to teach, and to teach increasingly diverse classroom populations. Local universities must be examined to clearly reveal what the generalist certification programs are doing to prepare pre-service teachers for the demands of diverse classrooms. Although universities often offer bilingual and/or ESL certification within their education programs, such certification is optional. Therefore, an examination of university teacher preparation programs and alternative certification programs would offer information about the level of exposure to teaching ELLs pre-service teachers receive in preparation programs. It is also necessary to determine the knowledge the instructors have regarding ESL methods, stages of language acquisition and ways to develop language and content skills.

In conclusion, this study found that teachers are not as prepared to meet the language development of their ELLs as they are to develop content area knowledge and skills. While teachers are making content more accessible for their ELLs, they are not developing the academic language that is necessary for academic success. Teachers also struggle with the role of the students’ first language in their English language development. Therefore, teachers need professional development that specifically addresses second language acquisition and strategies for developing academic language in content area lessons. This study also found that teachers report more consistent use of sheltered practices with higher percentages of ELLs and preparedness. Therefore, ELL students should be clustered in groups and placed with the most
prepared teacher, based on years teaching experience, years of ESL certification, hours of professional development and university ESL courses. School districts and universities can increase the preparedness of teachers by offering courses that address practical strategies to develop language in content areas.
APPENDIX A

THE SHELTERED INSTRUCTION OBSERVATION PROTOCOL (SIOP)
I. Preparation

1. Clearly defined content objectives for students:

2. Clearly defined language objectives for students:

3. Content concepts appropriate for age and educational background level of students.

4. Supplementary materials used to a high degree, making the lesson clear and meaningful (e.g., graphs, models, visuals).

5. Adaptation of content (e.g., text, assignment) to all levels of student proficiency.

6. Meaningful activities that integrate lesson concepts (e.g., surveys, letter writing, simulations, constructing models) with language practice opportunities for reading, writing, listening, and/or speaking.

II. Instruction

Building Background

7. Concepts explicitly linked to students’ background experiences

8. Links explicitly made between past learning and new concepts.

9. Key vocabulary emphasized (e.g., introduced, written, repeated, and highlighted for students to see).

Comprehensible Input

10. Speech appropriate for students' proficiency level (e.g., slower rate, enunciation, and simple sentence structure for beginners).

11. Explanation of academic tasks clear.

12. Uses a variety of techniques to make content concepts clear (e.g., modeling, visuals, hands-on activities, demonstrations, gestures, body language).

List them:

Strategies

13. Provides ample opportunities for students to use strategies, (e.g., problem solving, predicting, organizing, summarizing, categorizing, evaluating, self-monitoring).

14. Consistent use scaffolding techniques throughout the lesson, assisting and supporting student understanding, (e.g., think-alouds)
15. Teacher uses a variety of question types including those that promote higher-order thinking skills (e.g., literal, analytical, and interpretive questions).

**Interaction**

16. Frequent opportunities for interaction and discussion between teacher/student and among students, which encourage elaborated responses about lesson concepts.

17. Grouping configurations support language and content objectives of the lesson.

18. Consistently provides sufficient wait time for student responses.

19. Ample opportunities for students to clarify key concepts in L1 as needed aide, peer, or L1 text.

**Practice/Application**

20. Provides hands-on materials and/or manipulatives for students to practice using new content knowledge.

21. Provide activities for students to apply content and language knowledge in the classroom.

22. Uses activities that integrate all language skills (i.e., reading, writing, listening, and speaking).

**Lesson Delivery**

23. Content objectives clearly supported by lesson delivery.

24. Language objectives clearly supported by lesson delivery.

25. Students engaged approximately 90-100% of the period.

26. Pacing of the lesson appropriate to the students' ability level.

**III. Review/Evaluation**

27. Comprehensive review of key vocabulary.

28. Comprehensive review of key content concepts.

29. Regularly provides feedback to students on their output (e.g., language, content, work).

30. Conducts assessment of student comprehension and learning of all lesson objectives (e.g., spot-checking, group response) throughout the lesson.
APPENDIX B

ELL ENROLLMENT 2005-06
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>% Increase in LEP Enrollment 1995-96 to 2004-05</th>
<th>% Increase in Total Student Enrollment 1995-96 to 2004-05</th>
<th>% Increase in 2004-05 LEP Student Enrollment</th>
<th>2004-05 Total Student Enrollment</th>
<th>% Economically Disadvantaged 2004-05</th>
<th>% Economically Disadvantaged 2004-05</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aledo ISD</td>
<td>311.8%</td>
<td>69.0%</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>3675</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azle</td>
<td>152.9%</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>5863</td>
<td>33.7%</td>
<td>33.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birdville</td>
<td>196.1%</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>2114</td>
<td>22297</td>
<td>40.6%</td>
<td>40.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrollton-FB</td>
<td>136.6%</td>
<td>26.9%</td>
<td>6116</td>
<td>25815</td>
<td>47.4%</td>
<td>47.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castleberry</td>
<td>272.1%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>3277</td>
<td>64.1%</td>
<td>64.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cedar Hill</td>
<td>409.2%</td>
<td>35.8%</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>7626</td>
<td>38.1%</td>
<td>38.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coppell</td>
<td>324.2%</td>
<td>58.4%</td>
<td>632</td>
<td>10,072</td>
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<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crandall</td>
<td>67.6%</td>
<td>40.2%</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>2059</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crowley</td>
<td>779.5%</td>
<td>75.9%</td>
<td>730</td>
<td>12,575</td>
<td>29.8%</td>
<td>29.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeSoto</td>
<td>212.4%</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>7955</td>
<td>42.1%</td>
<td>42.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duncanville</td>
<td>345.7%</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
<td>1257</td>
<td>11938</td>
<td>51.2%</td>
<td>51.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saginaw/ Eagle Mountain</td>
<td>206.7%</td>
<td>72.0%</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>9404</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everman</td>
<td>381.4%</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>621</td>
<td>3964</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ferris ISD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Garland</td>
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<td>12397</td>
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<td>42.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Godley ISD</td>
<td>132.0%</td>
<td>69.4%</td>
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<td>1347</td>
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<td>44.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Prairie</td>
<td>213.2%</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
<td>4394</td>
<td>22801</td>
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<td>52.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grapevine</td>
<td>660.4%</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
<td>730</td>
<td>13800</td>
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<td>11.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>HEB</td>
<td>169.0%</td>
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<td>19426</td>
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<tr>
<td>Irving</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keller</td>
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<td>99.2%</td>
<td>778</td>
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<td>12.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kennedale</td>
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<td>27.8%</td>
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<td>2926</td>
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<td>24.0%</td>
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<td>Lewisville</td>
<td>412.4%</td>
<td>60.1%</td>
<td>4340</td>
<td>45335</td>
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<td>19.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mansfield</td>
<td>327.6%</td>
<td>105.2%</td>
<td>1518</td>
<td>22,981</td>
<td>25.3%</td>
<td>25.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mesquite</td>
<td>477.0%</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
<td>4022</td>
<td>34649</td>
<td>43.0%</td>
<td>43.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plano</td>
<td>171.1%</td>
<td>35.6%</td>
<td>5993</td>
<td>52113</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Richardson</td>
<td>66.1%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>6445</td>
<td>34073</td>
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<td>45.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Settlement</td>
<td>597.4%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>4916</td>
<td>41.6%</td>
<td>41.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C

ELL ENROLLMENT GROWTH 1995-96 TO 2005-06
Increase in Enrollment 1995-96 to 2004-05

% Increase in LEP Enrollment 1995-96 to 2004-05
% Increase in Total Student Enrollment 1995-96 to 2004-05
APPENDIX D

ELL TOTAL ENROLLMENT
APPENDIX E

SURVEY
1. Informed Consent Notice

To whom it may concern:

I am a doctoral student at the University of North Texas. As part of my dissertation research, I am asking fourth and fifth grade teachers with ESL certification and who currently have English language learners in their classroom to participate in a web-based survey. The title of my study is Preparedness, Practices and Resource Needs: Perceptions of English as a Second Language Certified Mainstream Classroom Teachers. Before you agree to participate in the survey, I must explain the following information:

PURPOSE: This study intends to gather information about fourth and fifth grade teachers' preparedness, practices and resource needs related to educating ELLs in grade level classrooms.

PROCEDURES: You will be asked to complete a 19 item web-based survey that will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. When you click on the link below, you will immediately enter the survey. Participation in the survey is voluntary and anonymous. Please answer the questions as accurately and honestly as possible. When you are finished with the survey, click on the DONE link to submit the survey.

COMPENSATION: Participants who complete the survey will have the opportunity to enter their name in a drawing for a $100.00 gift certificate. Upon completion of the survey you will be taken to a new web page that will ask for your name and phone number for the drawing. Your personal information is not connected to your survey responses.

ADDITIONAL RESEARCH: Upon completion of the survey you will be asked if you would be willing to participate in a focus group interview regarding teaching English language learners. You may choose to accept or decline participation in the focus group interview. The focus group interviews will also include a drawing for a $100.00 gift certificate.

RISKS AND BENEFITS: There are no foreseeable risks involved in this study. This study is not expected to be of any direct benefit to you. The benefits of this study derive principally from the importance of the knowledge expected to result from it.

CONFIDENTIALITY: The survey is completely anonymous and no information in the survey can be traced to participants. Upon submission of the survey, all district names will be coded to maintain anonymity. All survey data will be stored in a password-protected file. In addition, all district names will remain anonymous in all written and public presentations of the study findings.

RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS’ RIGHTS: Your completion of this survey indicates that you have read the above information and that you confirm the following:
- You have been informed of the possible benefits and the potential risks and/or discomforts of the study.
- You understand that you do not have to take part in this study, and your refusal to participate or your decision to withdraw will involve no penalty or loss of rights or benefits.
- You understand why the study is being conducted and how it will be performed.
- You understand your rights as a research participant and you voluntarily consent to participate in this study.
- You may print a copy of this notice for your records.

REVIEW FOR THE PROTECTION OF PARTICIPANTS:
This research study has been reviewed and approved by the UNT Institutional Review Board (IRB). The UNT IRB can be contacted at 940-565-3940 with any questions regarding the rights of the research subjects.

If you have any questions about the study, you may contact Jill Matson at 817-917-2751 or matson@unt.edu.

You may also contact Ron Wilhelm, Ph.D., UNT Department of Teacher Education and Administration at 940-565-4743 or Wilhelm@coe.unt.edu.

Respectfully,
Jill Matson
2. Teacher Information

Please choose or provide the answer that best answers the question

1. Where do you currently teach?

2. What grade/s do you teach?

☐ Fourth grade
☐ Fifth grade

3. Do you teach in a self-contained classroom or is your grade level departmentalized?

☐ Self-contained
☐ Departmentalized

4. What is the TOTAL number of students you teach each day?

5. How many ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS do you teach each day?

6. How did you obtain your teaching certificate?

☐ Alternative certification program
☐ Traditional, university based degree with certification

7. NOT including this year, how many years teaching experience do you have?
8. Not including this year, how many years have you had your ESL certification?

- 0 years
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- More than 20 years

9. How many university based courses regarding teaching English language learners have you completed?

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- More than 4

10. Since June of 2005, approximately how many hours of professional development or in-service training regarding English language learners have you attended?


3. Teacher Needs

11. What resources, supports, and/or professional development opportunities do you need to meet the academic and English language development needs of your English language learners?


4. Preparedness

12. To what degree do you believe you are prepared to meet the academic needs (content area knowledge and skills) of your English language learners?

- Very much
- Much
- A little
- Not at all

13. To what degree do you believe you are prepared to meet the English language development needs of your English language learners?

- Very much
- Much
- A little
- Not at all
## 5. Preparedness and Practices

Please consider whether you believe you are prepared to implement the following sheltered instruction strategies in your lesson planning, instruction and evaluation.

### 14. Preparation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>I am VERY prepared to do this</th>
<th>I am SOMewhat prepared to do this</th>
<th>I am NOT prepared to do this</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clearly define content objectives</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clearly define language objectives</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choose content concepts appropriate for age and educational background level of students</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify supplementary materials to make the lesson clear and meaningful</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adapt content to all language proficiency levels</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan meaningful activities that integrate lesson concepts with language practice opportunities for reading, writing, listening and/or speaking</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 15. Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>I am VERY prepared to do this</th>
<th>I am SOMewhat prepared to do this</th>
<th>I am NOT prepared to do this</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explicitly link concepts to students’ life experiences</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explicitly link past learning and new concepts</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasize key vocabulary</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use appropriate speech for students’ proficiency level</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clearly explain academic tasks</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use techniques to clarify content concepts (modeling, visuals, gestures, etc)</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide opportunities for students to use strategies (e.g., problem solving, predicting, organizing)</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use scaffolding techniques throughout lesson</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use a variety of question types, including those that promote higher order thinking skills</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide opportunities for interaction between teacher/students and among students about lesson concepts with elaborated responses</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use grouping configurations that support language and content objectives</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistently provide sufficient wait time for student responses</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide opportunities for students to clarify key concepts in their first language</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide hands-on materials and/or manipulatives</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide activities for students to apply content and language knowledge in the classroom</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use activities that integrate all language skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking)</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliver lessons that support content objectives</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliver lessons that support language objectives</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students engaged in 90-100% of the lesson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pace the lesson appropriately for students' ability level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 16. Review/Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>I am VERY prepared to do this</th>
<th>I am SOMewhat prepared to do this</th>
<th>I am NOT prepared to do this</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide comprehensive review of key vocabulary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide comprehensive review of key content concepts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regularly provide feedback to students on their output (language, content, work)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct formal and informal assessment of student progress toward attaining content and language objectives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6. Instructional Practices

Please consider whether you believe you consistently implement the following sheltered instruction strategies in your lesson planning, instruction and evaluation.

### 17. Preparation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>I CONSISTENTLY do this</th>
<th>I SOMETIMES do this</th>
<th>I NEVER do this</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clearly define content objectives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clearly define language objectives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choose content concepts appropriate for age and educational background level of students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify supplementary materials to make the lesson clear and meaningful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adapt content to all language proficiency levels</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan meaningful activities that integrate lesson concepts with language practice opportunities for reading, writing, listening and/or speaking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### 18. Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>I CONSISTENTLY do this</th>
<th>I SOMETIMES do this</th>
<th>I NEVER do this</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explicitly link concepts to students' life experiences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explicitly link new and familiar content concepts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasize key vocabulary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use appropriate speech for students' proficiency level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide opportunities for students to use strategies (e.g. problem solving, predicting, organizing)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Use scaffolding techniques throughout lesson</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide opportunities for interaction between teacher/students and among students about lesson concepts with elaborated responses</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use grouping configurations that support language and content objectives</td>
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<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistently provide sufficient wait time for student responses</td>
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<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide activities for students to apply content and language knowledge in the classroom</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use activities that integrate all language skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking)</td>
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<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deliver lessons that support content objectives</td>
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<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliver lessons that support language objectives</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students engaged in 90-100% of the lesson</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate the lesson appropriately for students’ ability level</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**19. Review/Assessment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provide comprehensive review of key vocabulary</th>
<th>☐</th>
<th>☐</th>
<th>☐</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide comprehensive review of key content concepts</td>
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<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX F

PILOT SURVEY QUESTIONS
How long did it take you to complete the survey?

Were the instructions clear and easy to follow? If not, what was unclear?

Was the format of the survey easy to follow? If not, what suggestions do you have to make the survey easier to follow?

Were the items/questions on the survey clearly understood and easy to answer? If not, what was unclear or difficult to understand?

Do you believe anything needs to be changed on this survey to make it more understandable or easier to complete? Do you have any suggestions?

What is your understanding of what information this survey was attempting to obtain?
APPENDIX G

FOCUS GROUP TRANSCRIPTS
Focus Group 1

QUESTION 1

INTERVIEWER:
OK, so the first question… if you could pass those down for me is “Why did you obtain your ESL teaching certificate”? So, if you want to jot notes down about that… this is an easy one. You probably don’t even need to jot them down, so… if anybody just wants to get started.

TEACHER A:
Is it on, okay. I’ll tell you why I, do I need to say my name before I speak?

INTERVIEWER:
No

TEACHER A:
You know me? I had to. (laughs) It was strongly encouraged in our district and one of the incentives was, I will pay for your testing and we will provide the training if you will go down and take the test. Um, and I believe if I am not incorrect, it was a requirement that came down from the state. So that was how we were encouraged. We had so many per grade level and I was the one of the rooms they walked into.

