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# Preparing Pre-Service Teachers to work with English Language Learners

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# **Preparing Pre-Service Teachers to work with English Language Learners**



Honors Thesis

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Department: Teacher Education

Advisor: Stephen Richards, UG Intervention Specialist Program Coordinator

March 2014

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## Abstract

English Language Learners (ELLs) can be misidentified as students with special needs. Teachers often watch these students struggle in school and assume they have a cognitive delay, when in reality, they may just be struggling with their language delay. To be identified as needing special education services, these students undergo assessments to test their abilities. These assessments were created for students who speak English. Studies have shown that “Familiarity with Standard English accounts for more than 50% of the total test variance on IQ and achievement test measures for fourth graders and 60% to 90% of the variance for seventh graders” (Abedi, 2002). Therefore, ELLs are put at a further disadvantage during the testing period. If placed in a special education program, the student rarely receives the language instruction needed. The current structure creates an environment where ELLs can easily be misplaced into special education programs where they will continue to fall further behind in their education. To prevent this problem, pre-service teachers need to gain experience with ELLs so that they can give them the instruction and support they need. Not all pre-service teachers have access to classrooms with ELLs. In order to try to replicate this experience, instructors turn to video case studies that show pre-service teachers authentic footage, assessments, and class work of an ELL. The goal of this research is to determine the effects of video case studies on pre-service teachers, and what questions were generated as a result of the in class clinical experience.

## Dedication or Acknowledgements

University Honors Program

Dr. Stephen Richards, Thesis Advisor

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## Introduction

In today's school systems, many English language learners (ELLs) are misidentified as students with special needs (Zetlin, Beltran, Salcido, Gonzalez & Reyes, 2011). This results because their language delays are often mistaken for cognitive delays. Therefore these students struggle to be successful in the current education system. In order to help improve the situation of ELLs, one must research what is currently happening in the classrooms and how pre-service teachers are trained. Once one understands the present situation, one can determine how to improve future programs for pre-service teachers and for ELLs.

The reality is many English language learners are often referred to or misplaced in special education classrooms. "Children's lack of English proficiency was often misinterpreted as a disability and they were referred for special education" (Zetlin et al., 2011, p. 59). Teachers often have difficulty deciding if the student's struggles originate from a language or a cognitive delay. This problem is common in many schools; the faculty of one school district in San Diego, California (Maxwell & Shah, 2012) noted that special education has become the "default intervention" for ELL students. Other teachers automatically think this is where struggling ELL students should be placed in order to receive remedial help; however, this action should not be completed without considering the long-term effects on the student.

Historically, schools were placing too many ELLs in special education programs. This commonly happened in schools with a small ELL population. After legal issues surfaced, schools began to overcorrect and put too few ELLs in the special education programs. These schools also were identifying these few ELL students far too late. This commonly happened in schools with a large ELL population (Maxwell & Shah, 2012).

During either circumstance, ELLs have to deal with the after-effects of how their learning was assessed. Before any ELL is placed in a special education program, the staff must decide whether their struggles come from their issues with English usage or if they truly have a

disability. It has become difficult to answer this question because the assessments used to place children in special education are frequently intended for a test taker who speaks English. This disadvantage makes it more likely that they be placed in the wrong program. Even if assessments are in their native language, there is no guarantee that the student received proper instruction in this language either (Zetlin et al., , 2011).

ELL students are misplaced in special education programs for many reasons. Many students struggle with material that their peers are mastering. Subsequently, many teachers respond to this situation thinking they have a disability when it may be a language barrier. There are many factors that go into the student's success and the teacher's response. Studies have found that "Time in the United States accounted for 10% to 15% of variance in observed results for both fluency and comprehension" (Barrera & Liu, 2010, p. 277). This suggests that one cannot expect immediate results from instruction, and that merely waiting for students to become more proficient in English over time is unrealistic. Instead ELL students need instruction that meets their individual needs. It has also been found that many students have been thought to have a disability because of their behavior (Barrera & Liu, 2010). ELLs may not behave as other children do, but this may be due to their culture and upbringing, not necessarily a disability.

Another problem is the readiness and ability of teachers to help. General education teachers often lack the training to adequately help ELL students; studies have shown that special education teachers are even less likely to be appropriately trained to help ELL students. They are less likely to be bilingual and have trouble modifying the curriculum for a language barrier. So even though teachers may be trying to give these students adequate support by putting them in a special education program, they may be putting these students at a further disadvantage (Zetlin et al., 2011).

These issues together create many struggles for ELLs. To implement a better education, pre-service teachers need to be trained appropriately in order to help ELLs succeed. Therefore,

one needs to understand the current training for pre-service teachers and how well prepared they are to work with ELLs so one can determine how to improve training in the future.

## **Present Study**

For the present study I investigated the questionnaires of pre-service teachers. My total sample size is 59. My research was limited to 3 class sections of EDT 340: *Educating Diverse Student Populations in Inclusive Settings*, at the University of Dayton.

Fifty-nine pre-service teachers' responses to a video case study were analyzed for common themes. The following includes important aspects of this study:

- The case study is of an eight-year-old bilingual (Spanish/ English) student, Elizabeth. The student is an actual k-12 student and the professionals are k-12 faculty and staff who worked with Elizabeth.
- The case study included authentic footage of Elizabeth and interviews with staff members of her school. Students listened to and viewed multiple auditory, reading, and writing assessments. Each student was given a hard copy of the assessment and Elizabeth's responses in order to practice grading and interpreting results. Students were also able to view authentic artifacts relating to her test scores.
- After the video case, pre-service teachers were given a questionnaire to assess their current knowledge regarding what needs to be known about Elizabeth to address her needs.
- Students were asked questions regarding the student's learning:
  - To enhance Elizabeth's learning, What question(s) do you have?  
Who would you ask? Why?

- Any other questions about Elizabeth? - Who would you ask? Why?

While these questions appear limited in number, they were intended to provide the maximum opportunity for respondents to demonstrate what they knew or learned about ELLs and with whom to collaborate to provide assistance to an ELL.

This study helps educators understand the extent to which a group of pre-service teachers are informed about working with ELLs, and if not, who could they turn to for assistance. The results can illuminate how to better prepare pre-service teachers to work with and successfully help ELLs.

In order to find results to improve pre-service teacher programs I am focusing on the research question “After observing a video case study of an 8 year old bilingual (Spanish/ English student), what themes emerged concerning how to enhance the student’s learning, who could provide important information about the child and her education, and why it was important to have that information?”

In order to understand the current situation for ELLs, my literature review focused on four main areas in regards to this problem. First, I researched how pre-service teachers are prepared to work with English language learners. Next, I focused on what strategies are taught to pre-service educators to address the needs of ELLs. Third, the problem of English language learners who are misplaced into special education programs and the reasons this occurs was investigated. Finally, I examined community resources that can be utilized in order to help English language learners succeed.



## Literature Review

### Teacher Preparation

It is crucial that pre-service teachers receive proper training on how to best work with English Language Learners (ELLs). Proper preparation programs will better train teachers on teaching methods and activities. The more teachers that receive proper training, the more ELLs will receive appropriate instruction in the classroom. These students have different needs than English speakers. Without properly trained teachers, ELLs (ELL) may not receive the instruction they need and they may begin to fall behind in their education. Different universities and teacher training programs utilize different methods and theories in order to properly prepare their pre-service teachers.

One study (Zetlin et al., 2011) suggests a specific format to educate pre-service teachers. First pre-service teachers must learn the characteristics of ELLs who are in special education programs. They must also be familiar with procedures and assessments used federally and state wide. Teachers must be familiar with language acquisition methods for first and second languages. They must also learn effective English language development instructional practices and assessments. Then they must learn effective instructional practices in regards to academic content. Throughout all of these steps, pre-service teachers are gaining experience with authentic videos, texts, interviews, assessments, and IEPs. During the last phase, pre-service teachers also gain experience with a real student through a case study. These pre-service teachers need hands on, real life experiences versus just hearing about appropriate practices through lecture.

Many programs emphasize the importance of authentic experience and hands on learning (Zetlin et al.,2011). In order to prepare teachers to work with ELLs, they should view actual classroom instruction through various types of media such as videotapes and slideshows. They should also gain experience with authentic assessments used in the classroom. It is also helpful

that pre-service teachers experience case studies. The key to completing this preparation is to give opportunities for in depth reflection. Reflection will help teachers understand the needs and struggles ELL students face.

Some teacher preparation programs train teachers by having them experience the strategies they are being taught to use with ELLs (Harfitt & Chu, 2011). In this particular situation, a teacher implements the reader response theory within the class of pre-service teachers. Once the pre-service teachers participate in this process, the teacher explains why each part of the strategy would be useful to ELLs. Since these pre-service teachers gain experience with the strategy versus just learning through lecture, they gain a true understanding of this strategy and its benefits. Programs such as this emphasize authentic learning and experience (Harfitt & Chu, 2011).

In many universities in California, teacher education programs are putting pre-service teachers through the ELL Shadowing Project. This is a program where pre-service teachers shadow an ELL throughout the day. The pre-service teachers track what is going on in the classroom every 5 minutes for as long as they are with the student. They are focused on tracking who is speaking, whom the speaker is listening to, and what kind of interaction and listening is taking place. One way listening is a lecture style setting; two way listening is a setting where the student can clarify and ask questions and this is considered more of a dialogue (Soto-Hinman & College, 2010).

The pre-service teachers involved in this program are able to observe patterns of who is talking and what kinds of listening occur in regards to ELLs in the classroom. The pre-service teachers involved in this program have seen patterns indicating that the teacher does most of the speaking within the classroom. They have also found that most of this speaking leads to one-way listening, which is lecture style. This means that the ELLs have minimal opportunities to actually participate in classroom discussion. The reality that these pre-service teachers observe helps them to reflect on their own teaching style. They can then re-shape their teaching model in order to

better address the needs of ELLs (Soto-Hinman & College, 2010). The present study uses: (a) a video case study that (b) includes teaching and classroom footage.

