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WHATEVER IT TAKES: EXEMPLARY TEACHERS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Dissertation

by

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This dissertation analyzed how exemplary mainstream teachers of English Language Learners (ELLs) taught these students across contexts--English monolingual immersion and bilingual. The research for this study was grounded directly in the teaching practices of exemplary teachers for English Language Learners (ELLs). Teacher participants undertook inquiry into their own practices to provide the knowledge and information needed to assist other teachers in improving their practices with ELLs. The research in this case drew upon previous research in the area of professional knowledge and expertise. The major goal was to understand from a holistic viewpoint the successful teacher of ELLs--their backgrounds, knowledge and practices, and how these were mediated by teaching contexts--English monolingual immersion and bilingual.

Using a constructivist grounded-theory design, four descriptive case studies were the focus of the dissertation. Using interviews, observations, recall sessions, and a focus group, each teacher was studied to determine their backgrounds both personally and professionally, teaching practices, and attitudes towards ELL students, in order to create a theory of what it takes to be an effective teacher of ELL students.

The results suggest that certain background experiences can positively impact the teaching of ELL students: learning a second language, being immersed in a culture
different from one’s own, and an understanding of second language development. The
results also indicate common patterns among the teachers’ planning and preparation,
teaching practices, and attitudes towards their ELL students. Commonalities in teachers’
planning and preparation included the use of themes and units, language goals for their
ELL students, knowledge of students’ backgrounds, and preparation of exemplars and
models. Commonalities in classroom practices included repetition of key vocabulary
and phrases, prompting and coaching ELL students, thoughtful grouping and pairing,
frequent check-ins with ELL students, and, in the bilingual context, use of the students’
first language for learning and instruction. Finally, all of the teachers demonstrated
common observable attitudes towards their ELL students such as kindness, sensitivity,
and encouragement.
Dedication

To my family and to my husband Kevin,

For your love, constant support, and unwavering belief in me
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Language minority students encounter... systemic obstacles that constrain their access to educational opportunities and inhibit their academic development in U.S. schools... [They] quickly discover that their home cultures and languages are viewed as deficient... Designed for a homogenous, White, middle-class, native English-speaking student population, schools rarely adjust to language minority students... [In addition], only a small percentage of teachers are prepared to teach across language difference, and the overwhelming majority of teachers do not have... any relevant training in working with language minority students... Within a high stakes educational context, mainstream teachers are accountable for the performance of language minority students whom they are not prepared to teach. (Beykont, 2002, p. 25)

The number of linguistically and culturally diverse students in public, K-12 schools continues to rise. From the 1993-1994 school year to the 1999-2000 school year, the number of English Language Learners (ELLs) rose from 2 million to 3 million, or from 5% to 7% of the total public school population. In the 2003-2004 year, approximately 3.8 million of students enrolled in K-12, or 11% of all students, received English Language Learner support services (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2006). The U.S. Bureau of Statistics (2008) Report of School Enrollment in 2006 indicated that of the nearly 50 million students enrolled in public school across the United States, 20.6% of them speak a language other than English at home or over 10 million students. Of those 10 million students, 8.6%, or approximately 860,000, were reported as speaking English less than very well.

However, national statistics reveal that of the over 1 million public school teachers who have ELLs in their classrooms, a mere 12.5% have had 8 or more hours of training in working with ELLs (NCES, 2002). Therefore, though teachers will increasingly be faced with teaching English Language Learners in their classrooms,
most will be unprepared to deliver effective instruction to these students. This becomes critically important as drop-out rates are increasing for minority students. Compared to a 70.8% graduation rate for White students, the national graduation rate for Hispanic students falls at 53.2%, with the male Hispanic rate at less than 50% (Orfield, Losen, Wald, & Swanson, 2004). Furthermore, one third of Hispanic ELL students and two thirds of immigrant students drop out of school (Garcia & Curry-Rodriguez, 2000).