TEACHER B:
I took Spanish three years in high school. I lived on a reservation, my grandparents were Native American missionaries and the only language in common between the native Americans, the Anglos and the Hispanic people was Spanish. So, I grew up I that atmosphere and when I was at school, I always taught special needs students so I would always end up with an ESL child in my room whether they were or not I would be the one helping them, so they requested me to get my certificate in 1995 and I did.

TEACHER C:
UM, this is my second year here in the Metroplex teaching. I came from a smaller town where there is a state college, Tarleton, and so I teach language arts, reading is my, the thing and so I though ok I’m there in the college so I’ll take advantage of it. And then plus in a small town we have a lot of dairies and so we had a lot of children that came in that needed ESL help and so that is why I went back.

TEACHER D:
I got mine because, kind of along the same kinds of lines as ****, but our disTeacher Dict paid for the testing and paid for your certificate and they offered an ESL certification course and I thought, coming from a Title I school most of our kids were ESL, but what I didn’t realize is that the course only taught you how to pass the test. It didn’t give you any kinds of strategies on ESL and I did it because I wanted to do the best thing for my kids. It really didn’t help me at this point. Now my district this year is making it a mandate that they are giving every teacher in the district two years to get their ESL certification.
INTERVIEWER:
So I think I heard you say it was mandated (to TEACHER B)

TEACHER B:
It was mandated but they did not pay. It wasn’t like they came to me and said **** would you, will you please take this and I said oh yeah and this was in September and I was thinking January classes would start and it was a nine hour course and I was real excited and our curriculum director said good, the Excet will be in November. And I was like, OK. So I, at my own expense, paid for me and went over to North ? College in Cedar Hill and took the class and I had a real nice friend who helped me, she was really, and we just studies like Bloom’s taxonomy and things because it was still very new, still new at that point in ’95, it was still real new, it was fresh in our area, but it might have been old in another area, and so my district did not pay, but what they did pay for was for the certification or for the certificate. They paid for that part. They could make sure that I actually had that and they could be covered but other than that they didn’t pay for any part of it.

TEACHER A:
I wanted to say the same…. I wanted to say something opposite. When I went back in 2000 or 2001, I can’t remember which year I took the test, it was in November, I remembered that they paid for your test but you have to pay to put it on your certificate, that’s how it’s changed

TEACHER D:
First of all, the courses that I took were district provided so we didn’t have to go to any college or anything like that and they were taught by the ESL teacher… that was good. I’m pretty sure, but it’s been awhile, but I’m pretty sure that my district paid for both the test and the certificate.

INTERVIEWER:
And did you take a course at the University

TEACHER A:
No.

INTERVIEWER:
It was a district course?

TEACHER A:
Yes, ma’am

TEACHER C:
I was fortunate at the time. My principal at the time, he strongly wanted everyone to become certified, so what he did was, he said ok all of you…starting with the fourth grade, all you fourth grade teachers, I’m going to pay for you to be able to take time out.. and it was so wonderful because we got to get out of school and go have these sessions with the professor there and we got the course hours if we wanted to pay for the exc Teacher Da course hours and basically we took the class and then he paid for that or the school paid for that and then the district would pay for the test and then we paid for the certificate. Now it was funny because two of us took the test
out of, at the time there were six of us and the rest of them didn’t want to take the test. I think a lot of the reason was because of the things ESL teachers are required to do. They said, hmmm, we’ll just take the strategies and use the strategies, but I don’t want to have that on my name.

INTERVIEWER:
So did you feel like yours was, umm, you mentioned the course you took was basically just to pass the test

TEACHER D:
That’s how I felt, yeah.

INTERVIEWER:
Was that what you felt?

TEACHER D:
I have people now, our district offers it every year and it is usually twice a year, fall and in the spring, especially now that they are mandating that every teacher do that. I have run into teachers now that are coming back and say, “All the course did was just teach me how to pass the test”.

OK- but your was not just about the test

TEACHER C:
No it wasn’t just about the test, we had more strategies

TEACHER B:
Mine was probably 50/50. I had a real nice, I paid for the course and I got a real nice book, a spiral style and it told you scenarios and hat would you do in this situation and this kind of thing and then when you practiced and you missed it said it would have been better if you had, so you had ideas scattered through there, but it wasn’t based on being successful on the test

INTERVIEWER:
OK, OK that’s interesting.

QUESTION 2:

INTERVIEWER:
I think we can move on to Question 2. Which, I will pass down to you guys, is “What do you do to meet the language needs of your ELLs in content area lessons”? So maybe if you guys want to jot down a few ideas…. OK, so whoever would like to say something…

TEACHER C:
Well, as much as possible, of course access their prior knowledge, but vocabulary definitely, that the big, that is what they are lacking, so we do a lot of pre-teaching the vocabulary, a lot of pictures, graphic organizers, umm to supplement as far as any type of a Teacher Dade book if it is possible… videos, but anyway, a lot of vocabulary
TEACHER A:  
I like, I teach math and I found with my ELL kiddos even when you have, you to have the hands-
on, you have teach math hands on with , but even with all that, sometimes they can manipulate 
the objects and because the vocabulary is still lacking, they’ll say but I don’t understand…and 
they might could do the computation perfectly, but if that computation is put into a word type 
situation, they have to orally be read or sometimes they have to define and that I really have a 
problem with if they started school by the time they come to me they don’t have any 
accommodations on the TAKS test and I really think that is unfair because if I just had someone 
to, if they would allow us to not only oral read, which we can usually get a 504 to do that , if they 
would allow us to orally read the test, if there was something the child did not understand like a 
pitcher versus a picture, then it would help, I feel like it would each child would have a more fair 
advantage 

TEACHER D 
I agree that probably three quarters of my class is ELLs, some are ESL, some are bilingual, I 
have gifted, I have Special Ed, I have everything in my class, so I Teacher Deat my whole class 
as a ESL, basically just speaking slower, but I agree it’s the vocabulary and I remember a 
number of years ago, the TAKS test the prompt was write about an adventure, half my kids 
didn’t even know what the word adventure was and of course on that day you can’t say anything 
anyway and they don’t have those experiences, so… the vocabulary and just constant… and 
when they are in my classroom they speak at least enough English to be able to understand. I 
don’t have anybody that’s brand new, that comes right from Mexico, so that’s why they’re in 
there in the first place. I agree… pictures, graphic organizers, visual cues, things like that. 

INTERVIEWER 
I heard the three of you say that vocabulary is an issue, so what specifically do you do in your 
class to address vocabulary? 

TEACHER A 
We, with math and science we have word walls and a lot of it, you know where one we teach the 
concept like translation or you know rotation and all that, then we also have little pictures of 
things that go along with it, so that’s a good, you know. Sometimes we review (made the motion 
of flipping flashcards), we have just a quick, just to make sure they don’t lose the words, we’ll 
have the vocabulary review. We have a program called accelerated math. I don’t know if 
you’ve ever heard of it, but accelerated math is like accelerated reader except it’s math and they 
are given mathematical problems in word form and all of my ELL students not all. I have one 
that can do it by reading it on his own and figuring it out. But one of my students has to have it 
read out loud to him to understand what to do and I think the combining of the vocabulary with 
the actual math has benefited that child immensely. From where he started to where he is now, is 
…and also they have an inner drive. Many of the elementary students have an inner drive that 
they will do whatever it takes just to please you and mom and dad are behind them and they will 
support you 100%. 

TEACHER D: 
Not at my school.
TEACHER A:
Not at your school.

TEACHER B
I have had students who have limited education. They come to me as a fifth grader with a second grade knowledge base in math and… but because I have a resource background, I have a lot of paper resources. So I take like a second grade math problem and instead of putting second grade numbers there, I put fifth grade numbers. But the reading ability would be Luis has ********marbles and instead of saying seven marbles I just white that out write in my numbers and then make the copy and then there we go. That’s what I’ve had to do to help them because so many of them don’t have that language base even for appropriate grade level instruction if they could have that… so that’s what I do and I have also very fluent English speakers who have been here, because they’re fifth graders they’ve been here a very long time and they will come in on part of their day and pair with my new to country students and help them a lot with their language. When they’re reading so they’ll understand what we’re talking about in math or what we’re talking about in social studies or what we’re talking about in science because I take them for a small portion of every single content area that we have on my campus if they are new to the country. Because throwing a child into the ocean and saying please swim is not going to help them, but if you can put a life raft on them and then a little life ring with them they can at least float along with the ocean tide and that’s how I feel about my new to country students because my other students, they’re just in there with me and we just speak Spanish and English back and forth to help them get more cemented, I Teacher Dy to do a lot of sheltering and scaffolding in that area

TEACHER C
I do um a lot of as many, you kinda have to see where they are, it’s been a long time since I’ve had one brand new to the country, but we do a lot of synonyms or this is like, we do a lot of acting out if we can’t …. I teach fourth grade social studies so some of that is just brand new as far as like government, that’s hard for a regular, normal, English speaker. So we do a lot of acting out, we do a lot of synonyms, I like to do… before we take the words and we’re looking at them name of a person or place or thing, do we see word parts, we do the word chunks, root words, just a combination, whatever word there is, ok how can I hook them. Is it better to have a root word lesson? Or is it better to have one on proper nouns and common nouns, just…

TEACHER A:
Getting them to act out any kind of word is the best thing. When we teach measurement we use body parts, they can understand… they may not understand that you know a meter is a hundred centimeters, but by gosh if you ask them to show me a meter

Laughing (motioning that the kids use their arms to show a meter)

TEACHER A
So that helps and you know I was going to say on reading, since we have a bilingual teacher this year, our ELL students read orally and we have the accelerated reader program, so we begin, we put them wherever they are….now when they don’t speak English very well, sometimes we, I’ve had a student that we had to translate even the AR test to them to find out where they are at,
but we’re now getting the resources with bilingual books, we didn’t have those for awhile, but we do now and umm that’s helped some… still, all of our the ELL kids oral read

INTERVIEWER:
Anybody want to add anything?

TEACHER D
Another thing I want to add is that we have a bilingual teacher but the only people… she has two fourth graders and I think four fifth graders and she’s mixed and what she does is she sends her fourth grades to one our classes and sits in there in like the back of the class and translates at the same time. So that the work we have… it is very distracting for the teacher, because if you are Teacher Dying to get something done and you here these voices and you can’t tell if it’s a teacher… and they struggle. This is like the second one we’ve had in three years they end up leaving because it is very difficult for them… if they focus on the fourth grade, fifth grade does poorly and if they focus on the fifth grade, the fourth grade does poorly because the teacher can’t be in the both places at the same time

TEACHER A:
There’s not enough…. There’s just not enough…

TEACHER B
We do a lot of thinking maps and that really seems to help them. They had, they had a real hard time in my class with social studies, understanding the concept of the world and the concept of the continent and the country and the state. Yeah, coming down they had a real difficult time, so I just had them do a thinking map, like a flow chart…but it always about sheltering, scaffolding, but my teachers will send a week ahead of time, they’ll send me their vocab and then I know what they are studying in science, those words go up. I know what they’re studying and then I’ll pull from the second grade materials… and then I’ll look that up at a second grade level because I have those resources from years of teaching resource….So I pull them so they get a lower level instruction. There’s no way they can get grade level instruction because they don’t have that language

INTERVIEWER
So, just so that I know that I heard you correctly, so you get the vocabulary terms from the teachers and then you, you address those vocabulary terms with lower grade level materials, but to work on those terms?

TEACHER B
If they are studying the word eclipse, well I’m going to go and talk about the moon and the stars and how they are far from here and what happens when the Earth and the sun and the moon line up. But I have a very low level *** program that I use and I pull that out and then we read that and I put the words, they were doing photosynthesis, but the book didn’t have the word photosynthesis, it just said this is how a plant eats, but we wrote photosynthesis on there and then they knew it needed air, water and light to make because the book talked about it, it showed a picture and then there were little blanks and I made them fill in what it was and then I said what is that word, write the word, so that’s what we do
INTERVIEWER:
OK, so it sounds like you guys said that you use graphic organizers, visuals, acting out, specifically address vocabulary terms, review the vocabulary terms, and I’m assuming that when you were doing this (hands) and reviewing vocabulary terms you use flash cards

TEACHER A:
Yes

TEACHER D:
I feel bad though because I don’t really, my kids are really like sink or swim group, I don’t have time to do all that especially with ranges from SpEd to Gifted, if you spend a lot of time doing flash cards, my gifted kids are like I’m bored to death, and none of them are pull out, no one pulls them out, and so don’t pre-teach the vocabulary, when I’m talking about the lesson, we take notes on it and I’ll make sure that I mention and that’s about the only pre-teaching they have, so mine is more like a sink or swim situation

TEACHER B
There’s an online dictionary called lookwayup.com. Have ya’ll seen it? Lookwayup.com

TEACHER A:
No, but I’m gong to write it down!

TEACHER B
I have a Portuguese child in my room as well. It will translate Portuguese to English, English to Portuguese, English to Spanish, Spanish to English, German to English, and that’s what I do. We have computers and I look up all of their words beforehand, their vocab, and I’ll already have it translated, ‘cause it will tell you, so I know ahead of time so when they open up their dictionary they don’t write down some bizarre word does not go in that blank, because it was the first one that they saw. But I go through and find it and then I give them a vocab sheet for the terms that they are studying and I put the right translation in there, so they can pair it

INTERVIEWER
So that’s something else I heard you guys saying, both of you about Teacher Danslating to address vocabulary

TEACHER D
A lot of times what I’ll do is if I have some that aren’t quite as high on their English skills, almost my entire classis ESL or ELL, or bilingual, they speak enough Spanish that they can translate, but the goal in our district is, you know, get them into English and just immerse them right away and so they ask us not to allow them to speak Spanish in our class and then

TEACHER B
And they don’t speak Spanish in my classroom to each other unless they are translating something they don’t understand.
TEACHER D
Right. That’s what we do, yeah.

TEACHER B
But having the dictionary online makes it so much quicker. I don’t, I can’t…it’s not about can they alphabetize, that’s not my issue, my issue is do you know this word. When they’re having to use that dictionary and find the words, you know they are so foreign to them, they might miss and o or an a, but if they just have to type it in once and then click, it makes it so much easier. So… I just want to recommend that to everybody

TEACHER C:
But then again, here in the metroplex there’s not there are a lot of ELLs that are not Spanish

TEACHER C:
So (inaudible)

TEACHER B:
Not at my school
TEACHER A
I want to make you feel better…. We also have after school tutoring two days a week. Sometimes that gets reviewed in there. Don’t think that I can do it all at once.

QUESTION 3

INTERVIEWER:
OK, third question. How do you determine the practices you use to meet the academic and language needs of your ELLs?

TEACHER A:
This is not professional, but, I have to tell you, it’s a gut instinct. Do you, I don’t know if I’m answering the question right, but if I had Teacher Died one of these strategies and it’s not working, I go to my bag of Teacher Dicks, if I try, then I go to my bag of Teacher Dicks…when I was thrown in that second grade class today, with the student that had just come here that’s brand new, um I was reaching in my bag of Teacher Dicks again, you know what’s the word for that… I would ask for help, you know we were Teacher Dying to come up with the word for shaded, the children said well there’s not a word for shaded and you know they finally came up with coffee and that’s how I got the kids to determine the shaded parts of a whole versus the un-shaded don’t ask me if it’s right or wrong, well there’s not a word, well what about brown and they go coffee and I say okay that’s it! So, I just, it’s just the teaching Teacher Dying to be in tune with the student, it’s looking them in the eyes, the fear and you’re Teacher Dying to dissipate that fear in them, so that you can reach them some how.

TEACHER C
I call it kid watching. In other words seeing what’s worked with the kid before and what hasn’t worked, and it’s basically just like any other type of learner that I have the regular children.
Some of them do better acting it out, you know there’s kinesthetic learners, there’s auditory learners. Again, it just depends on…Again, just as we get to know the students, how it works. And there are sometimes where I’m like there going to have difficulty with these. But that’s what so funny because sometimes, and I can’t come up with ay examples now, but I’ll think they’re going to understand that and they’re going to understand that and then they come up with this word that is totally different, like oxen and auction. We were reading today and there’s a little boy that’s in the gifted class, he is an ELL learner and we’re reading Texas and they had an auction and the oxen and so he heard they’re about the same and we had difficulty so, it’s just again, it’s what, …you never know what they’re really thinking because we’re not Teacher Dying to, I don’t know what all the students are thinking, but they totally have a different background as far as their language than I do, so….