Many programs place a strong emphasis on training teachers on how to work with students who might have special needs. Pre-service teachers must be trained in assessment strategies and the proper route for referral that should be used with ELLS within special education programs. In order to avoid further overrepresentation of ELLs in special education programs, teachers must be trained in how to appropriately evaluate and refer these students (Stein, 2011). Pre-service teachers should be educated on the pre-referral process. The pre-referral process is key in determining the appropriate route to take to help students. A team including the teacher, administrator, and ELL expert focuses the discussion on a student of concern. As a teacher, one should prepare an outline of the student's strengths. The teacher should bring evidence of student work and also look through past files for an indication of a learning challenge. Parents should also be included in this process. The goal is to create a holistic view of the child, including strengths.

Pre-service teachers should also be educated on the RTI model (Response to Intervention). This model provides for monitoring academic progress of students. It acknowledges that students with learning disabilities often demonstrate lower academic achievement and slower rates of academic growth. RTI is done in small group and individual settings. During the first tier, students are monitored while receiving quality, evidence-based instruction with short cycle testing to gauge the student's learning. If they move on to the second tier, they receive intensive intervention. This intervention should also be evidence-based; a follow up meeting should be scheduled to check for improvement. If this does not help, students will move on to the third tier where they are evaluated for potential placement in the special education program. If pre-service teachers are taught proper assessment and referral strategies to use with ELLs, the misplacement of students in special education programs can be avoided (Barrera & Liu, 2010). In the present study, the video case study (a) shows faculty and staff reviewing and

considering the student's performance and (b) includes data from the student's actual performance.

Pre-service teachers should also be taught to be aware and reflect on the educational community in order to identify areas of improvement and create recommendations. In Idaho, efforts have also been made to see just how prepared their local teachers are to work with ELLs (Batt, 2008). The focus was on the challenges found when trying to educate ELLs and what professional development is needed to succeed in teaching these students. First, this study suggests that there are not enough licensed bilingual or ELL teachers employed in schools. When a school finds a trained ELL teacher to fill this role, many of these teachers leave because of the heavy workload. This extra work puts more stress on these teachers because they are often obligated to complete many extra tasks because they are the only teachers qualified to work with ELLs.

In order to try to remedy these two common problems, a group of teachers created a proposal for how to improve ELL education (Batt, 2008). A significant aspect of their proposal was centered on professional development of pre-service and in-service teachers. They suggested professional development in regards to ELL curriculum development, sheltered English instruction, ELL methods, first and second language literacy methods, how to properly establish parent involvement, and how to establish a "newcomer" center.

This group of teachers also believed the schools could restructure their systems in order to help ensure the ELL's experience is successful. First, the schools need to hire more certified ELL, bilingual teachers and assistants, and they also need to hire a consultant, who is an expert in the ELL field. The teachers also felt it would be helpful to receive relevant professional development as mentioned earlier. In regards to the students, they felt that it would be helpful to change the ELL curriculum, use a different education model, and group students based on their language proficiency levels. If schools restructured and gave teachers the appropriate assistance and training, they would be more prepared to work with and help ELLs (Batt, 2008).

If pre-service teachers received further training in these aspects of English as a second language they would be more prepared to work in a real classroom. It would also be helpful if pre-service teachers were more informed about different English as a second language positions in the school and different certifications offered. This would help these new teachers hold the proper credentials needed to fill these the positions in need (Batt, 2008). The present study depicts the roles and responsibilities of an ELL teacher and general education faculty.

## Strategies

**General information.** In- service and pre- service teachers are trained in a variety of ways to work with ELLs. ELLs have special needs and skills required for their success. Therefore, their teachers need to understand specific strategies that will help them grow and learn. There is some agreement as to key strategies and activities thought to help develop ELLs.

Teachers must first determine the level of literacy of the ELL students in order to properly teach within their zone of proximal development. When a teacher uses assessment strategies they can properly determine what are the student's difficulties. Once their level of literacy and difficulties are discovered, the teacher can effectively scaffold their development. Some scaffolding ideas are modeling, providing experiences and opportunities, and asking questions that challenge the student. It is also helpful to keep in mind the student's prior knowledge; this way the teacher can create connections and build their schema.

**Language.** Researchers have found that it is helpful to teach students how to read in their native language first; this helps their literacy skills in English as well (Barr et al., 2012). Once a child knows a concept in one language, it is easier to learn it in another language. This is important to remember when teaching ELLs who are just learning to read English. One should assess their reading skills in their native language in order to choose the best method to teach

them reading in English. The case study video in the present case study presents data and professional discussions regarding the student's literacy abilities and needs.

**Reading.** There are some recommended general strategies and types of instruction teachers should keep in mind in order to promote reading for ELLs. These included literature appreciation, direct teaching of decoding, phonemic awareness instruction, systematic and explicit instruction in the code system of written English, incentives for children to read, vocabulary instruction, word structure origin, relationships among words, comprehension strategies such as prediction, summarizing, clarifying, questioning, and visualization, and regular exposure to many types of texts. (Barr et al., 2012). These methods all improve English language learning.

**Vocabulary.** Barr, Eslami, and Joshi (2012) found that a low reading vocabulary often adds to ELLs struggle in reading fluency and this affects the readers' comprehension, which complicates learning any new information. This can cause ELLs to fall behind, making it difficult for them to catch up because reading may become a negative experience. Teachers must expand ELLs' vocabularies early on and continue building that knowledge so that there is a better chance for success.

There are multiple aspects of vocabulary. There is everyday vocabulary and academic content vocabulary. Everyday vocabulary refers to words used in everyday life. These words are used in casual or social settings. Academic content vocabulary refers to content specific words, which are more likely to be used in an academic setting. Students should gain experience with both types of vocabulary (Barr et al., 2012). There is also the aspect of oral vocabulary. It is important to build a child's oral vocabulary; it is found that this also strongly affects their later reading success (Barr et al., 2012).

In order to build a child's vocabulary, it is helpful to have students brainstorm their previous knowledge in order to connect with new knowledge, and students should focus on semantic relationships between words. Students can also re-word dictionary definitions and other aspects of vocabulary knowledge in their own words. These dictionary definitions, antonyms, and synonyms should be used to help understand specialized vocabulary. Word lists can also be used in order to help students maintain knowledge of words. Students should also study the structure of words in order to understand their meaning. ELLs can also gain practice in using contextual analysis in order to determine meaning. Teachers should also encourage students to become independent learners by letting them self select which vocabulary words they would like to learn (Barr et al., 2012). ELLs have many skills to master, many of which may cause frustration. It is essential that teachers remember this. Teachers must be motivators instructionally and emotionally throughout this process.

Visual aids are also important to build ELL vocabulary. Research has shown that learning experiences that incorporate verbal and nonverbal opportunities encourage further understanding and stronger retention of the academic material (Peregoy and Boyle, 2005; Britsch, 2010). Teachers should keep this in mind when teaching language to their students. They should strive to incorporate many types of visual experiences in the classroom, which will help build a stronger foundation and to learn the language. Some experiences may include photographs, paintings, pictures, posters, cartoons, videos, audio, and actions (Britsch, 2010; Chukueggu, 2011).

Visuals can be used as teaching aids in order to assist ELLs in their learning. If students are confused over vocabulary in a language lesson, a visual aid can help make the vocabulary word more clear and relevant. The visual can enhance what information is already understood or can communicate an idea that is not verbally understood by the ELL. This strategy can be used in all grades and subjects to help teach all sorts of vocabulary words (Chukueggu, 2011).

Another important type of visual aid is a graphic organizer. This is a type of open graphic, which will help the student organize and further understand information.. Using the

organizers to sort through information can be helpful for understanding of the topic. Organizers such as charts or graphs also help to organize data (Cook, 2010). Once students are able to use these graphics to organize their learning and thoughts, they will be able to have a better understanding of the topics and vocabulary within that lesson. These graphics can also help to facilitate further discussions about their learning, also promoting increased use of vocabulary.

Teachers can also provide visuals indirectly. These visuals will be in place throughout the classroom environment in order to enhance student learning and promote knowledge of new vocabulary words. An example of this strategy could be a word wall with accompanying pictures; or even the entire alphabet on the wall with pictures demonstrating the letters' sounds underneath. These word walls can also include words in multiple languages accompanied by images (Worthington, 2011). Another way to use visuals in the environment is to label centers. These labels can show the intent of the center or of an activity within (Fishkin, 2010). These word labels can be accompanied by an illustration. These labels will promote knowledge of the center vocabulary.

Not only can the teachers provide visuals, the teachers can also give ELLs the power to create their own visuals. In a study conducted in 2009, ELLs were given disposable cameras (Britsch, 2010). Students were encouraged to take pictures of things that were important to them. Teachers discussed these pictures and themes with students throughout the year. This strategy is helpful as ELLs may benefit from visuals.

Using language naturally through their artwork can act as a link to establishing skills and confidence in the formal, spoken language. Students can develop their knowledge of vocabulary words by working through multiple forms of media, this is not limited to photography. Teachers could encourage this idea of vocabulary growth by encouraging students to draw, cut, move, dance, and write in many styles including poetry. Teachers should focus on the student's interests and strengths to promote activities that foster confidence and vocabulary growth (Britsch, 2010).



Visual aids can be used in teaching students vocabulary. Research has shown that if a student's learning is connected to visual images, the students will have a stronger level of comprehension (Chukueggu, 2011, 132). Therefore, teachers should strive to incorporate images during the learning process and continue to use images when reviewing material as well.

**Comprehension.** Researchers have found that different skills within literacy are correlated to each other and to English literacy as a whole. These skills are related to one another, practice in one will benefit other reading skills and their overall literacy comprehension (Barr et al., 2012). It is also important to build a student's confidence.