This combination of factors has raised numerous questions: what kinds of programs are most effective at teaching English to ELL students, what are best practices in teaching ELLs, and how do we prepare teachers to work with ELL students in order to increase the likelihood that ELL students will succeed in school. The main debate regarding the issue of the most effective programs for ELL students centers around schools that offer bilingual education programs for ELLs versus schools that only offer monolingual, English programs. Proponents of bilingual education assert that the development of a student’s native language enables transfer of skills to English. They cite research supporting their position that clearly shows the positive effects of bilingual education for ELL students (Greene, 1998; Slavin & Cheung, 2005; Thomas & Collier, 1997; Willig, 1985), not only in terms of language development but in terms of the benefits of maintaining these students’ cultural heritages (Brisk, 2006). Supporters of bilingual education programs believe in what Lambert (1977) originally called an “additive” view of bilingualism where a second language is added to the first language without the loss of the native language.

Proponents of monolingual, English only programs for ELLs argue that students should be immersed in English as soon as possible to promote the highest level of
English language development. They also cite studies to support their position (Rossell & Ross, 1986), as well as make claims about the disadvantages for ELL students to be segregated in bilingual programs (Porter, 1994). English-only advocates support a “subtractive” view (Lambert, 1977) of bilingualism, where a student’s native language is replaced by the country’s dominant language.

Several states have done away with their bilingual programs in favor of the English-only model. Some of these states include California (Proposition 227; California Secretary of State, 1998), Arizona (Proposition 203; Arizona Secretary of State, 2000), and Massachusetts (General Laws of Massachusetts, 2002). Movement towards English-only programs has meant that ELL students are now being fully incorporated into English mainstream classrooms leaving many teachers feeling overwhelmed by how best to educate these students (Palmer & Garcia, 2000; Stritikus & Garcia, 2000).

Due to the increasing need for teacher preparation in working with ELL students, scholars have suggested that the debate needs to be shifted from which kind of program is best for ELL students to the kinds of practices that are best for ELL students (Facella, Rampino, & Shea, 2005; Gersten & Baker, 2000; Reyes, 1992; Tabors, 1998). In a few cases, scholars have also suggested looking at what makes an effective teacher of ELL students (Garcia, 1991; Tikunoff, 1983). Though limited in terms of the research done in the area of effective teachers of ELLs, the issue can be seen as an important element of the current debate on teacher quality.

Through the No Child Left Behind Act, the government has provided a specific definition of the highly qualified teacher. Highly qualified teachers are defined as those
who have full state certification (this includes alternative routes to certification) or passing scores on state teacher exams, hold at least a bachelor’s degree, and demonstrate subject matter competence (U.S. Department of Education, 2002). Though limited in its definition, there is no doubt that teachers who are “highly qualified” in terms of in-depth pedagogical and content knowledge are more likely to have successful students (Darling-Hammond, 2000; King-Rice, 2003; Rivers & Sanders 2002). As Darling-Hammond stated: “Teacher quality characteristics such as certification status and degree in the field to be taught are very significantly and positively correlated with student outcomes” (Findings section, Finding 1).

A logical conclusion from the research on teacher quality is that the more in-depth knowledge and preparation that teachers have regarding best practices for ELL students, the better their students will perform. However, as stated earlier, mainstream English-only classroom teachers have very limited preparation in working with ELL students. In addition, though we know some effective practices for ELL students, little to no research has been done to determine what makes a successful teacher of ELL students. This study was developed to determine those characteristics, backgrounds, and preparation that effective ELL teachers possess.

Bransford, Darling-Hammond, and LePage (2005) proposed a framework for understanding the complexities of teaching that frames the research for this study. Bransford et al. developed a vision of the professional practice of teaching as made up of three intersecting components: knowledge of learners and their development within social contexts, knowledge of subject matter and curriculum goals in light of the social
purposes of education, and knowledge of teaching in light of the content and learners to be taught, as informed by assessment and supported by classroom environments.

With regard to the knowledge of teaching component, one area that was focused upon was the teaching of diverse learners (Bransford et al., 2005). Part of the process in learning how to teach diverse learners, they argued, is understanding and reaching out to children who have a wide range of life experiences, behaviors, and beliefs. It means understanding that “individuals’ world views are not universal but are greatly influenced by their . . . gender, race, ethnicity, and social-class background” (p. 36).