TEACHER B
The first thing I do, every year at the beginning of the year, is September 15 to October 15, is National Hispanic month. I make a big deal about how important the United States is because it took a Spanish person to fund for them to come over. I do a little history really good about being Hispanic and the little girl that’s from Portugal she’s from Brazil, but I showed her where Portugal was and how they came down to Brazil, so that the first thing, before I can do anything else, they have to feel good about themselves. So many of them walk through that door and they’ve heard so many horror stories from people that they don’t know what to expect that they have to feel really good. And once I do that, then I can kinda feel what they can and can’t get, because you know they’re children just like we are. I have ESL kids who have learning disabilities. I have ESL kids who have speech impediments, but you know they’re just like us and you don’t, people in general, don’t understand. They think they’re just ESL. That’s all they are, that why they can’t do this.. No… that’s not why they can’t do this. Here’s something else, we’re going to play this game for a little longer. But that how I determine what I’m going to do. I have to kinda know them. I can’t just… but I start off with kind of a blanket, this is what we’re going to do, and I have this, I’ve been doing it awhile, stuff tat I show them and how we are of our heritage and I’m from Europe and you’re from Europe. My family is from Holland and my family is from Ireland and look how close they are to where you are from. We’re all from the same place. But we move different places in different time and once they kind of understand that, it sets a ground rule for them to be able to grasp to go from there. And I know it’s kind of off of this, but once I have that base, I can’t really, what do you need to know. Because they have to feel comfortable, letting me know what they need.

INTERVIEWER:
So it sounds like the three of you said maybe, that you kinda, it’s the kid-watching, it’s the same idea, but just a different way of looking at it. But when you are talking about it, some of you said, you mentioned that you translate or you use graphic organizers, or word walls, or this or that, how do you decide each of those, when you are going to use what? Because there’s a difference between translating and using a word wall, so…

TEACHER D:
Ours, and I don’t have that luxury because our curriculum is online and it’s got you can spend three days on this and we’re benchmarked constantly in if kids don’t do well you’re in the
principal’s office explaining why your kids don’t do well. No so we don’t have that luxury, it’s just you know, this is it, they’ve taken the creativity out of it basically

INTERVIEWER:
So it sounds like you are telling me that you don’t really decide what practices you use, it’s basically just

TEACHER D:
The academic practices, this is what you need to do and they have lessons. And there’s a little bit of leeway, this is the concept, this is the lesson you’re going to do, and as far as the language needs, like I said, they’re just kind of in our class and we just have to, being ESL, slow down our speaking and using the visuals, that’s up to us, but the academic needs, we don’t have a choice in that. And it’s very fast paced; I mean it’s just…

TEACHER C:
Like you do with every child, you have to start where they are, you can’t just, I mean yes, they may say this is where we want you to start, but in reality it doesn’t happen that way and s you just do what you can, you build that foundation, yes maybe you might have a **** but at least you have a foundation

TEACHER D:
I know, unfortunately my district doesn’t do that, because I have kids reading on a first and second grade level, but they’re like they have to take the fourth grade test and the benchmarks, they don’t make considerations, so, you’re setting the kid up for failure. I don’t have that choice to teach them at a second grade level.

TEACHER A:
And you said you’re fourth grade?

TEACHER D:
Fourth grade

TEACHER A:
So, by the time they come to you, they’ve been with us since….

TEACHER D:
If they come into my classroom, they would have at least been in the counTeacher Dy at least a year. Or are at least speaking enough English that they can do well enough. That doesn’t mean that they can read well enough or that their math skills are high enough. Or…I mean, it’s just very difficult.

TEACHER B:
I can understand a kindergartener, they can tell me anything they need to tell me, I understand a five year old, but I do not understand if he Teacher Dies to write me a letter or if a five year old is giving me directions and I think a lot of times that is where they are doing you a disservice, simply because they have oral language they assume that just because they have oral language
they have all of these other skills. No. A baby is speaking by the time, if they are not speaking by the time they are two we are worried about them. These are ……

TEACHER D
Exactly

TEACHER B
These are ELL babies

TEACHER D
I have a student in my class now… who…he can answer any question you can ask him, orally, but he reads at a second grade level; he’s failed every single benchmark test that we’ve given him in math, reading, and writing. Every other word he writes in his compositions, and what the test is coming up in two weeks, every third word he writes is either Spanish or major spelling error. You can’t read is papers. And this kid’s in my class, I don’t have the opportunity to say, let me teach you at a second grade level. Through guided reading groups, YES, but no

TEACHER C
It’s not getting them to where they need to be.

TEACHER D
Exactly. It’s very frusTeacher Dating

TEACHER C
In that case, I mean, I’m sure that’s just the trickle down pressure that their administration that they think they are hearing from above from the state and everything. That’s why, portfolios, I love them. Some people say, eww yuck, but at least they show they may not be right here, but look were they started. Wow, and so that is just, you know, but…..

TEACHER B
It’s also a confidence builder on the student. When we have them write the very first day what they plan to accomplish in my room to where they are now, that’s a real confidence builder when they look through their portfolio.

Ok, so it kinda sounds like, in general, that to answer that question about how you determine the practices it sounds like you guys are all saying you have to look at where the child is and go from there and you just look at each individual. Does that sort of sum up what you called child watching?

TEACHER A:
Where they came from. I had one student who came from Nevada, so his is background was a little different than the student who came from Mexico. You know and… and this child was in a special ed. program but now that I worked with him, this child is dyslexic and it took us a long time to figure it out. So it’s kinda hard sometimes, things are masked.
QUESTION 4

INTERVIEWER:
OK…how about question number four, which says, “What aspect of English language development is the greatest challenge for you? And I’m thinking about you know, with TELPAS and everything, language development is also an issue. So thinking about that, what’s the greatest challenge for you?

TEACHER C:
I would say verbs, written expression, verb tense, figurative language, idioms, oh man, and academic language, to really be able to transfer that because…

INTERVIEWER:
Talk to me a little bit more about that

TEACHER C:
Well, I noticed especially even if they’re progressing along with reading, because we get kiddos in first grade by the time they get into fourth grade they’re pretty much about ready we would think out of the program and then get the reading level and the concept level that for most English readers you start getting more higher level thinking, drawing conclusions more, idioms, figurative language, jokes, they don’t have that base. It’s just like you were saying awhile ago with them being small children and acquiring language the first time have that firm foundation to really get the higher level that really tough for them to get the figurative language, the idioms, the drawing conclusions and that’s something that you just overexposure, overexposure, same thing with verb tenses, that just something that developmentally. And I think if we… I keep telling myself, okay keep doing this, someday eventually in high school they will get it. It’s just experience. You can’t rush some of those things.

TEACHER A:
I think something that blocks that…they’ve got their social language that they get

TEACHER C
Survival

TEACHER A:
And we really an we understand them on the social level, they’re doing awesome, we get the academic language and we you know, where they are, and then they go home and they are speaking their native language at home so they are not practicing anything they learn. That native language is going and they come back to speak the social language and then the academic language seems to keep getting further behind.

TEACHER C:
Well and it’s getting harder for the English language learner anyway. As you get up the academic career and older, so it’s a double whammy.
INTERVIEWER
So talk to me more specifically about when you’re talking about academic language. What does that mean to you on a daily basis? What is that?

TEACHER C:
Well okay, I’m thinking social studies, you know we have branches, many different multiple meanings for branches; branches in government, branches on a tree, so you have to stop and say okay, do you understand what branches means on a tree, now do we understand about branches. It’s just kinda that backing up, even with multiple meaning words. Things like that. Academic language the math, you know when you are talking about

TEACHER A:
I’ll give you an example.

TEACHER C:
Oh, yes

TEACHER A:
We have this argument when you teach volume in fourth grade, it's length times width times height. When I went to the Elm ELL training, which was trained by some ladies in south Texas who teach mainly Hispanic students… No, the formula is length times width times height, but you know how they figured it? They used depth and they kept saying let’s take… and I really did not mean to stump anybody but I really think they wanted to ban me from their classroom. Because I said, but wait, your saying, but the formula that’s on the TAKS chart that the kids are taught is length times width times height. But what you’re telling me is that you’re telling your telling your students you dig a hole and that, and she said the word depth, so do I need to be teaching length times width times depth. She said, no, no, no it’s length times width times height. And I’m like, that’s not what you described. And so if I’m gonna, this year when I taught volume, I happened to mention you can figure the depth, and we actually stood and visualized looking down into a swimming pool to determine the depth and standing at the corner of a tall building and looking up. Umm, that I just stumped on, I just stumbled on it, how much is out there that I haven’t even come across. That’s just in math, what about the reading comprehension? You give them a story about going to the zoo in fourth grade and they are reading about some kind of animal that they’ve never seen or experienced and then we give them and we want them to inference what this means

Right, there’s no prior knowledge

TEACHER A:
There’s no prior knowledge and I really think that we have missed the boat. And they don’t want to give it to them in their native language or they don’t, you know, it’s just and then you have that student in your class that is Teacher Dying everything, that is putting out 115% and he’s only getting 35% of what everybody else is doing? But by gosh, he’s going come up and put out that 115% and that’s where as a teacher and doing ESL and being thrown in there like she and I, like she and I because you know you need to do this because it’s mandated, and they really didn’t give us the resources to learn. And I’m sorry, even that MELL conference in San Marcos
this summer, I didn’t come away feeling like had any more resources other than a lady named Barbara, and I can’t think of her last name, and she teaches high school math and all she told us was vocabulary, vocabulary, vocabulary, Barb, and I could probably look up the name. Barbara somebody and she recently got married and I think her name is Taylor now, but that might have been her maiden name… but vocabulary, vocabulary, vocabulary it was three days and that’s what I remember about it.

TEACHER D
I took something at SMU about titled something about ESL strategies in the classroom because this is just what I need, because honestly, I think I do a horrible job of those ESL kids and bilingual kids in the classroom That was perfect and all they did was talk about vocabulary, they didn’t give us any strategies for using it, and again how do you pass the test for those weren’t already ESL certified. I know all about, I know what SIOP is or whatever, but I don’t use it because they didn’t tell me any strategies and I don’t have time!

TEACHER C
But you know along that, I just went aha, but you know, I first started with kindergarten endorsement, you know back then, now it’s different. Basically, it’s initial literacy activities. I’m mean that’s all it is. I mean that’s what I’m thinking.

TEACHER B
If you’ve taught dyslexia or resource, what kinds of strategies do you use with those kids. Slow down, you break it into smaller pieces, you feed them one little bite at a time and then suddenly they think in fifth grade that they’re ready for that buffet. I’m very blessed that my district has a pull out program for these extreme ESL kids

TEACHER D
You are blessed.

TEACHER B
I walked…They ad Teacher Double with pole and pipe…they thought they were the same thing, so my building was built in the 30’s. It the rock school, that’s the name of it, it’s very old and so lots of things are exposed that would normally be covered in new schools, so we walked out and looked at the heaters in the halls and said see those things up there, those are pipes then we walked out the front door to the flag pole and this is a pole! Then I went to the back of my, my Teacher Dunk and opened it up and said this is a fishing rod. It’s a rod, it’s a pipe it’s a pole, and they’re all different. You do not call it a fishing pipe. But they didn’t know that. When they were writing stuff down for me, that’s what I do. I have to go around and let them physically see, but it’s small bites.

TEACHER D:
But if I do that I will probably lose my job.

TEACHER B
I understand, but it’s small, small, pieces
INTERVIEWER
But let me, kind of going back to that, because I don’t know if I heard you guys say it, but what do you think is the biggest challenge that you have with developing the English language with the kids? What is the biggest challenge? You two both mentioned the academic language

TEACHER A
Written expression

TEACHER D
Written expression, the sounds and especially with the writing and we’re spending three hours a day on writing nowadays. And very turns out to be bery with a b. The y sound is an e on the end and not being able to write a sentence because they don’t know the language structure well enough is a real challenge…. So just the written expression

INTERVIEWER
Phonics, ok

TEACHER D
I mean mine can all communicate just fine

TEACHER B
Do you have a fund? Do you have money, do they give you money that you can buy materials

TEACHER D
No

TEACHER B
You see that’s what I, I put up rules like the I-t-y is I-d-a-d in their language, university id universidad, quality id cualidad, I do all kinds of, I have these vocabulary words with in little blocks put tiger, tigre, vinegar vinagre, so they have little tools to help them when they’re reading

TEACHER D
No

TEACHER B
Ok, this ending helps me

TEACHER D
The bilingual teachers get a lot of money, if you are a general ed. teacher with bilingual kids in your class, you don’t get any of that

TEACHER B
Can you request it from someone?
INTERVIEWER
So what would you say, **** would you think is a challenge for English language development?

TEACHER B
I think... I don’t want to say the whole program…. Can I just jump into it and swim. I think the way we have it structured is hard, it’s like hard for the students. It’s like we are punishing them for coming here. I’m sorry that you’re here so this is how you are going to learn. We wouldn’t do that to a kindergartener, I would not…why would we do this to a fifth grader?

TEACHER C
We rush them; I think that is what it is

TEACHER A & TEACHER C
There’s not enough time.

TEACHER A
I’m sorry there’s not enough time

TEACHER B
The program’s not developed to meet their needs because they do not understand our language. And so we have to stop what we are doing, teach them English so they can hop in and do this and throwing them in there and saying I hope you can swim. Do this and you’ll be able to swim…unless you practice swimming, I can show you all day on this table this is how you swim, but until you are in the water and you feel the waves and the motion you can’t do it

TEACHER D
And then they go home and everything I talk about in class and then they just go home and speak Spanish and they don’t practice it

TEACHER B
There’s also some cards, I bought them when I had dyslexia and it shows the shapes of human mouths, have you seen them, and it really helped my ESL kids. I Veinte and beinte, because we see a v we say veinte and the word is actually beinte, the b and the v are the back words and it really helps them to see what we’re saying, ‘cause them get them confused

INTERVIEWER
So, it sounds like you guys are saying and then we’ll move to the next question, the academic language, the written expression, and you mentioned time is an obvious… the program isn’t actually designed to develop language, so does that sound like maybe what we heard?
**Question 5**

**INTERVIEWER**
OK, let’s move to number five, which is, oops, sorry, which is, what academic area, some of this I know we, the conversation is kind of spiraling around these, but if we can directly answer it, what academic area is the greatest challenge for you to teach?

**TEACHER A**
Reading

**TEACHER D**
Language arts

**TEACHER A**
Yeah, language arts

**INTERVIEWER**
Can you tell me about it?

**TEACHER B**
The reading itself has no relevancy. If you are learning science, it happens because this happens here and this happens here. If you are teaching history it’s because these things happened a long time ago and how you tie it into… well reading is a story blah, blah, blah it’s very hard.

**TEACHER A**
Spelling, the writing

**TEACHER B**
The writing

**TEACHER A**
All of it

**TEACHER B**
The writing is the most difficult for me because they have not learned to write the way we write and their adjectives don’t go with nouns the way theirs do. They have to do everything reverse, it would be terrible if I had to do that backwards

**TEACHER A**
Wouldn’t it be neat if they would let them write in Spanish, put it through a computer that would translate it to English and then give it to those TAKS graders to grade.

**TEACHER C**
I think that too. As a fourth grade teacher we’re under the pressure of TAKS and it’s easiest when I get them brand new because they don’t have to take it and it’s the ones that have been here awhile, they just need time and you know with any writer, time to develop and grow and
mature, just like any English speaker, and so it’s just more time to set there and teach. And do... I see that the verbs aren’t correct, spelling problem and set there and conference and conference and conference and that’s the hardest thing because you say, ohhh be descriptive, ohhh use figurative language, well they don’t have that basis as I was talking about, they don’t have that, it’s ...

What about the converting that you’re doing...send me to France, send me to college in France and I’m only going to be there two years and you tell me that I have to write everything I do and I have to meet a standard, and I better only write this much and why don’t you pre-write and I’m thinking okay...and I’m converting the language part and Teacher Dying to learn all this stuff and then you are going to grade me in a system I’ve never learned

TEACHER D
Exactly. And that’s basically how I feel it is in my class

TEACHER B
We’re going to have to go by and give her a back rub

(talking)

INTERVIEWER
OK, it sounds like umm you all said language arts, but I think **** you said you teach math and science

TEACHER A
I have taught reading.