In order to build a student's comprehension skills, the student must have practice in determining their own meaning from a text in an environment that builds confidence. This can be seen within the reader response theory. One study suggests the use of the Reader Response Theory will build ELL confidence and vocabulary (Harfitt & Chu, 2011). Reader response theory suggests that texts do not just hold one, correct meaning. There are many possible meanings present; it is up to the reader or audience to construct their own meaning from the text. The use of these texts and the reader response theory promotes personal growth in students, improved vocabulary and language, and also brings cultural awareness and appreciation in the classroom (Harfitt & Chu, 2011).

When students read these texts in the reader response, they are encouraged to share their individual responses to the text. They are also encouraged to make predictions and develop their own personal understanding of the text. One key to this reader response approach is that the students feel safe to share their responses. The teacher needs to create an environment in which there is not one correct way to analyze the text. Each response should be respected and valued. Once ELLs have many opportunities to successfully comprehend a text, they may gain confidence in their comprehension skills (Harfitt & Chu, 2011). The case study video depicts a variety of strategies used to increase the knowledge and skills of the ELL.

## Problems with Misidentification

**History.** ELLs are often referred to or placed inappropriately in special education classrooms. Research suggests that “Children’s lack of English proficiency was often misinterpreted as a disability and they were referred for special education, whereas others who actually had a disability were misdiagnosed as lacking English proficiency and denied special education services” (Zetlin et al., 2011, p. 59). Teachers can have trouble deciding if student struggles stem from a language or a cognitive delay. Once the child is assessed for special education, they may be at a disadvantage because the tests are created for English speakers, even if the tests are translated. This disadvantage can make it more likely that they are misplaced, although nondiscriminatory testing is required under the Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA).

Historically, schools were putting too many ELLs in special education programs. This commonly happened in schools with a small ELL population. After legal issues surfaced, schools began to put fewer ELLs in special education programs. These schools also were identifying these few ELL students far too late. This commonly happened in schools with a large ELL population (Maxwell & Shah, 2012).

Research has shown a common pattern in the educational development of an ELL (Zetlin et al., 2011). Initially they have failing grades and lack of academic success in basic areas. Next, they may be held back and repeat the same unsuccessful experience, with no change in instruction, so they continue to fail. Then, they are referred for a special education program. Ortiz (2002) found ELLs are often accepted into a special education program because they are believed to have a language or learning disability. Once students were placed in special education, their new teachers did not have the skills to give them proper language support.

Many ELLs may be held back a grade as well as misplaced in the special education program. Research has shown that minorities such as Latino or African American students are

over-identified for special education classes or grade retention (Yellin, 2010). In one study, researchers found that “Hispanic and African American students are 50% more likely to be retained by the ninth grade than their White peers” (Yellin, 2010, p. 10). Studies conducted by Jimerson and Ferguson in 2007 have also shown that students who have been through grade retention are less motivated, more likely to drop out, and perform lower academically (Yellin, 2010). Therefore it is crucial that schools do everything they can before inappropriately placing these students, or holding them back a year. The current study’s video presents the dilemma of determining if an ELLs academic challenges result only from a language barrier.

**Teacher Difficulties.** Research indicates the barriers ELLs face in their general education classroom, during the special education process, and within the special education classroom. In their general education classroom, teachers may have a tendency to expect less from ELLs. It has been shown that “teachers tend to ask questions of and call on White students more than Latino students and that the questions they direct toward Latino students tend to be more recall and less cognitively demanding than those asked of White students” (Zetlin et al., 2011, p. 61). This suggests how many ELL students may be in an environment that sets them up for lower achievement. Teachers place them in special education programs because they are not showing academic progress, yet the teacher may have low expectations and not take the time or effort to challenge ELLs cognitively, which is the only way they will grow.

Another major problem is the readiness of the teachers and their ability to help. Although many general education teachers lack the training to adequately help ELL students, studies have shown that special education teachers are actually less likely to be appropriately trained to help ELL students. They are less likely to be bilingual and have trouble modifying the curriculum for the student’s language barrier. So even though school districts may be trying to give these students adequate support by placing them in a special education program, they may be putting these students at a further disadvantage (Zetlin et al., 2011).

General outcomes of measure (GOM's) (e.g., group achievement testing) are frequently used to monitor progress of ELLs. This can be an ineffective method. If students are not achieving at the level expected, GOM's consistently place the blame on the student for this problem, not taking into consideration that it might be a problem of teacher instruction or the learning environment of the classroom (Barrera & Liu, 2010).

**Identification and Assessment.** When one needs to place an ELL in a special education program, there are many factors one must consider. These factors include, but are not limited to: their home background, their language skills, their base of knowledge, experience in the American community, the relationship with teachers, and also the curriculum, instruction, and school environment they have been experiencing. Based on these considerations, the teachers must choose appropriate methods of assessment (Barrera & Liu, 2010).

Students are left to deal with the consequences of how their learning was assessed. Before any ELL is placed in a special education program, the staff must answer the question of whether their struggles come from their struggle with English or if they truly have a disability. It has become difficult to answer this question because the assessments used to place children in special education are typically intended for a test taker who speaks English. Even if the assessments were in their native language, there is no guarantee that ELLs received proper instruction in this language either. Studies have also found that ELLs are often placed in a special education program earlier than their English-speaking peers; therefore ELLs are already at a further disadvantage (Yellin, 2010).

Many problems may arise during evaluation. When given an assessment in English, the test turns into a language test. Studies conducted by Abedi (2002) have shown that "Familiarity with Standard English accounts for more than 50% of the total test variance on IQ and achievement test measures for fourth graders and 60% to 90% of the variance for seventh graders" (Zetlin et al., 2011, p. 61-62). Therefore, assessments should be conducted in the child's

native language as well. However, this does not always work. When the test is translated, it affects the difficulty of the test and the concepts being tested. Even if the translation is applicable, there is still no guarantee that students received formal instruction in their native language relevant to the test's content.

There are many factors that go into the student's success and the teacher's response. Studies have found that "Time in the United States accounted for 10% to 15% of variance in observed results for both fluency and comprehension" (Barrera & Liu, 2010). This shows that one cannot expect immediate results from an ELL to instruction, but this may be due to a language barrier. It has also been found that many students have been thought to have a disability because of their behavior. ELLs may not behave as other children do, but this may be due to their culture and upbringing, not necessarily a disability. The case study includes data for review and consideration including academic achievement and cultural/ developmental background to present to pre-service teachers.

**Second Language Acquisition.** Studies have found that students considered to be limited in their native and second language were most at risk to be identified for special education. Next ELLs in English immersion programs were very likely to be put in special education. Lastly, students who were placed in bilingual or dual immersion programs were still likely to be placed in special education, but less likely than students from the other two programs. This could stem from the fact that ELLs need instruction in their native language to help them learn while developing proficiency in English (Zetlin et al., 2011, 60).

Teachers should be educated on the stages of second language acquisition, and how to help these students learn English as their second language. Schools should first find the student's proficiency in their native language. Proficiency translates among languages, so this is helpful to see which stage the child is currently working. This can also give some insight into their level of English language. In the classroom, students may be quiet and withdrawn. This does not indicate

that students have special needs; this could represent students in their silent period when they are initially adjusting. Teachers should keep these stages in mind during language proficiency tests. These tests assess students on language in regards to English language standards, not by standards of second language development. These evaluations may not always have adequate translations as well. This means the assessments may not always be the same once translated in the native language. This leads to inaccurate test results for the ELL (Zetlin et al., 2011).

During all of these situations, teachers should do their best to ensure they are appropriately assessing the student in regards to the stages of second language acquisition. In many situations, teachers are asked to make quick judgments and referrals for students who may have special needs. This should not be the case. Yet, In regards to the stages of second language acquisition, teachers should also be aware that it may take as long as 5-8 years for the student to become academically and cognitively proficient in English. This is important to keep in mind when the student is being tested as a young child. Once the child has had time to adjust to the culture, their learning may still be slower than others due to language and cultural differences within the school. It is essential that teachers keep in mind these stages when assessing these children early on because in reality, this is an unfair practice as ELL students may need more time to adjust before they are ready to be screened (Hardin, Mereoiu, Hung & Roach-Scott, 2009, 94). The case study presents a student who has had instruction in English for several years but is still struggling.

This study reflects each of the current research based practices discussed. The study uses a video case study, which includes teaching and classroom footage. The teaching and classroom footage show faculty and staff assessing the student, reviewing the student's data and considering the student's performance. These professionals also discuss the student's literacy abilities and needs based on her data. The video models a variety of strategies used to increase the knowledge and skills of the ELL. The student has had instruction in English for several years but is still

struggling. The dilemma of this video is determining if an ELLs academic challenges result only from a language barrier.

## Methods

In order to find results to improve pre-service teacher programs I focused on the research question:

- How could the case study student's (Elizabeth) learning be enhanced?
- Who could provide additional information about Elizabeth and her learning performance?
- Why is that information important toward enhancing Elizabeth's learning?

The results of this study helps educators to the extent to which a group of pre-service teachers are informed about working with ELLs, and if not, who could they turn to for assistance. The case study used is of an eight-year-old bilingual (Spanish/ English) student, Elizabeth. The student is an actual k-12 student and the professionals in the video are k-12 faculty and staff who worked with Elizabeth.

## Participants

The participants were fifty-nine University of Dayton, undergraduate students. All but one were pre-service teachers in an undergraduate teacher education class. The class was EDT 340, *Educating Students with Diverse Learning Needs in Inclusive Settings*. This class is in the teacher education program at the University of Dayton. This sample of students was working towards their bachelor's degrees within various licensure programs. Nine pre-service teachers were in the early childhood education program, twenty three were in the middle childhood education program, twenty one were in the adolescent to young adult education program, one was in the Foreign Language program, two were in the Early Childhood Leadership and Advocacy program, one was in the Art Education program, and one student was a non-education major. The



sample of students consisted of two first year students, five second-year students, forty-four third-year students, and seven fourth-year students. This sample of pre-service teachers was enrolled in one of three sections of EDT 340 during the fall semester of 2012, taught by the same professor. All participants gave their voluntary consent in allowing researchers to use their data within their answers to the questionnaires. Confidentiality of individual responses was assured for participants.