This view was complemented in the component of knowledge of learners and their development where a knowledge of language development was emphasized. Bransford et al. explained that

the language that children speak often affects teachers’ . . . assumptions about students and their abilities. Teachers need to understand how ‘nonstandard’ uses of English evolve and, while helping students learn to speak Standard English, avoid sending the message, either overtly or implicitly, that the language spoken by some groups of students is linguistically inferior to that spoken by others. (p. 34)

Because the issue effectively working with ELL students has become so critical, it is important to explore how teachers’ knowledge of teaching diverse learners can best be developed. In order to do so, an understanding of those teachers who are effective with diverse learners, particularly in the area of language development, is needed.

In relation to this view of language development, an area that has begun to be explored in effective instruction for English Language Learners is preparing teachers to teach language explicitly. This argument is based on research indicating that the kind of language needed for school-based tasks is quite different from the language needed in
everyday interactions (Chamot & O’Malley 1986; Short, 1994). Cummins (1981) first
described the difference between these two kinds of language as Cognitive Academic
Language Proficiency, or CALP, and Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills, or
BICS in terms of the “contextual support available for expressing or receiving meaning”
(p. 11). The first type of language, CALP, often referred to as academic language, is
context-reduced in nature. That is that students need to rely almost solely on written and
spoken language for comprehension. The second type of language, BICS, often referred
to as conversational language, is more context-embedded, meaning that students can use
a variety of cues, including body language and speech intonation in order to
comprehend meaning. It is argued that the academic language needed for schooling “is
a variable that often hinders the academic achievement of language minority students,
even though such students might be proficient in varieties of English used in non-
amademic contexts” (Solomon & Rhodes, 1995, n.p.).

Though academic language has been analyzed in classrooms by researchers
(Chamot & O’Malley, 1986; Short, 1994; Spanos, Rhodes, Dale, & Crandall, 1988), it
is only recently that some researchers have suggested that teachers should be explicitly
prepared to teach academic language to their students. As Schleppegrell (2004) argued,

Many teachers are unprepared to make the linguistic expectations of schooling
explicit to students. . . . In the absence of an explicit focus on language, students
from certain social class backgrounds continue to be privileged and others,
[particularly English language learners], to be disadvantaged in learning,
assessment, and promotion, perpetuating the obvious inequalities that exist
today. (p. 3)

Fillmore and Snow (2000) also make the argument that teacher preparation needs to
include a focus on language. They suggested that teachers need “a thorough
understanding of how language figures in education” (p. 1). They laid out the kinds of knowledge teachers need in order to effectively teach English Language Learners in their classrooms. The first is a knowledge of educational linguistics in addition to knowing the basic elements of spoken language, such as phonemes and morphemes. They also argued that teachers need exposure to other languages to gain an understanding of the variety of structures that different languages and dialects use to show meaning. They were not suggesting that every teacher needs to comprehend all foreign languages but that they do need exposure to various common grammatical errors of students learning English to better diagnose and respond to their students’ errors. In addition, they said that teachers need to be clear to their students about discourse pattern expectations of the classroom, such as teacher initiated questions, response from students, and then evaluation by the teacher so that their students know what their roles are in these patterns.

Limitations of Current Research

Because the numbers of ELL students are increasing but teacher training for effectively working with these students is lacking, it becomes critical to understand how teachers can successfully teach ELL students. Though research has been done related to exemplary teachers in general education settings (Allington & Johnston, 2000; Snow, Barnes, Chandler, Goodman, & Hemphill, 1991), up to this point, there has been limited research on what makes an effective teacher for ELL students (Garcia, 1991; Tikunoff, 1983), and no research on effective teachers of ELL students in different language program settings. Furthermore, since language figures so prominently in the success or
failure of English Language Learners, it is equally important to understand how teachers can best teach academic language to their ELL students.