INTERVIEWER
OK

TEACHER A
I’ll tell you why math and science is easier, now when I get into word problems, if I can have them read orally and I can explain ‘em, and you know you can always explain them, you can draw pictures are wonderful, body parts to measure is great, ummm.....Science, used to start science out with a hands-on experiment, then your not going to have Teacher Double. Now maybe right now we’re doing ummm the states of, matter. We’re going to do a density experiment, that I’ve got to go buy the stuff for, ahh Friday, okay, you know when we teach density, they may not understand that word when I first explain it, but last week we measured with cornflakes and we realized cornflakes is not good to measure with because by the time you take a quart and put it into a gallon, the third group doesn’t have a gallon of corn flakes, they have three quarts, well that was just something that we happened into and we got to talking about density, so I can give them a pitcher, working with it kinetically, you Teacher Dy to let them work with reading and writing and spelling kinetically at the third grade level they normally get that in K, one and two. And unless you are fortunate and even she may have Teacher Double doing it because the fifth graders may not want to work that way. I don’t want to work with those kindergarten learners, you know. So... that’s where you know, this year we have Chris Ann
who is pulling out for thirty minutes, the fourth graders, so maybe those students are going to feel comfortable to work with each other, put them back in the regular classroom and they’re not going to work the way they do in Kindergarten.

INTERVIEWER
I’d like to ask you, because you both I think I heard you both say you are both departmentalized

TEACHER C
Teams, language arts and social studies, math and science

INTERVIEWER
You are self-contained

TEACHER D
We are this year

INTERVIEWER
OK, so tell me

TEACHER D
In the middle of the year

INTERVIEWER
But if you think about today, or tomorrow or next week, if you think about it, what do you struggle with, which of the areas are the biggest challenge for you?

TEACHER D
Honestly, this is kind of a problem with our ….I don’t know if this is a problem with my school or my district, but, the kids in our grade level, because there are so many of them that are ELL are much lower and they are going to take the TAKS test. We spend three hours a day on writing and one hour a day on math. And that’s our day. We haven’t taught science since Christmas, social studies since Christmas, reading since Christmas.

TEACHER A
And I’m going to back her up; you’re probably not the only person in Texas that is under that extreme pressure, right now.

INTERVIEWER
So what makes it so hard, it sounds like you are saying language arts is a struggle so why is that a challenge for you? What specifically is the challenge in teaching....

TEACHER D
It’s just the background knowledge and the sentence structure, especially with writing and that’s what I can focus on right now that’s cause it’s my day
TEACHER D
It’s just the sentence structure. The lowest of my ELL kids have no idea that what they are writing doesn’t make any sense in our language. To them it is perfect. I mean you can, I conference with them over and over again and they just don’t have the background knowledge and they are thrown into it.

TEACHER A
When they probably stand up and read their paper orally it probably says something totally different.

TEACHER D
YES!

TEACHER A
They stand up and they tell you and you get the paper and you’re like, that’s not what that says

TEACHER D
I have to ask them, what does this word say?

TEACHER A
If you grade them orally, gosh you are going to give them a really good grade, but if you look at the paper, it’s like, ohhhh, we’re in Teacher Double.

TEACHER D
And I have no help. We had an ESL teacher last year that pulled out for 30 minutes but even then it was pick the two lowest kids in your class. When you’ve got twelve of them that are all the same, well maybe he’s just a little worse. This year our district changed ESL teacher as just a facilitator so they come and help just really spend a few minutes in classroom. But the principal has them constantly doing other things than helping in the class. The whole thing is just really frustrating to me.

INTERVIEWER
So do you guys, you mentioned language arts, do find any other challenges in the other content areas? I mean, I know you said math and science are easier.

TEACHER A
Anything with reading is more…

TEACHER B
Passage length, if they come new to the country, or even been here a year, WOW, an old timer, the passage length is so hard, because it’s long passages in science or social studies and that’s why I pick because reading is usually your longest passage and it’s not so much vocabulary as every single word is. In science, there are these four or five terms you in social studies you are Teacher Dying to learn the branches of government and this information, but b all this other information… reading is everything. It’s the entire…

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TEACHER D
And I know my kids have been taught to draw a picture next to the paragraph, but when I’m doing a reading test to determine what level they are reading at, they spend so long trying to use their phonics that they’ve been taught, that they lose the total meaning of the sentence and they’re not fluent in any way, and if we spent more time on just stop, again give them some time to learn these things. Again, my district doesn’t allow that.

INTERVIEWER
But hold on, backup one second, you said if we would stop and then you changed

TEACHER D
If we would stop and give them more time to get those skills instead of expecting, I think they need to be fluent, fluent readers, listed sight words, mine don’t even know basic sight words and then they’re expected to understand a fourth grade passage? I mean, there’s no way. And they say, draw a picture and then the picture doesn’t look anything like hat the passage is.

TEACHER C
I was just going to solve the problem….no, I just thought almost, why don’t they do what they do for, give them the SDAA which you would do until they pass a different level (inaudible short discussion)

Accommodations

That would be awesome

TEACHER A
Because now in math you can define any term they don’t understand. Why didn’t they do that for ELL KIDS?

(inaudible)

And then they kinda, oh, this is really need to understand, these are just… and when I see a word I don’t understand that starts with a g, I just say “g” and keep going, we’re not going to stress out over this one, we’re going to call it G and keep going. It could be Great Wall of China and they don’t get Great Wall so that they understand what we are actually talking about what’s going on, not significant…. Attila the Hun and they’ll spend 10 minutes on Attila the Hun.

TEACHER D
That’s a skill I teach them to do while we are reading

TEACHER A
When we do, do the reading comprehension they do something called finding the gist, it’s funny, that’s a difficult concept, I did teach reading and social studies last year and I think teaching reading is ELL kiddo to find the gist, it’s like just…

I know, I agree
INTERVIEWER
It sounds like you guys in general were saying language arts; I guess we could say writing and then reading are the biggest challenges. Does that sort of

TEACHER D
I would say writing is harder than reading

INTERVIEWER
But is that kinda what I heard, and then within writing verb tenses and all of the other uses of the language. OK, good

QUESTION 6
OK- Number six is what are the most helpful or effective resources, supports and professional development that you have received from your disTeacher Dict. So what has helped you?

TEACHER C
I feel bad for being so fortunate, no, my district they provided SIOP training and it wasn’t just come and let us read what the service center has sent us. It was really good led by teachers, who have been there, I think they are more consultants with the district, but anyway, they, there was an expert from the elementary and high school and we came in and we had days that we had subs. It wasn’t like on Saturdays or after school, we came and it was a make and take, of course I credit a lot of it because it was teachers. When you have teachers give, in the classroom, workshops, it was awesome. That was good. We have an ESL teacher on our campus that sees the ones who are in greatest need, but she makes contact with us, what can I do to help you. So that is, but I’m seeing that across the district, because of money, next year two campuses… money is a scary thing out there that they worry about. I would say our district has given us hands on workshops, make and take, reviewing new strategies by real teachers, this fall we had them and it was great

TEACHER D
Here’s how my district handled it

(Laughter)

TEACHER D
We had a staff development where our ESL teachers taught us just a strategy about like a science concept of having the kids restate and then a week later they came in to watch us how we were using it, took notes went into PDAS observations. That’s my district. And that’s it. Here’s another example, because we spend so much time on writing, an I have everything from gifted to resource kids, I’m a great writing teacher for the most part, so my kids did, we took a benchmark and my kids did much better than the other people’s classes, so the principal pulled, we had like one person that was coming in to help, so while I’m conferencing, the other person is monitoring the class, because my kids did so well, she pulled all of the help out of my class and gave it to another teacher.
TEACHER C
Awwww

TEACHER B
So, you’re punished for being good.

TEACHER D
So one teacher now has three people in her and I have nobody

INTERVIEWER
What have they done that has helped, even it was materials

TEACHER D
Nothing from ESL, nothing. Nothing for bilingual kids, nothing for ESL. Nothing

INTERVIEWER
Where do I go from there?

TEACHER A
To the next person.

INTERVIEWER
C

TEACHER A
Actually, I think probably what she is telling you is probably more true than untrue Due and the reason I say that is because I think from the administration level I think for the most part it was a to take seriously unless you are in a bigger district. **** does a good job; I think ***** is doing a much better job now

TEACHER D
I’m in a big district; there are 30,000 kids in my district. I think the money goes to the bilingual, certified bilingual teachers,

INTERVIEWER
Let’s focus on what has been right, because the next question is actually going to ask you what you do need. This is actually a very interesting question, because like you told me what has worked, that is good information for districts to know what has, so it could be as simple, if there is anything… you might need to dig real deep, but umm, any sort of materials, any sort of time, any sort of training, any sort of topics, anything that did help a little bit in any way.

TEACHER A
I was going to say thinking maps, it’s, our district is really pushing it, it’s pretty old, like a ’95 concept, but it’s thinking maps, it’s a graphic organizer. Having a bilingual teacher on campus, was Oh, thank you God …third and fourth grade teachers, we don’t get as much access to her as some of the others, but she’s a very hands on lady
INTERVIEWER
Let me, sort of interrupt you, and can you kind of tell me why those thinking maps are helpful and what the significance is there and what's the significance behind the bilingual teacher.

TEACHER A
Thinking maps help you because any time you introduce a new concept you know whatever it is very helps them organize their thoughts, maybe they don't understand what the word density is but by the time we do a bubble map or we did a double bubble on, we did the metric system and the customary system and we pulled out all the words, it helped all the kids organize their thoughts better. That's why I like thinking maps.

The bilingual teacher is a wonderful resource to go to and say I have Teacher Died everything I know and I'm still not reaching this kid. He started out on a first grade level, we're now to a second grade level, you know he's reading orally… wonderful lady to go to and sometimes just having the person to speak their language, oh, it's wonderful. We'll we do a lot of Cheryl Cox activities which is hands-on science, hands-on math, hands-on reading games, she's really good the kids are actually participating in what they are doing and those are the three I wrote down.

INTERVIEWER
OK, I those you mentioned the training and the ESL teacher on campus. Can you think of anything?

TEACHER D
Actually, the bilingual teacher comes to us all the time and says I'm frustrated, I'm not getting anywhere. My district is just doing a horrible job, I don't know if it is just my campus. Like I said we have one, in the last three years we had one bilingual teacher that handled fourth and fifth grade and she was so overwhelmed and just constantly frustrated not knowing whether I'm mean, she would get pressure from the principal, make sure those fourth graders do well, make sure the fifth graders do well, and then… so she concentrated on the fourth graders and the fifth graders did poorly, and

INTERVIEWER
And this is a pull-out program?

No, she's just a separate self contained she would come into my math class and be in the back of the room and translating, but then she got some other, and she just quit, so we have a brand new one this year and she's just again, totally frustrated. She only has eight kids, so

INTERVIEWER
So, have they given you, I apologize for cutting you off, have they given you, do you have any materials? Have they given you any ESL materials?

TEACHER D
No!
INTERVIEWER
So you don’t have any materials. Have they given you any training since you took that training?

TEACHER D
No, the one that we had from the staff from the ESL department said ok here it is I’ll come by and check you. And that was about it. We’re told, we know what we’re supposed to do, but it again, is just not the time, and just no resources, I have no ESL books, I have no ESL books. My kids use regular English novels, in English, you know, nothing.

INTERVIEWER
****, do you have anything that you thought was helpful or effective?

TEACHER B
Computer program, having access to a dictionary quickly and then there are a couple other programs on there, its called school bell and Starfall, both of them are low level programs and reads it out loud, put on your, you put on your little headphones and it says the boy pets the dog and then the child can repeat the boy pets the dog, and you know, very, very beneficial, so I’m really happy. My district I don’t know how supportive, but if I look at my administrator directly above me, my principal’s very positive about ESL and bilingual and because they have that feeling, they’re here and we’re going to educate them and they are part of our population and then she passes that feeling down to all the teachers and we all realize we’ve got to these kids we’ve got to make them part, they’ve got to grow, they’re here and I think that is what makes the difference, because she’ll say what do you need, are you out of supplies, what do you need, what can I do for you,. I said I’m good; okay let me know if you need something, I’m good, how’s that new kid doing? He’s going to come up to the office today and bring a pencil. I send them on errands to see where they can go.

INTERVIEWER
It sounds like you’re also saying in there that you have support from your administration

TEACHER B
Big, very good, very good.

TEACHER C
I’m just curious because I am thinking. I’ve been in a Title I school and there was more pressure, it felt more like you do as far as you do, we had more ESLs. The school I’m at now is not a Title I school and it’s almost like, we do a good job, not that they aren’t as needy, but it’s parent expectation that, it’s not bad parents, you’ve always done well on testing, you will continue to do well on testing, so the kiddos that we get in whether where they are on the economic ladder, this school will do well. It’s expected from the principal, everybody just expects it. You will do well. It’s not a, I know what you mean, it can be pressure.

TEACHER D
Maybe it is because I have a Title I school 78% of our kids
TEACHER A
We’re Title I

INTERVIEWER
I think what you were saying then is it’s high expectations…and that’s helpful

TEACHER A
Well, it sounds like whoever is in the administration and I’m not blaming anyone, but it sounds like what they are looking at is the bottom line. The bottom line is we want this amount of people to pass the test

TEACHER D
My district is so concerned with they got recognized this year and my school got recognized last year and they’re like we gotta do it, we gotta do it.

TEACHER A
OK, what they’re doing is focusing here but they’re not focusing on where the people from down here need to come up

TEACHER D
Exactly

TEACHER A
And, and in the process they’re losing how many teachers, how many

TEACHER D
It’s like if you have a student who fails and benchmark, you are immediately in the principal’s office, why did this kid fail? But yet there’s no support to offer you, to tell you, to help you with what you need.

INTERVIEWER
Let’s use that as our segway into what we need, but before we get to the last question, and I think you’ll like it, umm, it sounds like you were saying high expectations are something that pushed everything, you have support from your administrators, and

TEACHER A
I’ll also say this, we have …this is something that is real important that we do in our school, is we have a ELL meeting at the beginning of school with parents and it is the principal will speak but there’s actually a parent that comes and speaks and one time, I don’t remember the study, it was put out by TASBE, I’m sure you’ve seen it, about in Texas the Hispanic and even any ELL population has exploded and the Caucasian are going to be the minority and the Hispanics are going to be the majority and how if we don’t educate these people, if we don’t educate everyone, and start making those accommodations to were we are teaching everybody, America as a whole, that was kinda the gist, okay that was kinda the gist, that was shown to our whole faculty… it was shown at the meeting, sown to the Hispanic parents that showed up, I did realize that there is even a segregation in there. There were the parents that were here legally and the ones that
were here illegally. But, those parents came to support the kids. Many of them did not speak English, the faculty was there, we had chips and dips and snacks. Ummm, we usually do it right after school starts. And I think that is a big push. It kids, parents feel comfortable that we are here for your kids, and now that we have a bilingual person, who can actually communicate in the ARDs with them, a novel idea. A novel idea, can really help us understand what is being said parents nodding, you know. Ummm, I feel like there is a higher expectation.

TEACHER C
Along the same lines, the district that I came from that was a Title 1, we worked, they worked so long to bring in the parents and not only would we have the ESL night, in school every month, and those parents would come and have lunch or supper and we would have a talk where we would come in and we knew those parents and maybe we would not be able to communicate, we would have a translator and they would bring their children and we would have someone watch them so those parents felt very, very, very comfortable at the schools and it was because the administrators and we had to accommodate those, not had to because you want to feel comfortable where your kid goes to school, especially being in a brand new country. If I had to send my child to some brand new place, I mean, I would be scared and it made a big difference. I’ve had many conferences with a parent where maybe the child didn’t do his homework and they maybe didn’t know what I was saying but they were just shaking their finger. Because they support you all the way. So that makes a big difference.

TEACHER B
It does, I have a dinner, that’s what I do. September 15 to October 15 and the parents bring all the food and they just love it. And then the rest of the year I get free food…Tamales at Christmas. It makes a difference because they feel a part of the community … I had one parent say I make him speak English at home to me, she told me in Spanish, I make him speak English and he teaches his little brother. I’ve had the first and second students, but not the third because they learn enough English.

INTERVIEWER:
I have two questions. One, umm, so it sounds like you guys are saying it not just that the parents are there but that the administration and staff welcome and encourage and try to bond with them. You both said yes when she said speaking English at home, you both said yes. Why?

TEACHER A
It helps their reading so much.