## **Setting**

The setting was a typical college classroom equipped with chairs, moveable tables, an overhead and whiteboard. The students were seated to be able to collaborate with one another as well as formulate individual responses. The professor was the only instructor present. The video case study spanned three days of class as an in-class laboratory experience. Students were presented with general information regarding English Language Learners. The video case study consisted of authentic footage involving the student, her English Language Learner teacher, and her general classroom teachers as well. The participants watched and listened to multiple auditory, reading, and writing assessments and practiced grading them on their own hard copies. Participants were also able to analyze authentic artifacts and test scores of the student. In the end the pre-service teachers rated the child on the English Language Proficiency Standards for Ohio English Language Proficiency Levels. Students explained their decision; the class then discussed their ratings and the child's progress. After this discussion, students completed the questionnaire.

## **Instrumentation**

The data were collected through a questionnaire. This questionnaire consisted of two main questions, with multiple sub questions. Question one states: "After observing Elizabeth's Skills- To enhance Elizabeth's learning, what question(s) do you have? Who would you ask?"

Why?” Question two states “Any other questions about Elizabeth? Who would you ask? Why?” The professor who was the instructor, the videographer who recorded and edited the case study, and a special education professor developed the questionnaire. The instrument was piloted with a small group of eleven graduate students during the summer session prior to its use in this study. During the pilot, feedback was obtained from the graduate students, the two professors, the videographer, and an English Language Learner faculty member. The case study questionnaire was revised based on feedback.

## **Procedure**

Participants in all three sections viewed the video case study during their class period, which is one hour and fifteen minutes long. During breaks within the video case study and immediately after the video case study students were able to communicate with their peers regarding the information they received from the video case study. Students were seated at two person tables in small groups. Typically, there were about four people per small group. However, this number may have ranged from two to six participants per group. Following the discussion, the pre-service teachers were each given a questionnaire. They completed the questionnaires individually at their desks, and returned it to the professor before leaving the classroom.

## **Data Collection/ Analysis**

The data from the questionnaires were collected by class section and assigned respondent numbers. There was no identifying information included on the questionnaire. The data from the two general questions and sub questions were compiled for each participant in a word document. The researcher reviewed responses to identify themes that emerged. Subsequently, these initial themes were reviewed with all the researcher’s faculty advisors. As needed, themes were condensed and organized around the three aspects of the research question:

- How could the case study student's (Elizabeth) learning be enhanced?
- Who could provide additional information about Elizabeth and her learning performance?
- Why is that information important toward enhancing Elizabeth's learning?

## Data Analyses and Results

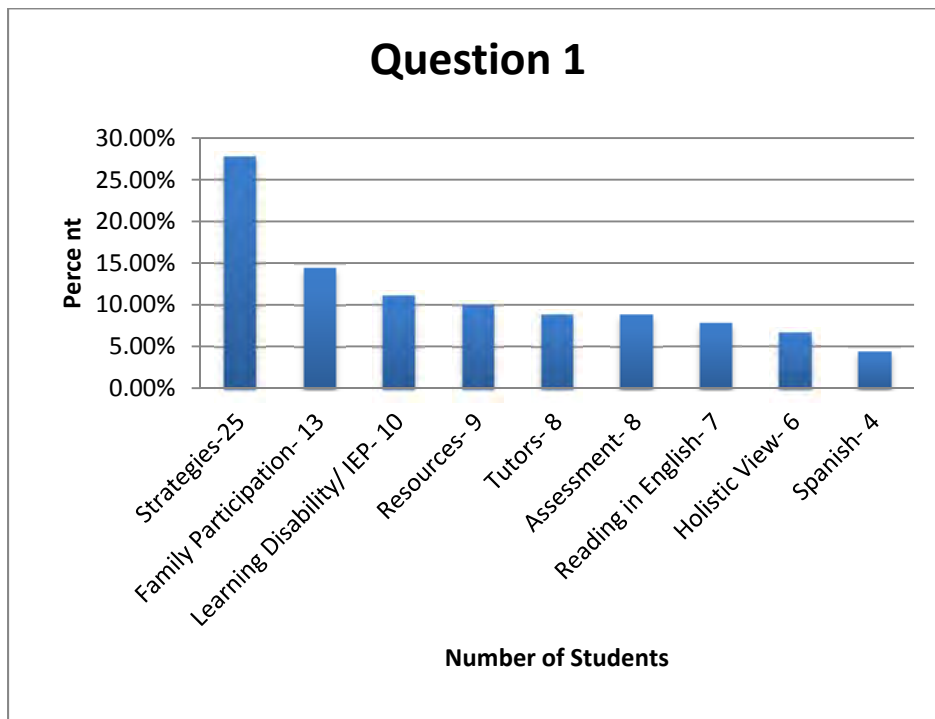
In order to examine the data, I completed a document analysis. The document analyzed was the researcher-generated questionnaires. I analyzed the results of the fifty- nine questionnaires in order to find common themes that emerged. Questions were open-ended so the pre-service teachers were able to write as many responses as they felt appropriate. The questionnaire stated: “To enhance Elizabeth’s learning, What question(s) do you have? Who would you ask? Why? Any other questions about Elizabeth? - Who would you ask? Why?” For the purpose of discussing the data, I will break up the questions into four distinct questions.

- Question one: “To enhance Elizabeth’s learning, What question(s) do you have?”
- Question two: “Who would you ask? Why?”
- Question three: “Any other questions about Elizabeth?”
- Question four: “Who would you ask? Why?”

The first question analyzed was “To enhance Elizabeth’s learning, What question(s) do you have?”

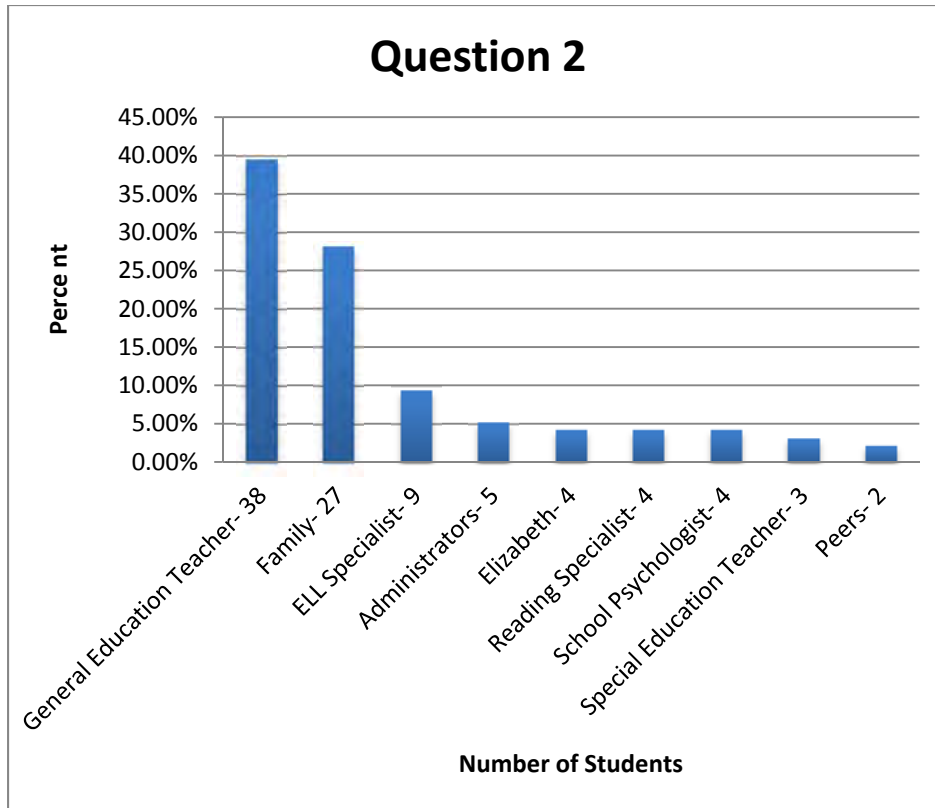
- Twenty-five pre-service teachers asked questions regarding which strategies were used or which strategies should be used. This is 27.78% of responses.
- Thirteen pre-service teachers wondered about Elizabeth’s family participation. This is 14.44% of responses.
- Ten pre-service teachers asked questions regarding if Elizabeth was on an Individualized Education Program or had a learning disability. This is 11.11% of responses.

- Nine pre-service teachers inquired if there were any extra resources Elizabeth could utilize. This is 10% of responses.
- Eight pre-service teachers asked about possible tutors or summer programs. This is 8.89% of responses.
- Eight pre-service teachers wondered which assessments were used and which assessments were appropriate. This is 8.89% of responses.
- Seven pre-service teachers inquired about Elizabeth's reading skills in English. This is 7.78% of responses.
- Six pre-service teachers asked about Elizabeth holistically, including her social life, hobbies, and success in other subjects. This is 6.67% of responses.
- Four pre-service teachers inquired about Elizabeth's literacy skills in the Spanish language. This is 4.44% of responses.



The second question analyzed was “Who would you ask? Why?”