The purpose of this research was to look holistically at the exemplary teacher of English Language Learners, particularly around the issues of teaching language, across different contexts--bilingual and English monolingual immersion. As stated earlier, several bilingual programs in this country are being dismantled as they continue to be challenged as effective means for educating English Language Learners. This means that teachers who formerly relied on bilingual colleagues to educate these students are faced with teaching them themselves in mainstream classrooms. However, there are still bilingual programs in effect in private schools as well as some dual language programs aimed at majority language speakers in public. The goal of looking at both bilingual and English monolingual immersion contexts was to see whether or not similar strategies were used by exemplary teachers in each setting and what challenges teachers faced in each setting.

**Purpose of the Study and Research Questions**

This study set out to explore exemplary teachers of English language learners (ELLs), specifically. It asked questions about what kinds of knowledge effective teachers of English language learners possess, what kinds of strategies these teachers used in practice, and why they used these particular strategies. For the purposes of this study, ELLs are defined as students whose first language is not English and whose cultural backgrounds differ from White middle-class, native-born American children.

The research for this study was grounded directly in the teaching practices of exemplary teachers for English Language Learners in order to understand what teachers
need to know and learn to do in order to successfully work with these students. Teachers in this case undertook inquiry into their own successful practices with ELL students in order to assist other teachers in improving their practices. The research in this case drew on previous research in the area of professional knowledge and expertise, with an emphasis on teaching English Language Learners. The major goal was to understand from a holistic viewpoint the successful teacher of ELLs--their background, knowledge and practices and how these were mediated by the contexts of English monolingual immersion classrooms and bilingual classrooms.

The main research question was, How do exemplary teachers teach English Language Learners in both monolingual English immersion and bilingual settings? The question had four sub questions:

1. What challenges did teachers face in both settings, and did they differ by setting?
2. What were the knowledge, skills and dispositions these exemplary teachers possessed?
3. What were the strategies exemplary teachers used to teach academic language to English Language Learners and did these strategies differ across settings?
4. Did ELL students’ progress over time in writing support the teachers’ status as exemplary?

Significance

Teachers in mainstream classrooms will continue to face the challenge of effectively teaching their ELL students as the numbers of ELL students increase. Though some states are now providing an ELL certification, this is often considered an
“add-on” to initial certification and not required for most teachers. This leaves the majority of teachers with limited training in teaching ELLs. Of particular concern is the need for ELL students to acquire the academic language they need in order to succeed in school. As Schleppegrell (2004) argued, “Teachers need greater knowledge about the linguistic basis of what they are teaching and tools for helping students achieve greater facility with the ways language is used in creating the kinds of texts that construe specialized knowledge at school” (p. 3).

Students who are limited in English often face significant challenges in learning the English they need to succeed in school, and it is therefore imperative to understand how effective teachers of ELL students teach these students. Though research has been done related to general effective practices for ELLs (August, 1998; August & Hakuta, 1998; August & Pease-Alvarez, 1996; Dianda, 1992; Garcia, 1991; Gersten & Baker, 2000), little research has been done that examines how academic language can be taught explicitly to ELL students (Schleppegrell, 2004; Short, 1994; Spanos et al., 1988). In addition, there is little research that examines what teachers who are successful with ELLs in their classrooms actually do in practice (Garcia; Tikunoff, 1983). More importantly, there is little research that looks holistically at the successful teacher of ELLs to understand what kinds of knowledge the teachers have, what their backgrounds are in terms of training and life history, and what kinds of thought processes they go through in planning the lessons focused on language for their ELL students. This study aimed to shine a light on the successful teacher of ELL students in order to help other teachers become more effective. Moreover, the study considered the teacher in two contexts--both a bilingual context and an monolingual English immersion context since
these are the situations in which most ELLs are placed. In looking at both contexts, I wanted to understand what kinds of practices were effective in each setting and what challenges the teachers faced in each setting.