And

TEACHER A
I don’t want to take away their native language, but when you are Teacher Dying to teach reading it’s really hard if they don’t practice it. I remember a story on a family night, that this young man had not done something and I had spoken to his, a translator translated to his mom, well his mom spoke to him in Spanish and told him to tell him the truth and if he didn’t he would be in big Teacher Double and he did. He fessed up and I never had Teacher Double out of that young man again.
TEACHER B
I do all kinds of Teacher Dicks like, I tell them I know what cartoons they’re watching and I’m going to ask you three questions about this cartoon tomorrow, so ya’ll be sure to watch your cartoons tonight. That way their watching English cartoons, they love cartoons, they love all that Japanation. It doesn’t matter to me as long as it is English, but I find out what’s your favorite cartoon. Okay, I’m going to ask you tomorrow. So, they’re learning more English and I tell the parents I want them to watch this and they’re gong to have some questions.

TEACHER C
Books in a bag, have you done that before? Those little things are just monumental. If nothing else…. They’re not, I don’t mean to say just because you have the parents ***…. Sometimes administrators think, ohh we’re going to have this ESL night and we’ll introduce ourselves and that will be really good that we had this. It is really bonding and having relationships all the time on a consistent basis. They know… it makes a big difference it comes from….

TEACHER D
Yeah, and I think my district is, they’re more into technology. For example, my district provided an IPOD for every ESL middle school student. They gave the teachers IPODs so we can do podcasts. They’re into technology, when we have open house, we have head phones that the bilingual teachers can speak into and the Spanish speaking teachers can do that. They’re more into technology….

INTERVIEWER
But you don’t find that helpful?

TEACHER D
Well it doesn’t help me as a teacher; I mean it gets my parents involved. When school started we had meet the teacher Spanish speaking teacher speaking and the parents came, but the parents basically just… they didn’t care. They wanted to see their kid’s classroom. I don’t, some of them support their child. Most of them I feel don’t, I don’t know if it’s just the administrator… we’ve had open houses, we’ve provided buses from the apartments to pick up parents for open houses so they can come to things like that, they just don’t do it, and I don’t know if it’s parents work or they just don’t….

TEACHER A:
They may be afraid of being picked up. I’ve heard of schools actually the police will wait in the parking lot… I don’t know if that’s … it’s just what I’ve heard about places in the … and you know it’s like

I think the principal is Teacher Dying to make an effort, I think she recognizes it, but I honestly don’t think she gets the support of the money she needs.
QUESTION 7

INTERVIEWER:
OK… with that being said, thinking about this last one…what do you need? So… sky’s the limit, what do you need to better address the academic and language needs of your ELLs?

TEACHER A:
Time

TEACHER D
I need a pull out program.

INTERVIEWER
This might be a good one to jot things down real fast.

TEACHER A
I think you need time. I think that we need a umm, a government in Texas

TEACHER D
Reformed testing laws.

INTERVIEWER
OK, I said the sky’s the limit, but….

TEACHER A
What I’m saying is, not just the government, but we need a better understanding of what we are Teacher Dying to ask these students to do… a realistic understanding.

INTERVIEWER
OK

TEACHER A
Because you know, we’re pushing these babies and by gosh, they’re doing leaps and bounds in general, but we need a realistic expectation. You cannot send every teacher on your campus to be trained to take an ESL test and turn around and brag that you are ES, ELL certified school and that I’m going to put her in that class because she’s an ELL teacher and then think, OK I’ve done what I have to do for the governor, I’ve done what I have to do for my administraor, my principal is happy, and they’re in our class and they get left over in the corner because no one wants to work with them. Fortunately you’ve got teachers that don’t think that way and still looking for you know better training

INTERVIEWER
So what do you need, if we can’t change anything?

TEACHER A
Better training
TEACHER C
Hands on training, real strategies

TEACHER B
strategies. They say they need a lot of scaffolding, well what does that mean, show me how to scaffold

INTERVIEWER
When you are talking about strategies, be more specific

TEACHER C
In other words, get, I’m always looking for a fun, hands on way that I can teach vocabulary. Or you know fun, hands on way that I can teach writing. I like it when teachers share, teachers who are really in the classroom. I do not like when they were collecting all that writing again and we have to go online, and what is that TOPS. You know that is a waste of our time.

TEACHER D
Exactly

TEACHER C
And you know it is so… and then they audit it. I understand that we want to keep kids on track, but….it just wastes….I could be doing something else

TEACHER B
Send someone else in to do that

TEACHER A
Yes

TEACHER C
Yeah

TEACHER B
Free me up to teach

INTERVIEWER:
OK, so, you said training on strategies and scaffolding, you said specific ways on how to…

TEACHER C:
Right, because even if we learned them a long time ago, maybe I’m just putting that in the back of my mind. But when you come up and you’ve got hands on, let’s do it, teachers who are really in the classroom, this is working, sitting around, not just somebody who, you know, has not been in the classroom a long time and I think this is…but that’s about everything, you know…That’s what we want to do. What can we do that ****
TEACHER B
I don’t want to make another Xerox copy.

TEACHER A
And don’t send me to an MELL workshop on mathematics and I go and hear about the research
that someone’s done about the difference in… and I just wasted my time. It did not help me
teach that ELL kids one bit

TEACHER B
Everything is research driven. And I’m glad that they did research, but that is not what the
meeting is about. I did not come to know that is was research driven. I assumed it was research
driven when I walked through the door. Do not do some overheads and give me the history of
these people. Show me how I’m going to teach this person metamorphosis.

TEACHER D
And let me practice it

That’s kind of what you don’t need anymore, so what do you need? If your principal came to
you tomorrow and said what do you need.

TEACHER C
Ideal classroom?

INTERVIEWER
Well, I mean

TEACHER C
Ideal if I could build my own schedule. I think what has worked in the past for me is when I had
students who were struggling language learners, I got to pull them in my classroom with quote
no pressure, meaning they were in there to hear the language, experience the language. Not under
the pressure, like I said, that first year TAKS, kid coming in that doesn’t have to take the TAKS
test I think I would probably make bigger leaps and gains. Because the they go to their intensive
teachers, so in other words, don’t be so worried, especially in the lower grades if they don’t get
all the science and social studies TEKS, they’re going to get that later.

INTERVIEWER
So you were saying you need….I’m not sure if I heard you say you need time or you need to
develop your own schedule

TEACHER C
Both. Or in other words, I want to be able to look at that student, say this is what’s best for that
student. Another thing we didn’t even get into what happens when a kid has already been here
for like three years and they’re still under ESL, you know down in your gut they probably,
ummm, have a learning disability, well it’s like an act of congress to get them tested.

(Inaudible)
TEACHER C
Oh no it’s ESL. It doesn’t matter what it is, the kid’s having difficulty and not being served in the ESL. So, I mean it’s a lot of things, if they would just Teacher Dust us teachers a little bit more rather…

TEACHER B
They need more time in language development

TEACHER A
Right

TEACHER C
Exactly

TEACHER B
They do not need to be worried about curriculum; they need to be worried about language development. Curricula will come when language has been heard. What we need as teachers, is a place, a time to just do language development… don’t worry about what its about, if it’s social studies, science, or whatever because they are sitting in these regular ed. Classrooms and they’re not able to pick up a thing because they’ve only been here a year and they’re sitting in a room where all they have is simple little bites and lots of language development, then you put them out in those classrooms they’re going to have a whole lot more at the upper grade…I’m not talking about if they come to me as a kindergartener we are learning everything together. But if they walk through my door as a fifth grader they don’t have any of that

TEACHER D
And you just described my classroom. Ok, if they had been in the country even less than a year and they speak English well enough… oh, well put them in there, so

INTERVIEWER
So what do you need, I think you are a good example of telling us what you need

TEACHER D
I would love to have someone be able to pull out my kids and work with them on that language development and not have to worry about you have to get them up to par because they’re going to pass the TAKS test … all I hear…I have a kid that took the Spanish TAKS test last year and this year he is in my regular classroom. He’ll take the English TAKS test.

INTERVIEWER
So what else do you need as a self-contained classroom teacher?

TEACHER D
Someone to work with those kids…probably some, some training, hands on things …I’m sorry but teaching me in a staff development and a week later saying let me come watch you do it without really….that isn’t training. That is just a waste of their time and my time.
TEACHER C
Let me explain…one good thing about this training that we had…it was like three days…oh so I had more than those hours I put down on there…anyway, three days, six hours and then we go and do our thing for two weeks and come back another six hour day, do our thing, so in chunks like that is good. We’re learning too so it’s not overload.

TEACHER D
So just the better, better training. Don’t just sit there and lecture me, the same thing with the history and then expect me to pick it up and I don’t care if you come into my classroom and model it in front of me with my students. That’s kind of what I need

INTERVIEWER
OK. I think you were saying training, but more practical training

TEACHER D
Practical training

INTERVIEWER
Sort of tag teaming it… you need to time to hear it, process it and practice it, and revisit it again

TEACHER D
Right and then reflect on it and then go back if that didn’t work…what else can I do

INTERVIEWER
Is there anything else you could use in your classroom that might be helpful? For you, you know?

Probably what would be the most helpful for me, because I don’t speak Spanish in any way, and knowing what kind of things are I had no idea that the Spanish speakers thought that V was B, and the first time I was doing it I was like, what is the deal here. Those kinds of things, someone to come and explain and work with me on those and analyze some of my kids writing and sit with me in a guided reading group and explain to me why they are not getting that. Because we do guided reading for example, I have no idea what vocabulary words my kids might not, won’t know.

INTERVIEWER
It’s very interesting actually that you just said that

Well, and think about this, writing is a hard concept to teach, I’m not even talking about the mechanics. It is very hard even for your regular kids, to say okay let’s teach and make sure you have a voice, and you can teach how to organize it, but when it all sits it all comes down to you’re Teacher Dying to explain something to a child, he has no clue where he’s, what’s it’s coming from. No clue, so it’s like a foreign concept and what they’re thinking in the back of their mind is, or what I think they are thinking in the back of their head is let me get through this language arts and get back to something I, you know.
TEACHER B
Regular ed. Writing is hard, regular fifth grade students it’s hard to teach writing …dyslexic students, it’s hard to teach writing, resource student, it’s hard to teach writing. You put ESL students in the same thing, they’ve got like twice the overload... they’ve got the language that they’ve got to do differently and it’s hard to teach writing, you know it’s spoken word on paper. That’s hard, very hard.

INTERVIEWER
So it kind of sounds like, just to sort of sum up this last question, that you guys were saying, umm training is the biggest thing, it’s not so much all the materials and things that they can throw at you, it’s really the training and support that you guys need

TEACHER D
I guess it’s the type of training, not just more training.

TEACHER B
More research driven training (laughter)

TEACHER A
I don’t want the analysis; don’t teach us how to analyze writing samples of ESL kids. We can pretty much figure that one out
Focus Group 2

QUESTION 1

INTERVIEWER:
Ok.. question number one, Why did you get your teaching certificate….ESL teaching certificate? Whoever is ready can just kinda pipe in.

TEACHER E
I got mine in the first place to be employable in California and I knew that would help me because it was called the CLAD an it still is called the CLAD and it was basically ESL, so and I went for the bilingual after that.

INTERVIEWER
OK

TEACHER F:
I got my ESL certification because I see, saw the need in the classroom. I had ESL students and I didn’t know if I was meeting their needs. So it was bothering me so much I might as well just go and get certified in… so that because… I was worried about, ummm were they, were they low because I wasn’t doing what I was supposed to be doing, to do and no one seemed to know because I was the only one on the fourth grade that had them in my classroom.

INTERVIEWER:
OK

TEACHER I:
I was not told to but requested or strongly encouraged by my first principal. I was alternative certified and they were saying that would be a good thing to have besides just being, I am 4-8 certified, so that helped and I also saw the need my first year and I was wondering, okay what else can I do and I have loved having those students in my classroom, so it just fit. It was a good fit.

TEACHER H
When I was hired they asked me to get it the next summer. If we hire you now will you try to get it over the summer and so yeah, I said yeah

INTERVIEWER
Good answer, James

TEACHER H
Right answer at the time

TEACHER G
I did it in order to meet the needs of more kids and also to learn more about the learners, because
it wasn’t something covered in a lot of the teaching education classes. Ummm, even though most of the kids in the United States, at least in California where I went to school and in Texas, are second language learners and then the stipend was also a nice incentive.

TEACHER J
I’m sorry

Go ahead

TEACHER J
The ESL strategies work for everybody not just the kids that just got here from another country, and it’s just working for me with being departmentalized… they come in and I do the same exact, you know, total physical response to get them all motivated, it’s just funner to do ESL. It really is.

TEACHER K
We’ll I have several reasons, ummm, for one thing I had taught in San Antonio for three years, ahh, for my very first job in a totally Hispanic neighborhood. In fact, it by Lady of the Lake, the Edgewood School District line and uhh it was a completely different culture and I had trouble coming from my background, relating with the kids and I recognized it immediately and it was something I kept going okay, that’s my problem and when I came to Irving, uhhh, the children had just become more Hispanic and I had felt again more and more that need to improve myself and then the district asked everyone to get it and I thought, I need this very badly, so…

INTERVIEWER
OK, so it kind of sounds like you had two, two parts… the natural interest and experience but then the district did ask you to do it.

TEACHER K
Yes

INTERVIEWER
OK. Umm… James did they ask you, and Brooke also, since you, and Marilyn, since all three of you said that the district asked you to get it, did they provide any training?

TEACHER G
I was also encouraged

INTERVIEWER
Oh, were you? OK . So, did you guys get, did they, was it just a matter of taking the test or was there some sort of course too, to…

TEACHER I
This was when I was in Waco and Waco had a weekend long staff development and they went through test materials and then they didn’t pay for me to take the test but I felt very well equipped to take it and passed it after that.
TEACHER G
They offered one in Irving but I don’t know if it was free or…. I don’t remember.
I didn’t go to it.

INTERVIEWER
I got that.

TEACHER H
I don’t think they offered anything for me but since then I see emails all the time saying these are the courses, here they are and…

TEACHER I
I saw that the one they had just recently they didn’t have anyone sign up. Or they only had about three people sign up and they were about to cancel. So…maybe people aren’t taking advantage of it.

TEACHER G
I think that’s a problem with the ESL trainings in Irving. Not everyone…Well, I had gotten study materials.

TEACHER E
Well now they are offering like a thousand dollars isn’t it if you go through the courses the first year, the ARISE program, I believe, and so it is a better deal now.

INTERVIEWER
OK…So, that’s or ESL, the ARISE

Yes

INTERVIEWER
So..You go through the ARISE program and then there is a thousand dollar stipend?

(Jumbled discussion of how the stipend and ARISE program)

Excuse me, they gave you a thousand dollars?

Yeah, like everyone thousand dollar stipend up to this point

In 06-07

In my school tere is every grade level has one ESL teacher per grade level and that person gets the stipend. That is through 06-07. For next year, if you are not enrolled in ARISE, you will not get the stipend. I’m not doing ARISE and I’m not getting the stipend. I really don’t want any more staff development.
I did ARISE, I’ve had it two years now so I should have gotten the stipend. I emailed them and told them I did not get the stipend and they told me they would pay for me if I took the test, it came through an email. So I went and took the test, but they never reimbursed me.

No I don’t think you’ll get reimbursed.

INTERVIEWER
Maybe, maybe we could talk

TEACHER F
We need to talk about something else, ok, I’m sorry.

INTERVIEWER
OK, so here’s the next question…I’m sorry.

TEACHER F
No, I’m sorry

**QUESTION 2**

INTERVIEWER
The next question is, and again you can jot some notes down, what do you do to meet the language needs of your ELLs in content area lessons?

TEACHER J
I bring in a lot of things from home and I’m a rat pack I just keep all kinds of pictures and just, and my husband, in the garage and in the back shed is mine because it is full of just stuff that you accumulate over the years and it’s helped me because I mean, without it I don’t think I could teach and I know a lot of principals when I talk to me and hire me, you know you are going to see a lot of stuff that I need to teach the lessons. I don’t do it by units because of the way the curriculum is, but I try to still keep it, where social studies goes with language arts and that way they could understand concepts okay.

INTERVIEWER:
So tell me how, you said you bring a lot of stuff in, so what are you doing with that stuff to meet their language needs?

TEACHER J
Umm, for example right now we are with George Washington. So I have my little wig and they dress up they try to learn that old language back then and we do a lot of role playing and it’s, kind of, because I did do kindergarten for awhile, so it’s kinda like kinder but it’s not, it’s fifth grade and they’re doing the curriculum and they’re having fun but they’re learning, you know basic history of America.
TEACHER I:
I allow them, especially some of the, bilingual kids with very limited English, we allow them to
in science or whatever, we allow them to respond in Spanish to explain something if they’re
having trouble or some of my kids that are out of the bilingual program but still struggle with the
vocabulary, maybe give them some extra time to think about it. Umm also the pictures and hands
on
Cognates help so much
Cognates

TEACHER I:
That helps. Right. And then obviously make the connections between the languages. Umm, like
what did we do… adaptivo or adaptations, we were talking about adaptations you know they
were saying the words were the same and also explaining it in simpler English terms….a lot of
times allowing them to use those lower level words.