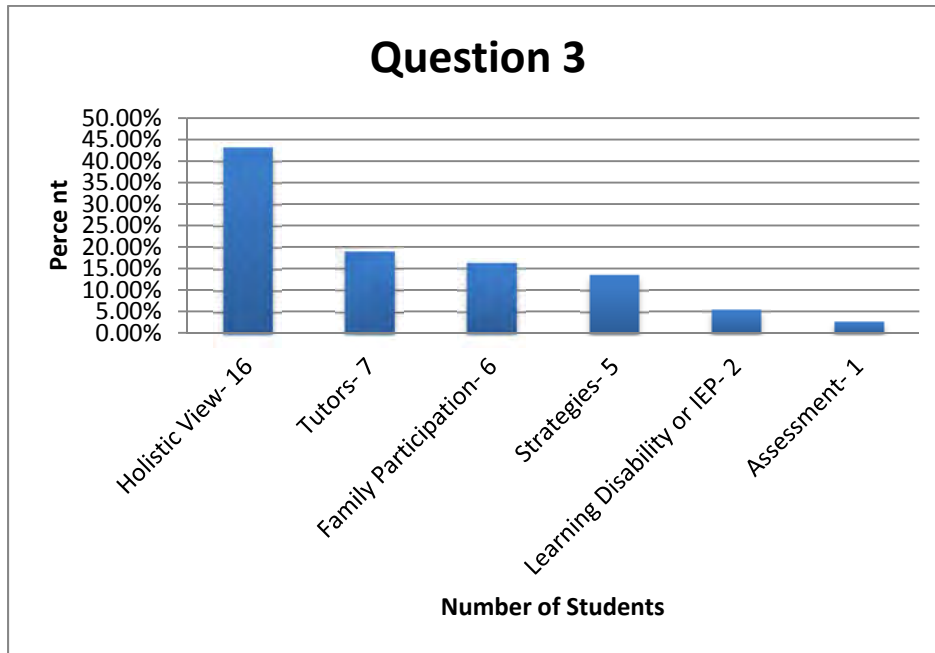
- Thirty-eight pre-service teachers said they would ask the general education teacher. This is 39.58% of responses.
- Twenty-seven pre-service teachers discussed asking Elizabeth’s family. This is 28.13% of responses.
- Nine pre-service teachers wanted to ask the English Language Learner specialist. This is 9.38% of responses.
- Five pre-service teachers considered asking administrators. This is 5.21% of responses.
- Four pre-service teachers wanted to ask Elizabeth directly. This is 4.17% of responses.
- Four pre-service teachers discussed asking the reading specialist. This is 4.17% of responses.
- Four pre-service teachers wanted to ask the school psychologist. This is 4.17% of responses.
- Three pre-service teachers considered asking the school’s special education teacher. This is 3.13% of responses.
- Two pre-service teachers discussed asking Elizabeth’s peers. This is 2.08% of responses.



The third question analyzed was “Any other questions about Elizabeth?”

- Sixteen pre-service teachers inquired about Elizabeth holistically including her social life, hobbies, and success in other subjects. This is 43.24% of responses.
- Seven pre-service teachers wondered about tutors or summer programs available for Elizabeth. This is 18.92% of responses.
- Six pre-service teachers discussed her family participation. This is 16.22% of responses.
- Five pre-service teachers wondered about strategies used and appropriate strategies. This is 13.51% of responses.
- Two pre-service teachers discussed an Individualized Education Program or a possible learning disability. This is 5.41% of responses.

- One pre-service teacher wondered about assessments used. This is 2.7% of responses.

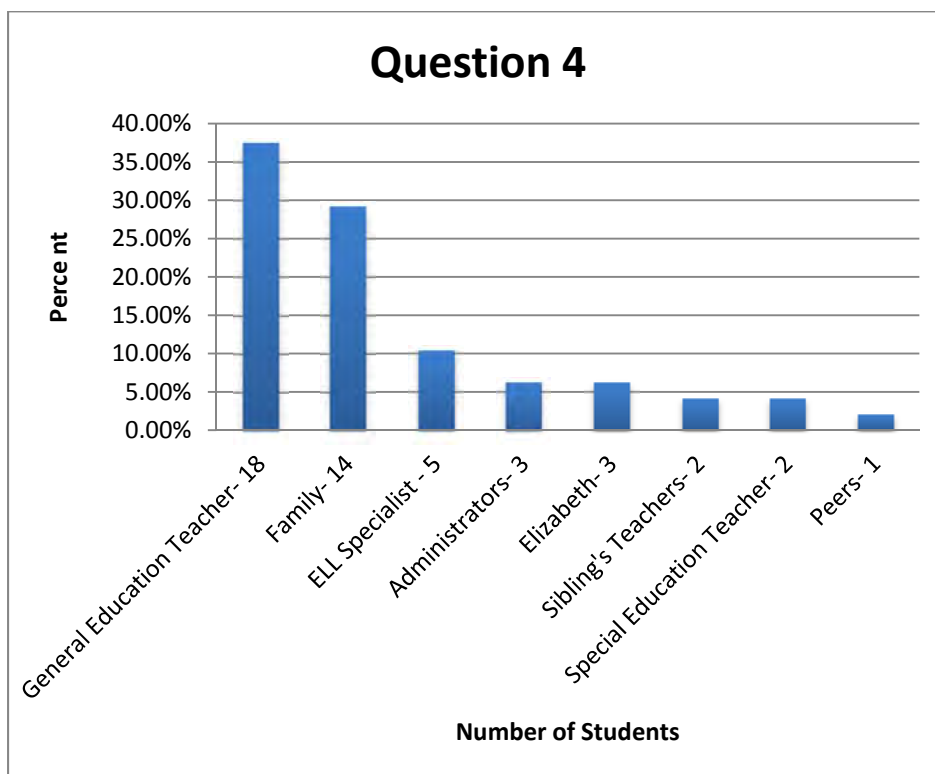


The fourth question analyzed was “Who would you ask? Why?”

- Eighteen pre-service teachers wanted to ask the general education teacher. This is 37.5% of responses.
- Fourteen pre-service teachers discussed asking Elizabeth’s family. This is 29.17% of responses.
- Five pre-service teachers wanted to ask the English Language Learner specialist. This is 10.42% of responses.
- Three pre-service teachers wanted to ask administrators. This is 6.25% of responses.



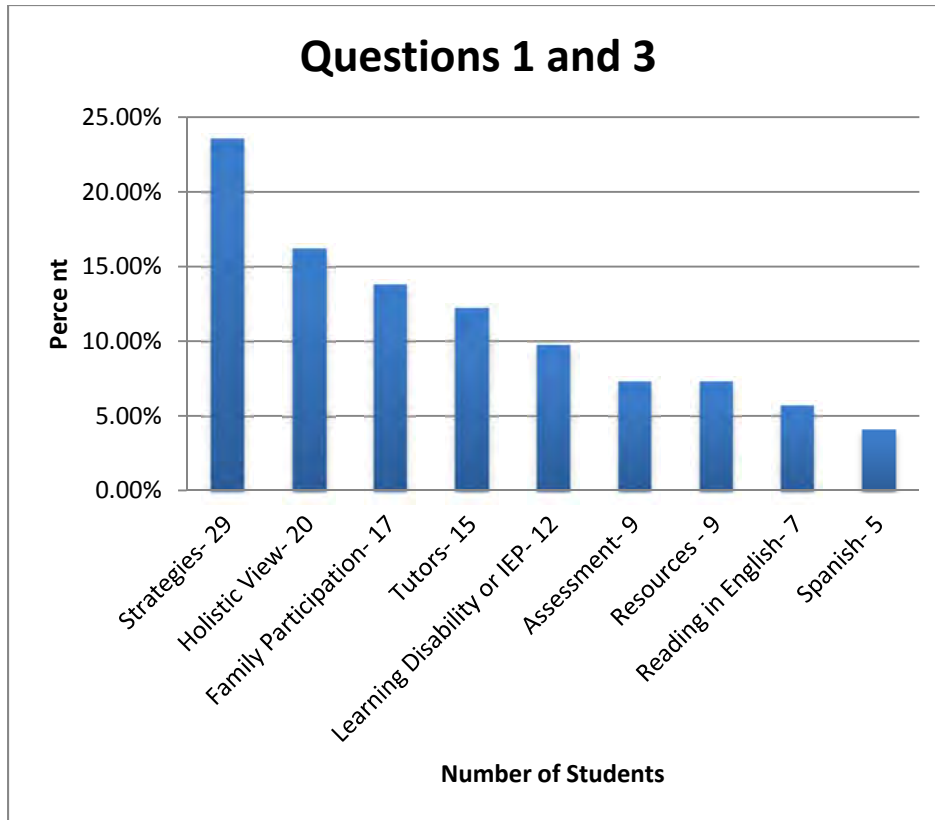
- Three pre-service teachers discussed asking Elizabeth herself. This is 6.25% of responses.
- Two pre-service teachers decided to ask Elizabeth’s siblings. This is 4.17% of responses.
- Two pre-service teachers wanted to ask the special education teacher. This is 4.17% of responses.
- One pre-service teacher discussed asking Elizabeth’s peers. This is 2.08% of responses.



In order to further analyze the data, I compiled the data from questions one and three, and questions two and four. Some pre-service teachers discussed the same theme in both sets of questions. In this compilation, I only counted each theme once per pre-service teacher, even if they mentioned it in both sets of questions.

In total, in questions one and three:

- Twenty-nine pre-service teachers discussed the strategies used or the appropriate strategies to use. This is 23.58% of responses.
- Twenty students inquired about Elizabeth holistically, including her social life, hobbies, and success in other subjects. This is 16.26% of responses.
- Seventeen pre-service teachers wanted to know about Elizabeth's family participation. This is 13.82% of responses.
- Fifteen pre-service teachers were curious about tutors or summer programs available for Elizabeth. This is 12.20% of responses.
- Twelve pre-service teachers were curious about the use of an Individualized Education Program or a possible learning disability. This is 9.76% of responses.
- Nine pre-service teachers wanted to know about assessments used or appropriate assessments. This is 7.32% of responses.
- Nine pre-service teachers inquired about additional resources available. This is 7.32% of responses.
- Seven pre-service teachers wanted to know about Elizabeth's reading skills in English. This is 5.69% of responses.
- Five pre-service teachers felt it was important to understand her Spanish literacy skills. This is 4.07% of responses.