The results of the study are important for practitioners who seek effective strategies for teaching language to ELLs. The results also allow professors and administrators in charge of professional development to consider the kinds of training teachers may need to be more successful with the ELLs in their classrooms. In addition, some consideration of the effects of a bilingual setting and monolingual English immersion setting may influence the kinds of programs districts and schools create to best serve the ELL students under their care.
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

To prepare teachers for a changing world, Bransford et al. (2005) suggested that teachers need to possess three types of knowledge: knowledge of learners and their development, knowledge of subject matter and curriculum, and knowledge of teaching. These three kinds of knowledge intersect to form a vision of professional practice that, they argued, all teachers should be prepared to achieve. These forms of knowledge are articulated as knowledge that can be learned, though it is acknowledged that other factors influence how teachers come to know what they do including the influence of personality, such as the attributes of perseverance, enthusiasm and flexibility. What is clear from the evidence about teaching is that teacher knowledge matters (Darling-Hammond, 2000, 2002; Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Mundy, 2001). However, the view of what counts as knowledge has been contested by scholars over the years (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Fenstermacher, 1994; Grimmett & MacKinnon, 1992; Noffke, 1997; Schon, 1983; Shulman, 1987), including how teachers come to know what they do.

Several areas of literature are relevant to a study of exemplary teachers of English Language Learners. First, we need to understand the nature of teacher knowledge--how it has been defined and how these definitions fit within the framework illustrated by Bransford et al. (2005). Related to teacher knowledge is teachers’ comprehension of second language acquisition which will be either implicitly or explicitly understood by exemplary teachers of ELLs. Therefore, it is necessary to present the varying theories of second language acquisition. Next, we need to examine
what it means to be an exemplary teacher. Though exemplary teaching has mainly been investigated in relation to the teaching of literacy in mainstream classrooms (Allington & Johnston, 2000; Block & Mangieri, 2003), the work provides important insights into how exemplary teaching has been studied. To understand teacher practice, an analysis of what constitute effective practices for ELLs is required. And finally, as teachers’ status as exemplary will be supported through ELL students’ progress in writing, an understanding of bilingual writing development is necessary, particularly the features of language that seem to transfer from a student’s native language to English.

**Teacher Knowledge**

What is the nature of teacher knowledge and how do teachers come to know what they do? These questions have been taken up by scholars in the field of teacher education. These scholars have looked at the development of teacher knowledge and teacher thinking (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995; Clark & Peterson, 1986; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Fenstermacher, 1994; Grimmett & MacKinnon, 1992; Noffke, 1997; Schon, 1983; Shulman, 1987), as well as examining the process of learning to teach (Feiman-Nemser, 1983; Grossman, 1990; Valli, 1997; Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Moon, 1998; Zeichner & Liston, 1987). Clark and Peterson’s seminal piece on teacher thinking introduced the notion that teachers do more than merely implement curriculum. Their critique centered around the process-product (Dunkin & Biddle, 1974) studies of the time that focused solely on outcomes—observable effects of teaching. Though important in the field of teacher education, Clark and Peterson, among others, felt that this view was a narrow one of what in fact took place in the process of knowing what to teach and how to teach. They argued that teachers go through a variety of unobservable thought
processes including intricate planning phases mediated by teachers’ theories and beliefs. These thought processes were described by Clark and Peterson as interactive, that is, constantly being reevaluated as the act of teaching was played out in the classroom. Their reciprocal model of teaching had teachers’ thought processes as influencing their observable actions and vice versa. The model they proposed saw teaching as a complex process involving thoughts and decisions, not merely a technical activity of implementing a prescribed curriculum. As they described in their article reviewing the research on teacher thinking,

...the research shows that thinking plays an important part in teaching, and that the image of a teacher as a reflective professional, proposed originally by the NIE Panel 6 on Teaching as Clinical Information Processing (National Institute of Education, 1975), is not far fetched. Teachers do plan in a rich variety of ways, and these plans have real consequences in the classroom. Teachers do have thoughts and make decisions frequently (one every 2 minutes) during interactive teaching. Teachers do have theories and belief systems that influence their perceptions, plans and actions (p. 292).

Their model led to the development of work around teacher beliefs, what teachers know and what teachers need to know in order to teach effectively. With regard to what teachers know, or teacher knowledge, various researchers have conceptualized teacher knowledge in the literature on teacher education. Shulman (1987) preferred the term “pedagogical content knowledge” to describe the essence of the knowledge teachers need to effectively educate students. He said, “It represents the blending of content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular topics, problems, or issues are organized, represented, and adapted to the diverse interests and abilities of learners, and presented for instruction” (pp. 15-16). The emphasis for Shulman was on how to communicate a knowledge base formulated from researchers,
professors and practicing teachers, to neophyte teachers who needed to receive this knowledge. The assumption was that the knowledge teachers needed to teach well was produced primarily by university-based researchers and scholars in various disciplines. It was also assumed that one could be explicit about a formal knowledge base for teaching rather than relying on the conventional wisdom of common practice.