INTERVIEWER
OK

TEACHER F
I teach fourth grade and I have found that with my class this year, that I have to have a lot of
hands on, and I do all this (hand motions) when I am talking. The thing that has helped me the
most spelling words. I go through each individual word, I give them a sentence for it. They know
they can ask me if they don’t understand. One time we had cucumber and they did not know,
because I have a child from Pakistan I have one from Korea, and one of mine is from El Salvador
and the others are Hispanic. So, I brought the newspaper and the Spanish, the Mexican grocery
and then when she did that and I brought a cucumber, she knew what it was. They are so
comfortable in my classroom that if they want me to explain something, they don’t mind putting
their hand up and if I can’t tell them, the other students will try to help me. And then I’ll just
bring something in to explain it to them. Because I told them, no question is a dumb question.
And they have been picking it up so much better.

INTERVIEWER
So it sounds like you were saying you use spelling words, acting it out, you bring in realia,

TEACHER F
Yes…and they can ask another student and if the student can’t tell them, then they’ll come to
me. They can always speak up in class if there is something that they don’t understand what
we’re doing.

INTERVIEWER
OK. Alright.

TEACHER H
In science class we do vocabulary before and after
INTERVIEWER
What do you mean before and after? Can you tell me about that?

TEACHER H
Yeah, sure. You go over the vocabulary they’re going to encounter and then you teach it, teach the lesson and then you go over the vocabulary after they’ve understood it.

INTERVIEWER
Sure, but what are you doing to teach the vocabulary.

TEACHER H
Well, ummm, for instance, we just got done with circuits. So we would start with circuit and talk about words that it reminds you of. And they could say circus and hopefully they would say circle and even if they say circus, you can talk about the rings in the circus. So you talk about how a circuit is a circle and that’s just the pre-vocab. Then you have them do the lesson on circuits and you have them make it and then they see it’s actually shaped of a circle and then you give them the real, or you have them define it in a real, definite terms of a circuit is a complete, all wires and parts connected in the shape of, not necessarily, a circle. Anyway, that would be a before and after.

INTERVIEWER
OK

TEACHER I
I’ve used that Irving has great video streaming and we, it came up in some guided reading lesson about a giant sequoia tree and they couldn’t visualize a giant sequoia tree and it is just so much more enormous than anything else. So I googled it and then popped up an image on the screen. Then they could see and just kinda listening for what they’re lacking. It made the context of the story because they family was driving through a sequoia tree and they just couldn’t visualize that. And then we do a lot of vocabulary flip charts. You know, the word and draw a picture of it, real life definition, and things like that so they can kinda have a concrete model.

INTERVIEWER
OK

TEACHER K
Uhh, one of things that I’m trying to get my teachers to do is not just talk about the meaning of the word, but also talk about the relationship of the new words to each other. Because it’s fine if they know this one and this one, but if they don’t know how they interact with each other, especially like in science, or social studies, then it’s really not going to make that much of a difference in many cases… and when we use interactive word walls which all of us are doing, umm, I know that we do drawings, definitions and in your own words and acting out and there’s about what 14 or 15 different ways to do a noun, antonym, synonyms, etc, related words, put it in a context, you know, where did you find this

?
What it’s not

TEACHER K
What’s it’s not and what is, umm, so all of these things are what we use all the time and I think it’s just second nature now, especially with the clientele we have
Interactive word walls, making connection between the relationships of words

INTERVIEWER
Hmm-Hmmmm

TEACHER E
Piggy backing on what they said earlier, the cognates, giving them experiences and making sure that they know how to make relationships and things...a lot of time students in my classroom don’t realize that you don’t have to learn a completely new language to move into English, which is where most of my fifth graders are ... if they have a background in Spanish a lot of times they translate to higher level English words, like preocupado... preoccupied. A lot of fifth graders aren’t going to say well I was preoccupied about that, but my kids would understand that because they use those roots. It’s kind of enlightening for them to say, ohh, I know what that word means… and I’m saying the kids across the hall don’t and they’re having to learn it brand new, so making them feel like wow, it’s not a deficit thing, you know, speaking another language when they come in because you know all of mine are bilingual, I can go Spanish oriented moving into English. I don’t have to take into account other languages so that’s kinda an aide for me as a teacher. That’s very eye opening for them.

INTERVIEWER
Interesting…. Okay so it sounds like you guys talked a lot about using visuals, whether it’s on the video or computer or you’re bringing it in from home. You’re also specifically addressing the words, like you mentioned, you’re teaching them the words or spelling words.

Question 3:

INTERVIEWER:
OK, thank you… let’s move to number three, which is…there you go guys…how do you determine the practices you use to meet the, so how do you determine the practices you use to meet the language and academic needs? Marilyn, no smirking.

TEACHER K
OK. I didn’t mean it that way (laughing)

TEACHER F
I can start that one off, I know I cannot do it by the paper and pencil assessment, but one thing I do with my student is when I talk to them, I look into their face and their eyes and you can tell if they’re getting it or if they are puzzled about something. And then I hone in on that one and ask them questions about it….what don’t they understand and they know that, I tell them all the time I’ll stay with you until the cows come home, but I want you to understand what we’re talking
about. And then you can see the light bulb go off whenever it comes through and whatever it takes to make them understand, I will stop and help them. We do etymology, where the word comes from and I’ll look it up and tell them and then they are so surprised of how that came about…. but umm, because assessments doesn’t always help because they can’t read, it’s not a true grade of what they are capable of doing. And then I let them sometimes share what they are doing, like I had a girl, she was doing something, from Pakistan, she had that henna where they do it, and she explained to the class why she had it and it was only the women and how they go about getting it and what it means and everything. And everybody, they’re jaw dropped and it was very, and she was just….there was something about her that they wanted to know, she wasn’t always trying to catch up with them.

INTERVIEWER
OK…What else?

TEACHER G
I really like the put reading first strategies, it was a training we had to go to, my school at least, does a lot of guided reading, so when I have my ELLs in my, in at least two of my groups, do different strategies to make sure they are understanding summary and things like that, and sometimes I just fly by the seat of my pants.

TEACHER F
Don’t we all.

You came in with a plan and you must see where it takes you.. and if it’s not happening, just tweak and readjust

TEACHER E
The reading groups are where I see what they need and just teach them the strategies, you know pretty much…..

INTERVIEWER
Can you kind of tell me, you said in the reading groups, so what’s going on in those reading groups that’s telling you what they need?

TEACHER E
We’ll pretty much the vocabulary, I feel like ELLs have the most problem with, so like he said, we talk about the words before the story and everything, but even when they are using it, you know go back and what does that mean to you, you rephrase it, use context clues, think of all the different strategies where they could, even in Spanish, rephrase it in Spanish, how would you use it in a sentence, because they tend to want to keep going, they want to get to the end of the story, or they wanna…

TEACHER J
We want to predict…no, no, no, we’re going to go back and expalin it, and they think you are so boring because you want to know what that word is, but you try to make it fun… ok, let’s see
who finds it this word and they’re going through the book, and ohh, I found it, and just different ways to get them excited about finding the words, because …

TEACHER I
I also do a lot of fluency work in guided reading groups.

TEACHER J
Yeah, those palm pilots are wonderful. They love it when you get to see how fast the read or something. They want to be with the group, so that’s important I think, reading groups, without the reading groups I don’t think I would be able to assess them because like she said, we do tests every week, the TAKS series and the TMBS and there are …..a by the time you get the information because edusoft is kinda slow sometimes, Other results not fast enough—perhaps not accurate
I don’t think it’s really even that accurate

TEACHER J
It’s not as accurate as did they really get the predicting, summarizing, so the reading groups

INTERVIEWER
So, small group instruction, which goes along with what you said…What else, Marilyn, you look like you have some thoughts

TEACHER K
Yeah…I’m that way

INTERVIEWER
And you look familiar

TEACHER K
Uhh, most of us do by teacher observation and that comes with years of practice and experience and we do base it on the child or the group of children because we know each year the class makeup and personality changes as well as what you can and can’t do with them. And also I think most of us read the TEKS on the one hand and look at our children and say okay, we’ve got to get these together….what exactly tricks in my bag do I know that can get these two together and stick.

INTERVIEWER
Did you want to say anything…. You have nothing to add?

TEACHER H
Uhh, I was gonna say…

INTERVIEWER
You have to James!

Right (laughter)
TEACHER H
Umm, I think Marilyn hit it that rarely teach something once in my classroom, because my kids aren’t that type that gets it like that (snap) the first time so, a lot of times, I teach it one day and then maybe 2 days later, especially in math, if we teach a different concept I try to teach it a different way to see what sticks and what happened or worked two years ago didn’t work this year or it worked really well this year and two years ago a brighter class didn’t get that concept at all. So just trying different things to, not assess their needs, but ummm, to meet their needs

TEACHER G
I think also all of our staff development that is positive ummm are good teaching strategies for all kids and umm you know, I guess a lot of it is geared towards ELLs anyway, I mean in our district, and so you know I just use ideas that I hear there and just knowing your kids, you know, that’s the easiest. ‘Cause the standardized testing is, I mean, they can get one right but they just guessed on, you know you can’t use that as a measure how, I don’t think, how fluent they are in English, you know, I think, personally, so I don’t base a lot on that.

TEACHER E
As much as standardized testing and that sort of thing is maligned, I do have to say that before school starts I do have to look at their portfolio folders and look at the TELPAS and I’ve found that generally they are a little it lower than what the kid can do in the classroom, so I kinda use that as a baseline and then and then I realize if I have these groups in English and then get them going and it’s just a good point to start from and then from there you can definitely

TEACHER G
I think that those are accurate because teachers do those.

?  
Yes.

?  
Not the reading part

TEACHER G:
Ok, the reading, yea, but the listening, speaking and writing. That’s all teacher observation and I’ve found those are very accurate. I think those are, I should clarify.

OK, so it sounds like, in general, most of you say it is child watching, watching the kids or small group instruction or possibly using some of the standardized assessments, TELPAS we’ll include in there, and weighing that with your own observations. Does that kind of…

Group:
Yes

INTERVIEWER:
Good.
QUESTION 4

INTERVIEWER
OK, let’s move to number four, which is what aspect of English language development is the greatest challenge for you?

TEACHER I
Do you mean you as a teacher?

INTERVIEWER:
For you as a teacher. You know, what are the biggest challenges in the classroom, when, you know, chances, chances are if it is a struggle for the kids it is going to be a struggle for you and you know, the other way around. So, and thinking specifically about English language development.

TEACHER E
I think I would like to start this off just because I’ve had reading together forced on me for the last two years and I didn’t have a say in it umm and that’s something they wanted specifically for the bilingual class, where my students tutor second graders because we can serve more kids that way… we’re supposed to do third, but with reading levels in English the way that they are it’s better that way. It’s supposed to take the place of our ARI time, ummm, our reading time with those students and umm, I, it’s very frustrating because you can’t get all of your reading groups through because that’s an hour of your time four days out of the week and frankly I don’t know that I’ve seen the gains that it’s supposed to show with it for the amount of time that I’m losing and so for me just having enough time for my reading groups and that type of thing is something that’s lacking, so that’s a huge challenge for me because I can’t do a thing about it because it has been dictated

INTERVIEWER
And the program is intended to develop English reading

TEACHER E
Strictly English

INTERVIEWER
OK. Who else?

TEACHER F:
I think I because I did it last year and I’m doing it now. I thoroughly enjoy it. I had one that, from Pakistan that was doing, coming in as a nineteen and now she is up to forty nine….now, she’s not where the other students are, but she progress steadily in it and with us doin it this way and when she has to read a story she has the day before so she comes up to me and we go through it and she questions me on something and then we look at the pictures and then relates to what going on in the story and she reads it to me and everything. She is trying so hard, but what I find my biggest struggle is, is we did a field test in writing. They are excellent writers if they
can sit and tell you the story, but they’re not going to be assessed on oral, it has to be written but yet they don’t have different standards for ESL students.

INTERVIEWER
Right, and just to kind of clarify, I think what you were just talking about with the writing might come into the next question that we have… but if we kinda just think about English language development, like you said, that they are able to speak, but perhaps not write, let’s consider writing as part of a content area. So, if you guys think about, developing that English language, like we have to show on part of TELPAS,

TEACHER G
I have something

INTERVIEWER
OK

TEACHER G
I think my biggest challenge is relating academic language and the things we read about and talk about to their real world experiences, because they’re very limited experiences. For example, I was reading out loud to them just the other day and a luggage rack example came up, like the rack is made just for luggage in a hotel room. And I asked the kids how many of them had seen that and five or six out of twenty four raised their, rose their, whatever you say, raised their hand, and ummm, it just baffled me that these kids hadn’t been in a hotel and they’re ten, eleven, twelve, some of them are thirteen. I mean, they just, they have very different experiences than the literature that we read a lot of times. Ummm and another problem a couple years ago was tourist, that kids didn’t know. They didn’t know the word tourist… it was a fourth grade reading passage. It was a strange word for them. So, their language, their experiences are very different from school language.

INTERVIEWER
OK, James if you don’t mind, I saw you nodding at one point when *** said something

TEACHER H
I have the same thing… lack of background and cultural knowledge. I feel like when I read orally to them, I’m more of, not a narrator of the story but an explainer of the words, and so I find that when I read I’m not only changing words for synonyms, but sometimes I’ll add on a sentence as though the author had it in there as an explanation

? To clarify

TEACHER H
Exactly

INTERVIEWER
So, if we, well I’ll ask, anybody else, what would you like to say?
TEACHER F
Can I ask her a question? When you were talking about your students, and you too *****, do you find that because their limited travel experience that it’s not just ESL, that all of them have that same problem

TEACHER H
Yes

TEACHER F
And I find myself reading to them all the time book from the library and reading so that they can expand on

TEACHER L
OK, the kids that I have are very worldly, I have newcomers and they are from all over the world and many of them have traveled far and wide, so I guess it depends on the socio economic and more than really language

INTERVIEWER
So, let’s kinda get back to this idea of what of English language development is a challenge. You guys mentioned that sort of academic language, what else would you guys say, what else did you write on your papers?

TEACHER I
I wrote down spelling and just English conventions, irregular verbs… I guess that’s more writing since I’m fourth grade, but yea, spelling, they just come to fourth grade and the rules about I before e except after c, and just things that I feel like they’ve just lost along the way, ummm, maybe they know how to spell it in Spanish, I don’t know. That’s where I’m working a lot. I mean high frequency words are just not,

TEACHER E
Writing is the last of the skill set

TEACHER I
I know

TEACHER J
The problem that I’ve seen district wide is science vocabulary…it’s just killing us. I think it’s mainly uhhh not all teachers, but most teachers we don’t feel comfortable with a lot of language like today we’re talking about the trundle wheel…I’m like what on earth do you measure with that? Of course she knew that for race tracks, I don’t know to make measure distances, long distances. I think I don’t feel very comfortable ahh teaching the science vocabulary because I’m not very good at science, but umm, I’ve learned over the years with other teachers that have shared, so I feel a little more comfortable, still I think to teach something you need to be real comfortable with it. You can’t, and I think that’s where were at right, in my own experience.
INTERVIEWER
OK

TEACHER K
OK- I put down that the hardest part I have is coming up with creative instruction daily to teach the new words… it’s like maybe three times a day I need three completely different activities so that it will continue to make an impact. If I don’t mix it up, they are not going to learn as well. And then the other thing that I have trouble with sometimes is teaching the idioms, like don’t throw the baby out with the bath water

Group
Uh-huh

TEACHER K
And all kinds of things that are historical and yet they have not had any experience with those. So sometimes when I am trying to explain in my simple language the idiom comes out that I have to turn around and explain in that way too

TEACHER E
I think for native English speakers for those kids it the same for them too, they don’t understand all that either

TEACHER E
They like to play those games like jeopardy and who wants to be a millionaire, around the world, and any time you play games with them, they love just trying to remember what was on that word wall

INTERVIEWER
So, you two mentioned and I think also if we think about science vocabulary as sort of that academic language, can you guys talk a little bit more about that, why that academic language is a struggle and I’ll include that, I know it’s a stretch, what you said Brooke, that kind of language they need to be successful writers, so we’ll lump it in there with academic language.