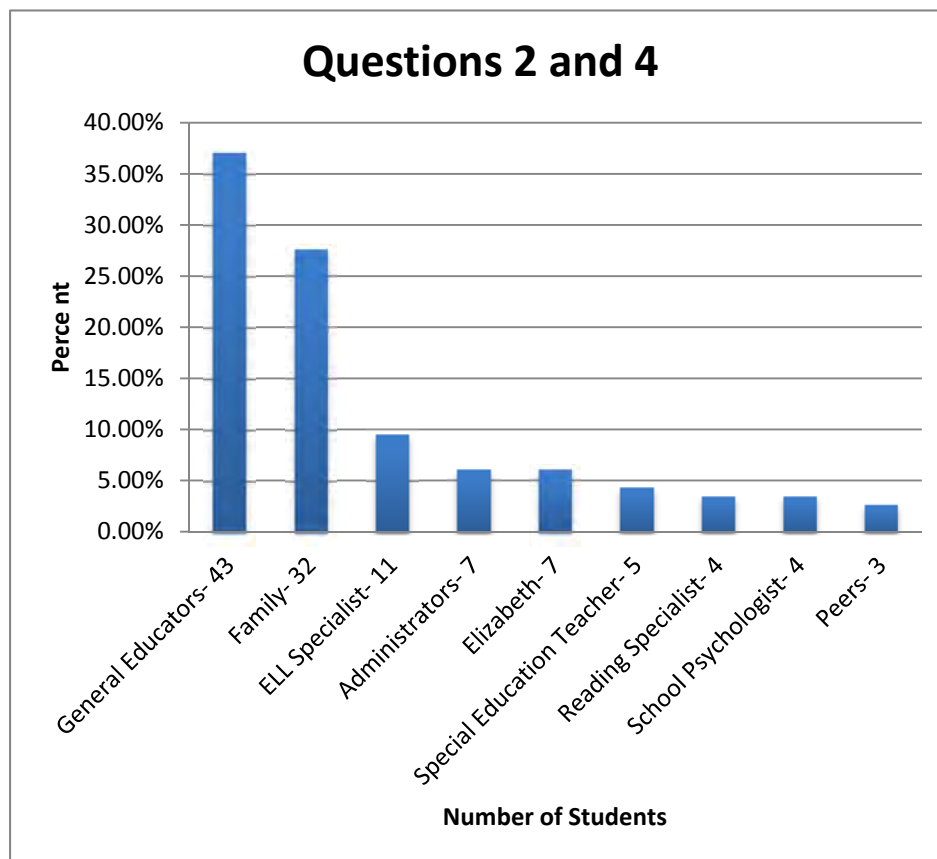


In total, in questions two and four:

- Forty-three pre-service teachers felt it necessary to discuss these themes with the general education teacher. This is 37.07% of responses.
- Thirty-two pre-service teachers wanted to ask Elizabeth's family. This is 27.59% of responses.
- Eleven pre-service teachers decided to ask the English Language Learner specialist. This is 9.48% of responses.
- Seven pre-service teachers wanted to ask the administrators. This is 6.03% of responses.
- Seven pre-service teachers decided to ask Elizabeth directly. This is 6.03% of responses.

- Five pre-service teachers felt it appropriate to ask the special education teacher. This is 4.31% of responses.
- Four pre-service teachers wanted to ask the reading specialist. This is 3.45% of responses.
- Four pre-service teachers decided to ask the school psychologist. This is 3.45% of responses.
- Three pre-service teachers wanted to ask Elizabeth's peers. This is 2.59% of responses.

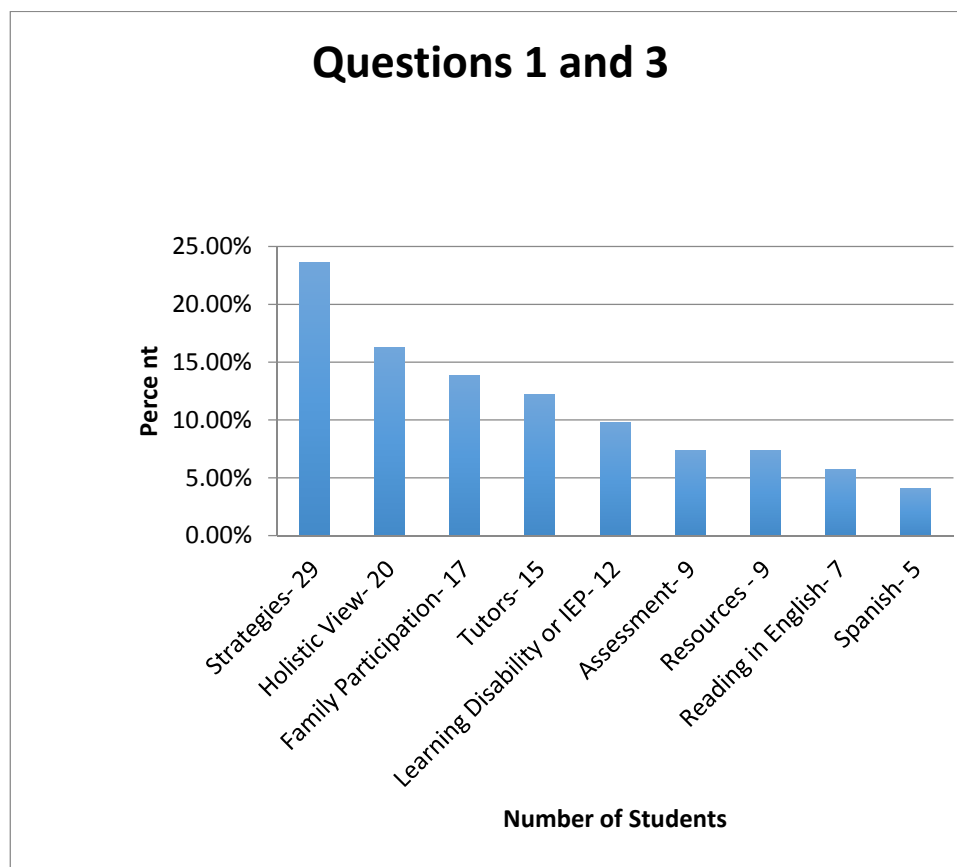
See Appendix A for specific participant responses.



## Discussion

### Results

This study helps educators understand the extent to which a group of pre-service teachers are informed about working with ELLs, and if not, who could they turn to for assistance. The results can illuminate how to better prepare pre-service teachers to work with and successfully help ELLs. This study reflects upon the themes that emerged from the case study and analyzes how pre-service teacher responses align to best practice, and how some responses lack foundation in research. The themes reflected upon are discussed in order of highest frequency as found on the questionnaire questions one and three, then questions two and four.



## Questions 1 and 3

**Strategies.** The results of the questionnaire indicate that many of the pre-service teachers are asking questions related to which strategies they should be using with ELLs in the classroom. This aligns to best practice, as there is a lot of research and suggested strategies to use with ELLs, specifically strategies aligned with language, reading, vocabulary, and comprehension. This demonstrates that pre-service teachers are asking questions in a meaningful area of teaching. However, this may also demonstrate that this is the area pre-service teachers feel less prepared in because it is the most common question. Pre-service teachers are aware this is a meaningful area, which would help Elizabeth, but they are unsure of specific strategies. Therefore in order to better prepare pre-service teachers to successfully help ELLs we must make sure they are equipped with multiple researched based strategies. Pre-service teacher must not only know about these strategies but they must know how and when to use them with ELLs. A possible approach to this lack of feeling prepared could be for students in this particular study to research and create their own resource binder of strategies to use with ELLs. Students should physically document and explain these strategies in a binder devoted to this class, this binder should be turned in to the professor for grading near the end of the term in order to ensure their research and strategies are accurate. This binder should be returned to students before the end of the term. After grading, students should be encouraged to share the strategies and resources found with their peers so that each can compile more resources into their binder. This physical binder full of materials may help students feel more prepared because they have documented research based strategies that they know are accurate in front of them to reference.

**Holistic student.** Some students asked about Elizabeth as a holistic student, their questions included her success and attitude in other subjects as well as her hobbies and social life. This shows some of these pre-service teachers have learned to view the child as a whole, that

although the focus may be on a specific test score, the test score does not summarize the whole student. This group has learned that as a teacher, one must get to know their students as a whole. If a teacher knows Elizabeth's interests, hobbies, or what subjects she is successful in or likes, the teacher can better motivate Elizabeth by finding content that is relevant to her life and integrates her interests into the subject she needs to improve upon. Although some students questioned the "holistic" student, it was not the most common response. This indicates this view of the student as a whole may be lacking in this pre-service teacher education program. To promote thinking of the student holistically, there may be a section of the class on how to motivate one's student and the importance of knowing their strengths, weaknesses, frustrations, and likes and how to use these to motivate the student to higher achievement.

**Family.** Many pre-service teachers also asked about Elizabeth's family and their involvement. This aligns to suggested best practices found in research as well. Their concern for family involvement shows they have successfully learned the importance of keeping the caregivers involved in the student's life and schooling.

**Tutors and summer programs.** Many pre-service teachers wondered what tutors or programs were available to help Elizabeth. This shows these pre-service teachers have successfully learned how to collaborate with others. They realize they are not alone in helping their struggling students. Instead they realize there are many resources available to help them and Elizabeth. This shows creative thinking in using their professional connections and knowledge to seek out and obtain appropriate help to meet Elizabeth's individual needs.

**Individualized Education Program and learning disabilities.** The pre-service teachers in this study inquired about possible learning disabilities or Individualized Education Programs and appropriate assessments. This shows they have been trained to look for struggling students

and to assess what their struggles might mean. These pre-service teachers have identified Elizabeth's reading issues and want to know more about her specific reading level. This data would help to assess and identify more fully the reading issues. It is crucial these students know the proper methods to assess and identify their future ELLs. In order to help students know the proper methods they should research the possible assessments and methods used in schools with guidance from the professor. Students would compare the Response to Intervention (RTI) approach to other methods used; they would weigh the pros and cons of the approaches. The ultimate goal would be for students to be able to justify why RTI is a successful, suggested approach in comparison to others. Therefore students not only know to use RTI but they know why they should use it as well.