Fenstermacher (1994) provided further valuable insight into the question of knowledge for teaching by focusing upon epistemology. He essentially argued that the epistemological character of what is deemed knowledge is crucial to any definition of knowledge. He identified two primary conceptions of knowledge in the research literature—practical and formal. Formal knowledge “is gained from studies of teaching that use conventional scientific methods, quantitative and qualitative; these methods and their accompanying designs are intended to yield a commonly accepted degree of significance, validity and generalizability, and intersubjectivity” (p. 8). Practical knowledge, on the other hand, “arises from what teachers already know, in contrast to producing knowledge for teachers to use” (p. 9). This kind of knowledge is “developed from participating in and reflecting on action and experience. It is bounded by the situation or context in which it arises” (p. 12). He proceeded by questioning whether or not the categorization of these two types of knowledge as practical and formal was epistemologically sound.

Grimmett and MacKinnon (1992) and Schon (1983) discussed this more “practical” knowledge that teachers have. This is knowledge gained through careful reflection and is grounded in the specific practices of teachers. Schon (1983) referred to this knowledge as one that can be gained in practice and through reflection. He said,
“our knowing is ordinarily tacit, implicit in our patterns of action and in our feel for the stuff with which we are dealing. It seems right to say that our knowledge is in our action” (Schon, 1995, p. 29). Like Schon, Grimmett and McKinnon (1992) saw the knowledge teachers need to have as gained through experience. That is, it comes in the craft of teaching, or what they called “craft knowledge” (p. 387). They said that craft knowledge

concerns itself both with teachers’ representations of the declarative knowledge contained in subject matter content and with teachers’ tacit instantiations of procedural ways of dealing rigorously and supportively with learners. As a form of professional expertise, craft knowledge is neither a technical skill, the application of theory or general principles to practice, nor critical analysis; rather, it represents the construction of situated, learner-focused, procedural and content-related pedagogical knowledge through deliberate action. (p. 393).

Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) extended the work by Fenstermacher (1994), Schon (1983, 1995), and Schulman (1987) in describing three types of knowledge that teachers can bring to bear on their practice. The first relates to Shulman’s (1987) pedagogical content knowledge, or what Cochran-Smith and Lytle referred to as “knowledge-for-practice.” With this knowledge, “it is assumed that university-based researchers generate what is commonly referred to as formal knowledge and theory . . . for teachers to use in order to improve practice” (p. 250). The second kind of knowledge Cochran Smith and Lytle described is knowledge-in-practice. “From this perspective, some of the most essential knowledge for teaching is what many people call practical knowledge, or what very competent teachers know as it is embedded in practice and in teachers’ reflections on practice” (p. 250). The third type of knowledge they describe is knowledge-of-practice. Here
it is assumed that the knowledge teachers need to teach well is generated when teachers treat their own classrooms and school as sites for intentional investigation at the same time that they treat the knowledge and theory produced by others as generative material for interrogation and interpretation. (p. 250)

For this research, teachers knowledge-in-practice and teachers knowledge-of-practice were emphasized. In examining their practices, I interviewed the teachers about why they do what they do, how they make their decisions, and what they think works well and does not work well in teaching their ELL students. This type of knowledge can be seen as being more of the “craft knowledge” or “knowledge-in-action” as described above. I asked them to also participate in a focus group to look at and interrogate some of their own teaching. They used their classrooms for the “intentional investigation” described by Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999), and we worked together to construct a knowledge base for teaching ELLs.