TEACHER G
I think most of the schools, at least our school, is mostly, mostly hispanic kids and I know mine are all but a couple Hispanic, even if they are not classified ELL, at home they speak Spanish and English and some of their parents even if they are not classified ELL, because of the way the paperwork was filled out or whatever, they’re parents maybe only speak Spanish, so when they go home, even though their Spanish isn’t very good, that’s what they hear and see and they watch, you know, Spanish television and they go to fiesta and they, I mean that’s their culture, there’s Spanish everywhere, you know, so you know they English for six or seven or eight hours a day and

If we’re lucky
TEACHER G
Yeah. I think that even if they are not considered ELL, it’s a struggle for our kids in that aspect, because all of our kids are exposed to Spanish more than English in their day to day life…most of them, I wouldn’t say all of them, but most of them, the vast majority of them at least at our school. I know not all schools in our district are like that, a lot of them are too.

TEACHER J
It used to be that umm we had more time in the classroom to do the English, but now with our new people in charge, that it seems like ok, second grade, first grade, I think they can do twenty percent or something English. It’s really low. Enlish.

? It’s ridiculous

TEACHER J
Then in third grade it’s fifty – fifty and then fourth is

TEACHER K
80% English and 20 % Spanish

? And that’s not really happening

TEACHER K
And then fifth grade is 90% English and 10% Spanish and then in sixth grade there is not a bilingual program

TEACHER J
So, it’s just, I don’t see that, this happening, English language development with our students if we’re trying to do that program. It’s not going to happen by fifth and so I have right now three kids that just got here so I’m doing Spanish with them because they are not up to par on their Spanish and of course in the afternoon it’s all English so they are learning to mesh in and of course they are still in their silent period… but then we I have some who have been here since pre-k and don’t speak, you know, in English and so they do the BICS and not the CALP. I mean, I have problems with that, I really do, because it’s just not right.

INTERVIEWER
So, just to be sure that I understand, you’re saying that because there is such an emphasis on

TEACHER E
TAKS test

TEACHER I
We don’t want to offend anybody, we’re ready to all speak Spanish all the time because we don’t want to push anybody, that’s how I feel at my school, to speak English and most of my students we’re born in the Dallas, North Texas area, have gone to early childhood schools in Irving and
have been in even my own school since fourth grade and are still speaking Spanish way too much

INTERVIEWER
And you, ***, were also saying it’s because, you’re saying the English language isn’t developing because there is such an emphasis on Spanish?

TEACHER J
Right, if I’m going to give the TAKS test in Spanish, I have to be teaching I Spanish. But thank God there are some principals that say okay, go ahead and do the English instruction, they’re still going to pass the TAKS test in Spanish because I know they’ll still pass it in Spanish. But because that’s part of the, you have to take it to go to the next level, it’s such a pressure now. So, that’s where we’re at.

INTERVIEWER
OK, so it’s kind of a combination of too much Spanish and too much focus on TAKS, both ways?

(nodding)

INTERVIEWER
OK

TEACHER F
Can I add to that? My classroom, I have found when I have parent teacher conference, the reason I feel, they’re not picking up English because the language spoken at home is Spanish or it is another language, they come through kindergarten, first grade and they’re in fourth now, but that is not, English is not being spoken at home. And the parents when they come in, the child wants to translate for me and I have to call to the office and have someone else translate. When I look in the parents’ face, when this is going on, the parents are so proud of them because they can speak English, even though it’s not all English and it’s not, it’s broken English, they still feel and that child is held on a pedestal by the parent and they come, the child in my classroom and they think that they should be great in my classroom too, because they speak in English, so it’s hard for me to teach them when they think they already know. And so they won’t, it’s hard to get them to buy into it?

? It’s true

(Laughter)

TEACHER I
Is it because the parents think that the English they know is good enough?

TEACHER H
Because the parents cannot speak English. Anything the child does is better than what the parent
can do, it’s better than what the parent can do

TEACHER F
Then it’s better than them

TEACHER G
Yea, yea, I can see that

TEACHER F
And they think they are academically up here because they can speak English

? Some English

TEACHER F
and it’s not so

TEACHER L
Do you send the papers home with the frowny face on it?

(Laughter)

TEACHER F
Not for fourth grade. I go get somebody to translate it and tell them exactly what

TEACHER L
I mean like their test papers and work that they do…if it’s not perfect mine have corrections on them and in some countries 70 is a good grade and it’s like (whistling sound) really good, but here it’s really not.

TEACHER F
Well…

TEACHER L
I have facial expressions and you know and all kinds of stuff on my papers that go home and

TEACHER F
What grades?

TEACHER L
I have self contained newcomers where its 1 through 5

? Whoa
TEACHER L
But, you know, the parents won’t, don’t really know what’s on that paper, but they can see that little face and they can understand and hen they come to me ….please help my child and you know though a translator I can tell them what’s going on

TEACHER F
That’s what I need, a translator to let them know what’s going on…you’re exactly right.

INTERVIEWER
So, umm, to wrap up that question it sounds like ummm, vocabulary is an issue whether it is academic vocabulary or the general vocabulary to get through any, what do I want to say…. It’s the social and academic vocabulary that they need and that there’s also a problem because there isn’t enough emphasis on English or enough time allotted to actually learning English. OK, does that kind of sum up what you guys were getting at

Group
Yes.yea.

TEACHER M
I would like to jump in and say use it or lose it, if they don’t continue to use it over and over and over they’ll lose, just like when you learn any language

QUESTION 5

INTERVIEWER
OK…I have ummm, if you can keep your same color…ok the fifth question and this is kinda going back to what we started on is what academic area is the greatest challenge for you to teach? So we were talking about before the sort of what is hard about teaching the language and I’d like to know, of all the content areas which is the most challenging for you to teach when thinking about your ELLs?

TEACHER E
For me it’s science just because of the dependence on academic language, in fact for those students who were taking it in Spanish it was still hard because it was written at such a high level and now that the push if for everyone to pretty much take it in English, umm, it’s very much a challenge especially for those words that don’t really translate better, that one’s Germanic and not latin enough.

TEACHER G
I think reading is the hardest, as an upper level well I don’t have the patience to sound out words and to teach reading, and that’s why I like teaching the older kids because you learn through reading and I think it is hard to do the abstract higher level thinking skills. I think it’s harder
anyway, but especially kids with limited vocabulary because they can’t even understand the basic meaning of a sentence much less analyze the

TEACHER G
Yea, the inferencing, so I find that very challenging and also writing is very tedious and a lot of things like I learned at an ESL conference this summer, you know in Spanish it’s okay to say, not never, or a double negative, right, and it’s not okay in English. So, even some of my smartest kids still use it. You know those rules don’t, like she was saying those English crazy rules that we have are hard to teach, but the abstract concepts… to me like science and math is so easy because it is so concrete, you can do things and have pictures and it may make sense to me, but the reading and the writing it’s tedious I think.

TEACHER E
Yea, because it’s fun when you’re teaching the lesson and they’re all excited like today I had one answer, one little boy put nobody could not go west of the Appalachain Mountains, so he had the concepts, but like you said, the double negatives were there and you have to go back and explain you never use no twice and everybody so it is a struggle but still science is harder for me because that vocabulary is really, I mean these words are really hard, the ones we are trying to teach them, and it’s so many of them. I mean we’re talking so many and I guess in fifth grade they just throw it all at you at the same time, and you’re kinda, what should I focus on? You know, they’re good with animals and biology and all that so I’m going to go with landforms, but then they’re struggling with that, so you want to do it well, but it is so much. You’re and so I just stick with the ones in fifth grade, landforms and ecosystems and I don’t go back to kinder, first and third to review all that vocabulary

INTERVIEWER
It sounds like you were saying and correct me if I’m wriong, Josie, that science is duiffiiult for you because the terms are sort of so complex

TEACHER J
Yeah

INTERVIEWER
but also that there not just that the terms are so complex but the amount of material that you have to cover. Is that what you were saying?

TEACHER J
It’s overwhelming with that many words

TEACHER G
Which ideally you shouldn’t have to covered because they should have been covered in k through 4th

INTERVIEWER
What else?
TEACHER G
I would say writing… verbs, syntax, write with voice… some of my ELLs are pretty decent writers by now to the point because they’re following the formula, they’re just formula writers… they’ll pass, hopefully, the test but they have no voice or creativity, they’re just trying to get it down on paper. If they can say it out loud… beautiful, but… writing.

TEACHER M
Language arts, use of grammar, different rules, that’s what stops them every time, because as you are learning, you go from what you know and ummm as ELL what you’re supposed to do is build from your primary language into your second language and now we are saying you’re primary language is wrong because of this rule and that rule and grammar rules and now we need to teach you the correct way… so the whole foundation of going from first language to second language ummm it sets them up to fail.

INTERVIEWER
It sounds like language arts is more difficult because its more heavily based on language.

Eureka!

You have a thesis! (Laughter)

TEACHER M
Rules that are opposites of their primary language, their first language the whole bilingual language system is start with your primary, get a good foundation and use that as a spring board to the second language

TEACHER E
If they start early… Kids that come late get 90/10

TEACHER M
I got one yesterday you’ve got to start them somewhere and that’s the whole spring board… ok use your primary language, let’s go ahead and go the second language and then the first thing you do is… that’s not right, oh, double negatives and so it stops them

TEACHER H
OK, what about you James

TEACHER H
I put writing, but to me the problem with writing is listening, because id they can’t listen, they can’t learn the language, because so much of writing is does it sound right. Well, oh yea, it doesn’t sound wrong to me (Laughter)

TEACHER H
Yeah, it doesn’t sound right or wrong it just sounds like it sounds. They, I have kids who have listening problems and so I try to differentiate… is this kid zoning me out because it is the fifth
hour of the day and they’re tired of me or are they trying but they are only getting every third word, to me I don’t separate writing and listening because if they can listen they can get, you know how some kids can learn from TV and some kids just watch TV? I don’t know, so yea, writing and listening.

INTERVIEWER
OK, what about you Robin.

TEACHER L
I put composition especially when the topic is academic. So just bringing their thoughts together…it’s easier to express something orally but wow, but even really oral expression…listening is really not that big of a problem in my class I guess. They can listen and even when I think they are not listening, they really are, but when I ask them to compose whether it’s speech or writing, it’s like wait a minute, now I have to put it together and produce something…no.

INTERVIEWER
So when you said academic writing did you mean any kind of writing that you expected to be done or did you mean on academic topics

TEACHER L
On academic topics. For instance, you can say, write about your best birthday party. OK that’s a personal experience, but if I say tell me the difference between

TEACHER G
Solar eclipse and lunar eclipse

TEACHER L
Yes, then it’s like

TEACHER H
Rounding numbers

TEACHER L
Explain in writing how do you round numbers to the nearest ten

INTERVIEWER
OK

TEACHER K
The thing that I put down was reading but it was more or less the tier 2 words and uhh the district has been pushing Marzano’s book with Tier 1 basically being BIPS and and Tier 3 being CALPS, and then the other Tier 2 words are the words that everybody uses all the time, but they’re more process words that are used in every subject. And ummm, like homonyms, the difference between a-c-c-e-p-t and e-x-c-e-p-t. Or multi meaning words like run for office or run in your hose or ….those types of things that it’s almost a completely different word. And yet
you still use it in the same way and in many languages one word means one specific thing only, and that’s very hard to explain to a child, how the differences can work.

INTERVIEWER
OK, what about you Julie

TEACHER E
I started off with the science, I was enjoying listening to everyone else

TEACHER F
I’ll go…mine is the writing. The reading is the hardest thing is stopping with the punctuation, so that you can have time to understand. I read to them all the time. I always get a short book from the library to read to them and they can stop me and ask me and I can explain to them what’s going on. English language is one of the hardest languages to learn and I recognize that, so you know I have a lot of empathy for the students that come to my classroom and so I tried to learn a little Spanish, and they teach me a little Spanish, I teach them a little English. They’re up here, I’m down here. But, they, so they know how hard it is for me and that they do and we had a discussion this week on k-n-o-w and n-o and they had the hardest time figuring out what one or the other means. I don’t have trouble with the science because I do labs all the time, I’m always doing something in the classroom so that they can visually see and then instead of asking them umm, like we did electricity, how do you make a complete circuit, I tell them we have just passed magnets and electricity, I want you on your piece of paper to tell me everything that you know about that subject. And then when I read it I try to read through their mistakes and interpret what they are trying to tell me. And so that’s how I know that it’s the language that’s the barrier. The intelligence is there, but it’s the language that is the barrier.

INTERVIEWER
So it sounds like and I know a few of you mentioned science, the complexity of the words and the amount of the science vocabulary and everything, but it sounds like in general that most of you are saying that it seems a little bit easier to teach subjects that you can make more concrete, were you are applying vocabulary to concrete concepts or experiences versus trying to apply meaning to abstract terms like know, or should or could, things like that

Group
Yea

INTERVIEWER
OK, OK, well thank you

QUESTION 6

INTERVIEWER
Let’s umm go to number six. Thank you and here’s that lone blue. OK number six is, and this is going to be a hard one to stay focused on, so I’ll tell you what six is and then what seven is. Six is asking you what the most helpful or effective resources, supports, or professional development
that you have received from your district? So try and keep it on what’s really helped you and then question seven is gonna ask you what you still need. So it’s easy on question six to get into what you didn’t get or what’s not right, but I really want to focus on what has been helpful. And it could be anything from a packet of pencils to a week long training seminar. So…. 

TEACHER J
I use Avenues a lot because it’s such a good program. Soar to success is really helping me

INTERVIEWER
OK- tell me why Avenues is helpful.

TEACHER J
Well, just the pictures, layout, the vocabulary is right there explained and it’s bright, bold colors

TEACHER H
Defined idioms

TEACHER J
Yes and it goes with the curriculum, our social studies that we need and science and it’s wonderful

TEACHER G
I think it’s good too. I don’t teach ESL as a certain subject during the day but I’ve used Avenues stories that go along with the science curriculum. They have songs in there that the kids enjoy and they use. So I think that’s the most

TEACHER J
And all the cards come with them

TEACHER G
I don’t use them so much but the stories, they’re a little bit lower level so you can read them with all your kids because science includes the special ed.kids that are lower even and ESL or whatever and so everyone can understand those. I was going to say Avenues too. It’s a good book

TEACHER J
Program

INTERVIEWER
And what was the second thing you said?

TEACHER J
Soar to Success is a real good step by step, you know you start at the beginning and then figure out what level their at, so if their second grade level, third then I start at their level, even if it’s two or three kids. You know you might start out with six groups at the beginning, but hopefully by December you’ve got three groups
INTERVIEWER
And that’s your reading program?

TEACHER J
Yes…Soar to Success and then just the basals.

INTERVIEWER
OK

TEACHER M
They have a new uummm, uhh, at least at our school in Irving, A to Z reading, it’s on the computers, that’s really helpful. Ummmm, it does a pre-vocabulary, a reading, follow-up questions, an activity to work on and the kids can actually use it online or you can print it off. So you can hook those kids that some of them, you know you give them a piece of paper and they see English or they see another language …rrrr, but if you get them on the computer, that attracts them. They’re willing to work over and through their frustration.

TEACHER J
And they get real proud because I do the Spanish and the English

TEACHER M
Uh-huh

TEACHER J
And I print both off

TEACHER M
Exactly

TEACHER J
They come back…I can read it now. It’s a real big deal.

INTERVIEWER
What else has been helpful or effective?

TEACHER I
We do a lot of Fountas and Pinnell guided reading strategies. I just think they’re the best. Ummmm and Randi Whitney, the program we do for writing is awesome

INTERVIEWER
And did you get training on those?

Hmm-hmmm

The PA series is a new thing Irving is doing where kids go to the computer and do these like fill in the blank quizzes. I think those…I kinda though they were a waste of time, but they do spit
out a lexile number and our librarian showed me how you can go into this program and the kid
has a lexile of 700, then you can search for books that are in that level and it helps with
independent reading because if the kids not reading on their right level it’s not good for anybody,
and so it doesn’t take very long and so I will now say that PA series has been effective.