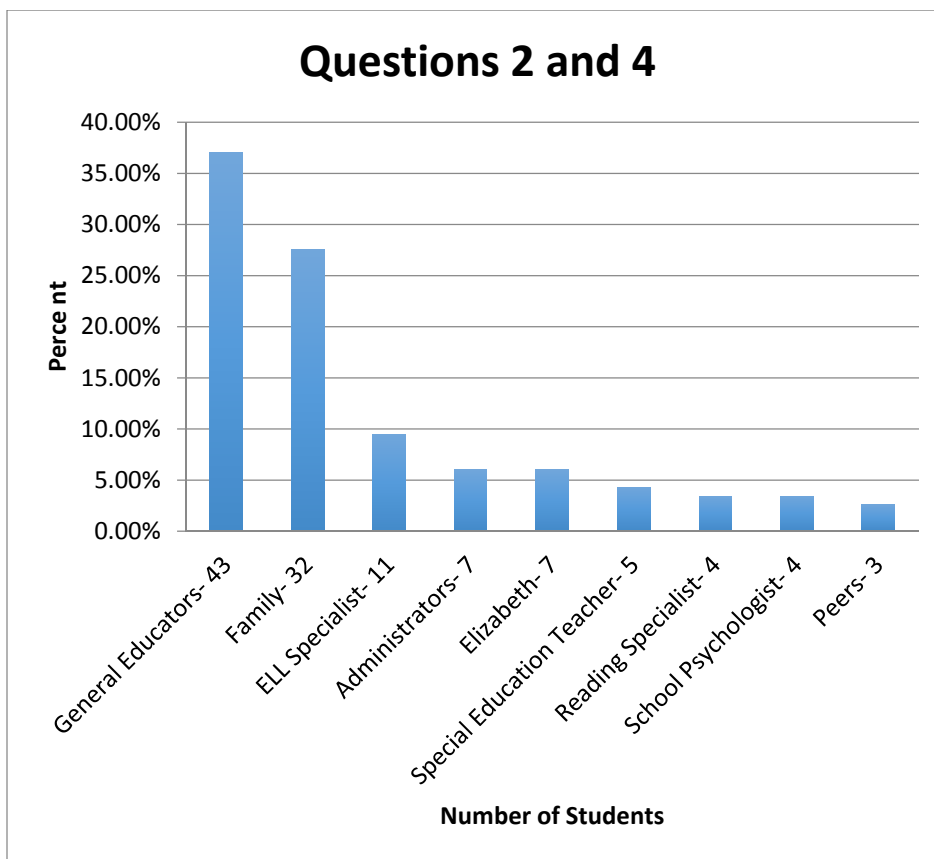
**Assessments.** Few students asked about assessment specifically. It may also be helpful for students to research approaches and assessments used in the past with a student. This would give pre-service teachers insight into an ELLs history in our education and mistakes made in the past, this would help ensure they do not make these same mistakes in the future. This would also help students to have a solid understanding of appropriate assessments for ELLs.

**Resources.** Few students wondered about outside resources besides tutors and summer programs. This shows awareness of importance of collaboration as a teacher, but also shows limited knowledge of any outside resources. These resources may change depending on the location; however, pre-service teachers should do their best to utilize any resources available and collaborate with any outside professionals once in the field.

**Reading skills.** Some students questioned Elizabeth's English reading skills. This ties into best practice, as there is a lot of research and suggested strategies to use with ELLs, specifically strategies aligned with language, reading, vocabulary, and comprehension. These strategies all factor into her overall reading skills.



**Spanish literacy skills.** Very few students asked about Elizabeth’s skills in Spanish. This indicates these pre-service teachers are lacking knowledge on second language acquisition. In order to teach someone learning another language, it is crucial one understands how one learns a language. Due to the importance of understanding second language acquisition students may need to receive direct instruction on second language acquisition or they may research this as part of the class as well. There is relevant research available these pre-service teachers could read in order to better understand how one learns a second language. Once this is understood they can apply their knowledge to understand why certain strategies are best practices when working with ELLs. Knowing why one strategy is a better practice for a student learning a second language will help ensure they continue to use the best practice for their students.



**Questions 2 and 4**

**General Education Teacher.** The majority of students said they would ask the general education teacher. This makes sense as the majority of their time in placements is with the general education teacher. This also makes sense because most of the instruction for pre-service educators focuses on the general education teacher in a standard inclusive classroom.

**Family.** Many also wanted to ask Elizabeth's family. This aligns with research suggesting to keep open communication with the family and to keep them involved. This shows students understand the importance of this communication and collaboration with the parents.

**English Language Learner specialist.** The third most frequent choice was to ask the English Language Learner teacher. This also makes sense as this person is trained in exactly the issue being discussed. This shows pre-service teacher's knowledge of this resource within a school or district.

**Administrators, Special Education Teacher, Reading Specialist, and School Psychologist.** Other responses included administrators, reading specialist, school psychologist, and the special education teacher. This group of pre-service teachers recognized there are additional resources available within the school or district. Many other students did not mention these resources. It may be helpful to ensure pre-service teachers have some interaction with these professionals throughout their placements. An approach to fill this void is to build in interaction with these professionals during all placements. This may need to be a group effort by multiple professors working together. A possible approach is that one day during each placement is spent observing or discussing resources with an assigned professional. Professors could each enforce interaction with one professional during their course and placement. This way interaction is not overwhelming for the pre-service teacher, interaction is spread out over time with an

administrator, reading specialist, school psychologist, and special education teacher. This interaction will help pre-service teacher remember the other resources available to them.

**Elizabeth, her peers, and her siblings.** Some students also chose to ask Elizabeth herself, her peers, and her siblings. However, these resources were not brought up frequently throughout the questionnaires. Elizabeth herself was the fourth most frequent person to question; her peers were the least discussed person to question. This indicates many of these pre-service teachers are forgetting Elizabeth herself is a valuable resource. It may also indicate a pattern that many of these pre-service teachers are forgetting any type of child may be a resource, as many did not mention her peers, siblings, or her. This may stem from a belief that one must be an adult in order to be able to contribute meaningful information in this context. A way to change this belief may be for a pre-service teacher to work with a student towards a personal goal the student has set for himself or herself. This experience can show the pre-service teachers how resourceful, observant, and responsible a child can be. After this experience, these pre-service teachers may consider children relevant to that matter as valuable resources as well.

## **Limitations of the Study**

For this study I worked with questionnaires of pre-service teachers. My total sample size was fifty-nine. My research was limited to three class sections of EDT 340: *Educating Diverse Student Populations in Inclusive Settings* at the University of Dayton. I was restricted to students taking the class in the fall semester of 2012.

## **Future Research Directions**

In the future I would gather data from a larger sample size of students from multiple universities to analyze the results of their teacher preparation programs as well. It would also be helpful to gather data from multiple levels of education classes in order to assess how pre-service teachers are prepared to work with ELLs throughout their years studying Education.

Also, during future studies, as students received the questionnaires students should be directed to answer all questions on the questionnaire. In this study some students only completed the first two questions, this lessened the amount of data for questions three and four. Direct instruction to complete all questions may eliminate this decrease in data in future studies.

## **Recommendations**

**Schools.** Researchers found evidence that suggested some changes in order to appropriately help ELLs. Schools should do their best to hire and develop bilingual staff members. A staff with these skills would be able to assist in ELL screening, assessments, and also to develop a comfortable, trusting relationship with an ELL's family. This bond with the family is crucial. The family should play an important role in deciding the educational future of their children, the school should do their best to give the family all the resources available so that they are as involved as possible. If possible, it might be helpful to develop a cultural navigator or a parent liaison program in order to better help the family understand the situation and hold an active role in the decision making process (Hardin, Mereoiu, Hung & Roach-Scott, 2009). Schools and teachers should keep these strategies in mind while working with ELLs. Both parties should strive to involve the family and the child's native language and culture in the school setting. In order to do this schools should work to have bilingual staff, family events, frequent communication in preferred language, and a position in the school of a parent or cultural liaison. This liaison's position should be to work with the families of ELLs, communicating and helping

them to be involved in their student's lives. The liaison should also provide families with as many resources as possible in order to ensure a smooth transition.

Schools should also examine their own practices in placing students. Instead of an assessment-based model, they should begin using a team approach, which observes and reacts appropriately. Schools should also create guidelines for how to work with and accommodate ELLs. Teachers should ensure that these ELLs are in a comfortable, safe environment working with literature that is relevant to their lives. If this does not happen, students will reject the information and will not participate, distancing themselves even further. Schools should also seek further professional development for their staff, in order to better serve the needs of ELLs (Yellin, 2010).

**Teachers.** In order to help ELLs teachers should keep up to date with new strategies and research in this field. As professionals in the Education field, teachers should take advantage of any professional development opportunities available. These opportunities could include strategies for teaching ELLs, resources available in the area, or even learning another language themselves. If there is an English Language Learner specialist in the district or school, teachers should make an effort to connect with the ELL specialist. This would be a great resource for general education teachers to learn how to improve their own practice in order to better fit the needs of their ELLs.

Teachers should also strive to create a positive, welcoming environment for their students. An environment that is patient, embraces learning from mistakes, celebrates diversity, and respects others. Learning another language can be a difficult transition for some. Remember to be patient and try to view teaching styles from the ELL's perspective. If the ELL is struggling, avoid attributing this to their intelligence. Instead reassess the teaching strategies used and try something new.

## Appendix A

The first question analyzed was “To enhance Elizabeth’s learning, What question(s) do you have?” Typical responses include:

- Strategies/ Techniques:
  - “What manipulates are being currently used in Elizabeth’s learning?” (1.11)
  - “How do we get her to the needed reading comprehension level? (1.21)
  - “Is Elizabeth always in the general classroom population?” (2.23)
  - “Were there any strategies that Trisha did that seemed to be the most beneficial with the most visible/ evident improvements? ... Also ask Elizabeth which activities she enjoyed the most?” (3.5)
  - “Would putting more visuals and graphs enhance her learning?” (3.12)
- Family participation:
  - “What are her parents/ siblings doing to help her at home? (1.9)
  - “How frequently do the parents speak/ try to speak or practice English at home with the kids?” (1.15)
  - “How can Elizabeth’s family aid her learning?” (1.20)
  - “At home, how much help does she receive with homework? Is there any English being used in the house?” (3.8)
  - “Would parent be willing to continue learning in home environment (flashcards, labels, books, etc.)?” (3.10)
- Individualized Education Program or learning disability:
  - “Is Elizabeth on an IEP, if so why?” (2.12)

- “Does Elizabeth have a support team? Does Elizabeth have an IEP? How can these two aspects happen?” (3.4)
- “Is there a learning disability present?” (3.6)
- “Does she have a possible learning disability?” (3.7)
- Resources:
  - “Does Elizabeth have access to the public library over the summer?” (1.10)
  - “What kind of access to books does she have?” (1.12)
  - “Are there activities before/ after school that could help her?” (1.14)
  - “Does she have access to a TV/ DVD player?” (1.19)
- Tutors or summer programs:
  - “Are there any programs, tutoring, or anything to promote more English speaking in the summer?” (1.1)
  - “Is she involved in summer programs to enhance and retain learning?” (1.11)
  - “What does she do in the summers? Are there any programs, camps, etc. that could enhance her learning and English use in the summers?” (1.16)
  - “Is there a summer program for Elizabeth?” (1.20)
- Assessments:
  - “How are her standardized tests given to her?” (2.7)
  - “What questions were on the tests she took? Did she have any questions read aloud or given extra time?” (2.17)

- “How often is she given tests orally/ given more time on written tests considering she does better when something is read to her?” (1.24)
- “As far as test scores, did Elizabeth receive any help?” (3.8)
- “What would be the most appropriate way to assess Elizabeth?” (3.12)
- English skills:
  - “Does she enjoy reading? What kinds of books? Does she like books on tape?” (1.17)
  - “What reading level is she at?” (3.2)
  - “What level is she at for reading? Speaking? Listening? Writing?” (3.7)
- Holistic view:
  - “How often is she required to speak English in her daily life?” (1.12)
  - “Does Elizabeth have friends who speak English?” (1.17)
  - “What are her strengths and likes?” (2.16)
  - “What subjects does Elizabeth enjoy more and does her attitude towards her subject increase her learning?” (2.26)
  - “How does she learn best?” (3.10)
- Spanish skills:
  - “What is Elizabeth’s comprehension, vocab, phonemic awareness, in Spanish? Is she at the “typical” place for a 3<sup>rd</sup> year Spanish student?” (1.2)
  - “Does she ever get to read in her native language and does she even know how to?” (2.5)
  - “How well does she learn in the Spanish language?” (3.10)



The second question analyzed was “Who would you ask? Why?” Typical responses include:

- General education teacher:
  - “Previous teacher” (1.6)
  - “Her teachers” (1.8)
  - “Teachers/ other teachers” (1.9)
  - “Elizabeth’s teacher” (2.24)
  - “Regular teacher” (2.25)
- Elizabeth’s family:
  - “Family” (1.7)
  - “Parents/ family” (1.9)
  - “Her parents” (1.10)
  - “Family members” (1.11)
  - “Parents” (3.2)
- English Language Learner specialist:
  - “ELL experts” (2.9)
  - “ELL specialist” (2.11)
  - “ELL teachers” (2.21)
  - “The ELL teacher” (2.25)
  - “Tricia Deck”- the ELL specialist (3.7)
- Administrators:
  - “Principals, School’s Administrators” (1.4)
  - “Counselor” (1.5)

- “Administrators, organizers of activities, principal” (1.14)
- “Administration” (3.2)
- “School psychologist” (3.6)
- Elizabeth:
  - “Elizabeth” (1.7)
- Reading specialist:
  - “Literacy expert” (1.6)
  - “Reading specialist” (1.20)
  - “RR teacher” (3.6)
- Special education teacher:
  - “Special Ed” (2.11)
  - “Special Ed teachers” (2.20)
- Elizabeth’s peers:
  - “Friends” (1.12)
  - “Her friends” (2.17)

The third question analyzed was “Any other questions about Elizabeth?” Sample responses illustrating common themes include:

- Holistic view:
  - “What subject area does she dislike the most. What are her interests and hobbies?” (1.4)
  - “What are her favorite subjects? What activities does she like to do?” (1.11)

- “Does she have any other Spanish speaking friends to practice English with?” (1.15)
- “How does she feel about her progress in different subjects?” (2.17)
- “Is Elizabeth making friends at school?” (3.8)
- Tutors or summer programs:
  - “How much extra help does Elizabeth receive after school?” (1.22)
  - “What could be done to keep her advancing during the summer months instead of losing some of what was learned in the previous year?” (1.24)
  - “What intervention does she get during the summers?” (2.7)
  - “Did she lose knowledge from being away from school over the summer? She needs the constant help.” (2.13)
  - “After school/ summer activities?” (2.14)
- Family participation:
  - “How are we going to get Elizabeth’s Spanish speaking parents involved with her learning outside of the classroom” (1.21)
  - “Is there anything that can be done at home to help Elizabeth succeed in school?” (2.11)
  - “What is her home environment like?” (3.4)
  - “What kind of support could we get Elizabeth for home and summer time?” (3.12)
- Strategies:

- “Could English be written on objects or sentence strips with both languages to place in the classroom?” (1.3)
- “Does she get individualized time out of school?” (2.9)
- “What seemed most/ least beneficial?” (3.2)
- “What’s your plan for her improvement?” (3.13)
- “How does she best learn?” (3.15)
- Individualized Education Program or learning disability:
  - “Would it be worth testing her to put in place an I.E.P.?” (2.18)
  - “Any possible learning disability?” (3.10)
- Assessments:
  - “What are other forms of assessment used to determine her levels in other content areas?” (1.16)

The fourth question analyzed was “Who would you ask? Why?” Typical responses include:

- General education teacher:
  - “Elizabeth’s teacher” (1.3)
  - “Her teacher” (1.10)
  - “Teachers” (1.11)
  - “Gen. Ed. Teacher” (2.20)
  - “Previous teacher” (3.2)
- Elizabeth’s family:
  - “Her family” (1.8)
  - “Her parent” (1.10)
  - “Parents” (1.17)

- “Elizabeth’s family” (1.21)
- English Language Learner specialist:
  - “ELL teacher” (1.8)
  - “ELL specialist” (2.18)
  - “Trisha” (3.12)
- Administrators:
  - “Principal” (1.24)
  - “Administration” (3.4)
  - “Psychologist” (3.10)
- Elizabeth:
  - “Elizabeth herself” (1.4)
  - “Elizabeth” (2.17)
- Elizabeth’s sibling’s teachers:
  - “The sibling’s teachers” (1.1)
  - “Sibling’s teachers” (1.2)
- Special education teacher:
  - “I.E.P. specialist” (2.18)
  - “Intervention specialist” (3.10)
- Elizabeth’s peers:
  - “Friends” (1.11)

## Appendix B

CBM- Curriculum- based measurement

Efferent- This is a style of reading where the goal is to find and comprehend information.

ELD- English Language Development

ELL- English Language Learners

Esthetic- A style of reading where the goal is pleasure and to engage in the text.

GOMs- General Outcomes Measures, equivalent to CBM, these are a standardized method of assessment for determining academic progress by repeated measurement of student academic achievement outcomes, outcomes refers to what a student has learned or what they should have learned.

IEP- Individualized Education Program

L1- A student's first Language

L2- A student's second language

RTI- Response to Intervention, it is an approach to help struggling learners, a tiered model of intervention

SDAIE- Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English

## Appendix C

Additional Community Resources available for ELLs:

Resources in the Community are sometimes available for ELL (ELL) families depending on the city and ELL population. Researchers (Ray, 2007, 6) discuss New Immigrant Centers as an important resource for these families. The research on these centers is based on six centers located in Austin, Texas and also centers located Minneapolis, Minnesota. These welcome centers provide many services for new immigrants.

In Texas, these centers are located in local public libraries. They provide books, audio, video, and software to help new immigrants study for U.S. citizenship. Members of the center also receive information on other community services. There are also formal opportunities such as various classes. One main class offered is Talk-Time. This class is devoted to developing their conversational English skills. There are also informal opportunities such as a variety of texts printed in immigrant's native languages.

In Minnesota, these services are also provided through libraries. These libraries hold a unique, bilingual staff. Their skills range from English, Spanish, Somali, and Hmong. They provide help with interpretation and also provide instruction. For children, the library offers bilingual story time. This group of ELL families also has the opportunity to visit schools and attend events in the community.

Researchers (Borba, 2009, 683) found that after-school programs can be a great resource for ELLs. Some schools provide a Language Club within their after school activities. This opportunity gives ELLs more opportunities to practice English and also to enhance their knowledge of their native language and culture. There are also English as a Second Language (ESL) computer programs these students utilize during their time in the club after school. However, their work is not limited to English based instruction.

Students also work on various projects in relation to their native language. In this specific club, students interview their family members. They then write about their interviews and the information they found on their family history. In this instance, students are able to integrate their native language and culture through interviews with practice in English instruction as they write a paper on the experience. Language Clubs are available at certain schools; however, their presence again depends on the ELL population in the community and may vary from city to city.

There are also resources available for families online. “The International Children’s Digital Library digitizes children’s books from around the world, including works in over 30 languages” (Roy, 6, 2007).

Researchers also (Tellez & Waxman, 2010, 111) investigated the effects of community programs on ELLS. They found studies that supported that these programs were most effective on ELLs who already spoke English well. They also found research to support that after-school programs are effective for ELLs. The most improvements were made when they programs focused on progress in English. Their research also found that non formal clubs such as “Boys and Girls’ clubs to sports teams enhance academic performance” (111). These casual, non-academic clubs can also be a resource for ELLs to more fully integrate into the language and culture, and in result better their academics.



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