INTerviewer
Good

Teacher I
Because of that

Interviewer
So tell me about these trainings and why those trainings and programs have been effective, the
ones that you mentioned

Teacher I
Ummmm, Fountas and Pinnell is just great guided reading strategies for any group, so you’re
just working on all the harder skills… you know prediction, inference, context clues, things like
that, and then they tie in writing with that… writing independent reading journal and it helps
apply k-n-o-w to n-o and things like that and it just gives them another opportunity to be writing
and I like that

Interviewer
So it was more the program not really the training

Teacher I
Well it was good training instructors and our instructional specialist at our school was doing that
and coming in and doing guided reading lessons using those strategies, so it all kind of fit

Interviewer
OK

Teacher G
I was also going to say the hands on materials that the district provides for math and science is
good. A lot of districts don’t have that, the manipulative kits, I don’t, they’re good… there
hasn’t been a lot of solid training on using those with the curriculum, at least math. Anyway,
and also brainpop is a computer program that it’s kinda hard for the ELL kids, because it’s kinda
fast

? It is fast

Teacher H
We watch it three times
TEACHER G
Yea, but it’s visual, they can hear it. I have them do the quiz and turn in the quiz and si it’s a little bit of everything, and they can rewatch the quiz, the video, whatever, but….it’s the whole, all the senses

? Right

INTERVIEWER
OK

TEACHER G
And it’s subject based, by subject and then Irving bought a subscription for us this year. It’s been very helpful

? Yea, I like that

INTERVIEWER
What else has been good?

I think for professional development, the best thing I’ve gone to in the district was G/T summer institute, which I actually did five years ago now, because part of being hired was I had to take the minimum thirty hours and since G/T certification and all that, but ummm it really opened my eyes to a lot of things. When I was in school, you know, you just went on these field trips and that was about it, it wasn’t a classroom way of being, coming from other districts where it was a pull-out program, that’s not the most effective way, so I learned so many things that can be applied, even in my classroom. This year I have no G/T kids at all, ummm yet using the differentiation and umm helping them to reach their fullest potential no matter where they are… I really wish I could have gone to it other years. It was a really good program.

INTERVIEWER
Good. *** is there anything?

TEACHER F
Ummm, I like the ARISE, not so much for them as for me, because I really though this year that I wasn’t coming across and helping them, but when I did the ARISE, I realized I am doing something, I am helping them and you know, you can’t make it a hundred when it’s down here at nineteen, you have to take the steps. The other thing I like, I really enjoyed the Reading Together and I’ll tell you why. They get the instruction, then they introduce the book and then the student reads the book to the second grader and then they discuss it and they do, they have hands on, they make a book or they read, and they send a letter home to the parents from the tutee. Now they do two books a week, now when I’m doing it with them, it might take us the week to cover, but they are introduced to so many different situations by the two books a week, that I have noticed that their spelling of the basic words has gone up in their writing. It’s coming over into their writing. And they feel like everyone in the class is doing the reading together and
there’s a student over here that reads English very well and I’m over here doing the same thing they’re doing. So it builds their self esteem.

INTERVIEWER
Good.

TEACHER F
I really, I really like it and this is the second year I’ve done it. And I’ve seen how it makes them feel better about themselves and want to learn.

INTERVIEWER
Good. Good. OK. What about you ****?

TEACHER L
I’ve got a lot of stuff. Our curriculum is online and there are a lot of resources with that and also ESL strategies that are on there that are helpful. I love Avenues, there’s so many things that we do with that that are curriculum based and content based. My students each have a video IPOD with microphones and that has just been an awesome tool for them. Tonight their homework is to take their guided reading book and I have on here the leveled guided reading library. It’s great. They take their book and they read it into their IPOD, they bring it back, hang it up and I go back around when , hahah, I have a free minute.

(Laughter)

TEACHER L
And I just listen to the voice memo and I can hear them read their book, make any anecdotal notes about this word, this little pronunciation here. It has been wonderful and their spelling has just skyrocketed.

TEACHER G
I went to a presentation on that this summer at an ESL. Is it good

TEACHER L
Yea. It’s awesome. Ummm, we also use Ellis online. Ummm our district has cultural ambassadors at each school who will contact parents who are ELL parents and especially ones that are coming from another country and we’ll welcome them to the school, talk to the parent about expectations of the parents, because I’m sure you know that these parents are so hands-off to the point where I’m going to the car to grab them and they’re sometimes like, are you talking to me, you know, you’re the boss, you do whatever.

(Laughter)

TEACHER L
No really, I want your input. And then the translation services that we have are awesome. I know if I need a translator I can just pick up the phone and say okay, I need this.
INTERVIEWER
OK, what about you James?

TEACHER H
Well, I had support staff down as something different. Our district, at least our school, has reading specialists where my lowest readers and often my ELLs umm go there for an extra hour longer of reading on top of the reading they get with me. And that is I know lots of districts and schools that don’t …you’re kids come to your classroom and then you’re done, they’re yours, good luck. But umm, at our school, everyone is willing to help and it is a culture of everyone is in it together. I think that comes down from the district or at least from our school.

INTERVIEWER
Interesting… so in addition to the support you are also saying the fact that the administration set up a community where,

TEACHER H
Sure…

INTERVIEWER
would you say it’s high expectations? Or would you say it’s welcoming

TEACHER H
I hesitate to say that it’s the district’s culture, you know I’m not an uppity-up with the district, you know.

(Laughter)

INTERVIEWER
I know it’s my school’s culture, ummm, this is the back up, what would you say it is?

TEACHER H
A culture of success, expectations, and ummm, everyone is expected to do their job and the administrators facilitate that and expect that, and

?
Teamwork

TEACHER H
Yea, I’ve heard of schools, my wife taught at a school where you got punished, if the principal didn’t like you, you got moved down, out of the TAKS grade because it meant that you were a bad teacher. But, umm….you know that lack of understanding that it’s a Web and if you have bad teachers in K through second, your kids aren’t going to pass TAKS in third. And, so, umm, that’s not how our school is run from what I know of the district.

INTERVIEWER
OK, what about you ****?
TEACHER K
Well, I agree with you that the district is not run that way, but we really try to do more as a team than anything. I think that’s one of the reasons we get those math manipulatives is because the district finally realized we knew what we were talking about. I think one of the biggest things that has helped me is the ARISE training, because, while I know these techniques, I don’t have them completely memorized yet. This has so many lists and ideas, I don’t have to keep coming up with all of the things that uhh my own ideas… I already know what’s going on and can look at the list and picked out the things that work. Part of the Avenues that I thought was interesting…I had a child just fall in love with English at Your Command, which is like a dictionary..

?  
Yea

TEACHER K
And she said my grandmother is trying to learn English, may I take this home and she did and it finally came back in two months, but uhh, she and the grandmother were then speaking English to each other and that was an excellent part of Avenues.

INTERVIEWER
Did you want to add anything or did you?

TEACHER M
I touched on a couple of things… again I was , I put a little plug in also for the TAKS books that we have in English and in Spanish. Ummm they are so on level and the kids are able to walk through them as a process, step by step, that I think that I enjoy using those and the kids know to work on them independently, as a group, as a class.

TEACHER J
I wish mine enjoyed using the TAKS practice books.

TEACHER G
I know …two kids asked me to recycle theirs today.

TEACHER J
We finished the orange one finally and we are in the red one now. But they were very excited to recycle it and we might win that recycling

TEACHER G
I graded, their last ones are today and tomorrow in the orange book and they are like, can I recycle it?

(Laughter)
**QUESTION 7**

**INTERVIEWER**
So, we just have one more question left, maybe we could just to keep it focused and go around quickly so I can get you out on time, what do you still need. You guys just told me a lot of great things tat you have in place and you have received, but if you had to come up with something that you would still need to better meet the language and academic needs of the kids, what would it be?

**TEACHER F**
I can start that, ummm, we had a survey that we had to fill out at the end you could put a comment. My comment was, it was about the district, my comment was that for the the make up of the students we have in our schools what we need to do is instead of jumping around with the curriculum guide, that I think we need to start and build a foundation and then work on that. If, my daughter in her school started in the beginning in the math book and they take a chapter by chapter. They start a foundation here and they work up. 98% of her students pass the TAKS every year. Her school is recognized and she said every year it’s a different class of students and we all get them, but she said if we start that language from the beginning, and we walk though, they understand it much better than this jumping around all the time and that’s why we don’t have that many exemplary schools, recognized schools, because they need the foundation with the make-up that we have, so I told them so. I’m in trouble already anyway.

(Laughter.)

**INTERVIEWER**
What about you ****?

**TEACHER G**
I think just the opportunity to see more teachers, really good ESL teachers in action, or ELL teacher, whatever the word is. Teachers in action

? That would e good

**TEACHER G**
I think the best things I do a lot of times are either copies from other teachers or things I think of when I see another teacher doing something, so I think just seeing somebody use the things …we have tons of resources,

**TEACHER H**
It’s overwhelming

**TEACHER G**
…it’s just a matter of using them and knowing which ones to use. And I know a lot of that is trial and error. Bit I would just like…. 
TEACHER M
I put the ARISE training and then training that you can take because sometimes the ELL classes or what have you, I’m not allowed to take or its umm suggested to me to take a different training versus something that I think could be used in class. There was a lady down there talking about the G/T training I think a lot of the G/T training may be used throughout, but sometimes when you sign up for it, ummm I’m not discouraged, but… if there is an ELL training I am told to go to that instead.

? Exactly

INTERVIEWER
OK, what about you ****.

TEACHER H
Smaller classes. If the district could provide that I would be happier because you can make so much more progress with a smaller class, even if you have kids come in for 20 minutes before school or 20 minutes after school, the progress you make with those kids one-on-one is exponential, but you know trying to reach the low kids in a class of 23 or 24 is a lot harder.

INTERVIEWER
What about you ***?

TEACHER L
Well I agree that more opportunities to network with other ESL teachers is really very valuable, but for my situation, personally, separate my class into a primary class and an intermediate class. I have too much going on…. I have an aide also, but I have to do all the planning for all those grades and it’s just too much for me

TEACHER F
How many students do you have?

TEACHER L
16

? Wow

TEACHER L
I’ve had fewer and that’s the problem, because I had fewer kids last ear and this is the second year I’ve done 1-5, but before that there was a primary class and an intermediate class.
There are too few kids.

TEACHER L
The numbers went down

The numbers went down and they added them together.

TEACHER L
Right now I only have 2 first graders and the rest are third, fourth, fifth. And then I’ve got the one kid who’s never been to school before and he’s eight years old. He was in a Russian orphanage, so….

INTERVIEWER
You are a little outside of the norm. What about you ****?

TEACHER K
OK, one thing that just bugs the heck out of me…

INTERVIEWER
What question said, what bugs you?

OK, what I would like is the vocabulary lists from the district. I hate going in and looking at stuff and choose this word or this word if you’re really that concerned about it, you come up with the list and that will make it much easier. Because this is time consuming, and it’s easy in science and it’s easy with you know some of these other things, but in reading, in Tier 2, what do they need to know. We’re getting no help

TEACHER L
We have that in our online curriculum and it’s really a life saver.

TEACHER K
All we have is science vocabulary and that is a huge problem

TEACHER G
I struggle with that too with reading, teaching reading. If you don’t use the leveled, or the basal or whatever and a lot of times if you do a novel and you get the teachers guide some of the words are just ridiculously ridiculous, and they’ll never need to know them. You know, there are suggestions, but you ask them to pick words they don’t know…like I’ll let them write down a word you don’t know, you come up with the vocabulary words and they come up with like 50 of them

Yea, that’s never worked for me. That’s why I like A to Z
TEACHER G
It works every once in a while?
It gives me a shot in the dark

INTERVIEWER
Did you have anything else on your list that you wanted to add.

TEACHER K
No, no, that’s it

INTERVIEWER
What about you, Josie, what do you still need?

TEACHER J
Ummm, well, I’m lucky to have almost everything I want.

Must be nice.

TEACHER J
I’m in heaven

INTERVIEWER
I’ll send that straight to the ad. Building.

TEACHER J
 Seriously, I’ve gotten a tutor to come into my room for an hour and that’s when, ohh, I can take those little three that have no, have nothing, just ot here and help them, you know. It’s just been wonderful and I just think, we are in one of the best districts, I really do, because we’re blessed and maybe it’s . I think it, it, umm, I have brought in the phonics game and stuff that I wouldn’t mind if the district buy it, an extra five hundred dollars, but it’s… you do stuff for the kids because you just love them, you wanna help them, whatever it takes, and so I think, ummm, like she said, the culture in the school is so important, because if you have people that just want to help your kids and you’re, you’re saying pull them in during this time or that time. You know at the beginning of the year, I was trying to schedule them all and everybody was helping me and it was just great to have people like that…it’s just I’ve never seen so many people wanting to help these little kids. You are usually by yourself and so I’m very happy.
Tutor is helpful

INTERVIEWER
OK- I’ll send that straight to Dr, Morris.

TEACHER I
Ummm, I would love to see more of an awareness from the K-3 teachers of where the kids need
to be at the time they hit fourth and fifth grade. I think everybody at my school wants to help, but I cringe when I walk down the hallways, the k-2 hallways and they’re just speaking Spanish. I cringe, because I just don’t think in the long run that is where they need to be helping and I think those same helpful people if they knew they would be doing more English and then I would love a great math text book. Our math

TEACHER H
YES

(Laughter)

TEACHER I
Is TAAS, it is so old, it has never been updated and there’s something about the legislature they’ve never gotten the money or something and I would love…Avenues is great and so I always wonder what about a math text book.

TEACHER J
We used to have that Addison Wesley and that was awesome I mean I still kinda use it sometimes as a supplement

? I like that word

? There you go

INTERVIEWER
OK, is there anything else anyone is dying to say? Because I know you were sitting and listening to each other… anything anyone is dying to say that has been weighing on them? No, nobody’s feeling moved?

TEACHER K
I’ve noticed that everyone agreed pretty much there were no arguments.
APPENDIX H

DESCRIPTIONS OF TEACHER TRAININGS AND PROGRAMS
**Randi Whitney Writing**
The Writing Academy (TWA) is a comprehensive, brain-compatible writing process that serves kindergarten through the junior college level. The Writing Academy was developed by a classroom teacher, Randi Whitney, to meet the needs of her students. It addresses: Organization, Lexicon (good word choice), Idea Development, Voice, Expected Conventions, and, Sustained Focus. [http://www.twa.net/](http://www.twa.net/)

**Cheryl Cox Training**
Cheryl Cox Educational Consultants has provided quality educational materials and workshops since 1995. Cheryl is a very versatile presenter. She develops and uses materials that are designed for a "hands-on" approach. Teacher love her workshops because they are able to be engaged participants. The workshops address math, reading, science, writing, and K-2. [http://www.cherylcoxedu.com/](http://www.cherylcoxedu.com/)

**Brain Pop**
BrainPOP is an educational program, providing content spanning 7 main subjects including: Science, Math, English, Social Studies, Health, Arts and Music, and Technology. [http://www.brainpop.com/](http://www.brainpop.com/)

**Reading A to Z**
Reading A-Z offers thousands of printable teacher materials to teach guided reading, phonemic awareness, reading comprehension, reading fluency, alphabet, and vocabulary. The teaching resources include professionally developed downloadable leveled books, lesson plans, worksheets, and reading assessments. Reading A-Z children's books and lessons are appropriate for all sorts of reading programs, including K-6, ESL/ELL, special education, and remedial reading. The reading program's downloadable books and lesson plans are standards based and results oriented. [http://www.readinga-z.com](http://www.readinga-z.com)

**Ellis**
ELLIS leverages the power of technology to move your English language learners toward basic English fluency. It offers management utilities, reporting features and comprehensive curriculum to address a wide range of proficiency levels. From true beginners to more experienced learners, ELLIS is your comprehensive English language teaching and learning solution. ELLIS lessons are designed to move learners immediately from observer to participant. ELLIS addresses the needs of non-native elementary to adult students to foster successful English language learning. It closely follows the natural pattern of language acquisition via its research-based instructional methodology known as Watch—Learn—Practice—Play/Perform. [http://www.pearsondigital.com/ellis/](http://www.pearsondigital.com/ellis/)

**Avenues**

**Reading Together**
RT is a cross-age tutoring program in which fifth graders support second graders in both reading fluency and comprehension. Additionally, the tutors develop leadership, problem solving and
higher level thinking skills.

**SOAR to Success**
SOAR to Success functions on teaching the four strategies of Summary, Predict, Question, and Clarify. *Soar to Success* © 2008 is a K–8 intensive intervention program designed to meet the needs of struggling readers. The program, based on over ten years of sound research and authored by Dr. J. David Cooper and Dr. David Chard, covers all five areas critical to reading success.


**Thinking Maps**
Thinking Maps® are visual teaching tools that foster and encourage lifelong learning.


**ARISE Training**
P.A. Series
Fountas and Pinnell Guided Reading
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