Second Language Acquisition

An area of knowledge in the framework developed by Bransford et al (2005) is knowledge of the learner and their development. Within this part of the framework, there is an emphasis on the teacher understanding the language of the students as well as language development generally. The teacher participants in this study had some understanding of second language acquisition in their knowledge base of the learner. Though this knowledge may be more implicit, they still had a general orientation toward the learning of language that they were asked to articulate. In order to understand their position, it is important to examine the different ways in which second language acquisition (SLA) has been theorized.
One of the initial understandings of SLA was born of behaviorism. Within this way of examining SLA, it is assumed that children learned a second language through the process of imitation. They hear the language being used around them, and they acquire the language through attending to the words and structures used by native-speaking peers and adults. As Lightbown and Spada (1999) explained, behaviorists “account for learning in terms of imitation, practice, reinforcement, and habit formation. Learners receive linguistic input from speakers in their environment and they form 'associations' between words and objects or events” (p. 35). A problem with this theory of SLA was that it could not account for what second language learners produced in their language formation that had not been heard by them in the environment. “Similar to data from child language acquisition, second language learner data reflected errors that went beyond those in the surrounding speech, and importantly, beyond those in the native language” (Gass & Selinker, 2001, p. 75). For example, a second language learner would say a sentence such as, “He comed yesterday,” which could not be a phrase a second language learner likely would have heard in his environment.

An alternative to the behaviorist theory became an innatist theory of SLA which maintained that human beings were prewired for language. Noam Chomsky was first known for this theory with regard to both first and second language acquisition. He postulated that language learners had what he called a language acquisition device, or LAD, that facilitated language learning. This LAD consists of a universal grammar which he claimed was made up of

a set of principles which [were] common to all languages. If children [were] pre-equipped with UG, then what they [had] to learn [were] the ways in which their own language [made] use of these principles and the variations on those
principles which may exist in the particular language which they [heard] spoken around them. (Lightbown & Spada, 1999, p. 16)

The environment simply triggered this innate language.

One model of SLA based upon innatism was Krashen’s monitor model (Gass & Selinker, 2001). This model consists of five “hypotheses”: the acquisition-learning hypothesis, the monitor hypothesis, the natural order hypothesis, the input hypothesis, and the affective filter hypothesis. The first hypothesis states that we acquire language as we are exposed to samples of the second language that we understand, much like the way we pick up our first language. We learn a language, on the other hand, “via a conscious process of study and attention to form and rule learning” (Lightbown & Spada, 1999, p. 37). The second hypothesis says that we have a monitor which takes the language we acquire and learn intuitively and makes minor changes to it through the learned system. The third hypothesis indicates that there is a natural order to the rules second language learners will acquire, much like in a first language. For example, Krashen would say that plural forms with –s will be learned before the regular past tense marker “ed.” The next hypothesis, the input hypothesis, argues that the only way to truly acquire a language is through a sufficient amount of what Krashen called “comprehensible input” which could only occur with extensive exposure to first language speakers/models. And the final hypothesis, the affective filter hypothesis, states that there is “an imaginary barrier which prevents learners from acquiring language from the available input” (p. 39). This barrier arises depending upon a second language learners’ attitudes, motivation and/or personality.
From innatism, other models of SLA emerged that put less emphasis on the innate ability for language of the learner and more emphasis on the social aspect of learning a second language, or the interaction of the learner with the environment. In this view, second language acquisition takes place through conversational interaction. The sociocultural theorists operating from the interactionist position “assume that language acquisition actually takes place in the interactions of the learner and interlocutor, whereas other interactionist models assume that input modification provides learners with the linguistic raw material which they will process internally and invisibly” (Lightbown & Spada, 1999, p. 44). A theorist operating from the interactionist position is Fillmore (1991) who outlined a theory of language learning in social context. She explained that there were three major components to her model: the learners, the speakers of the target language, and a social setting. The learners need to be present and motivated to learn a second language, the speakers of the target language need to know it well enough to “provide the learners with access to the language and the help they need for learning it” (p. 53), and the social setting needs to be place where the learners and the target language speakers come into frequent enough contact to make the language learning possible. She further explained that various processes come into play with language learning, including social processes, linguistic processes, and cognitive processes. The social processes are the learners and target language speakers interacting in a setting that allows for optimal language use. The linguistic processes involve how a target language speaker will modify his speech based on the needs of the learner as well as the learners’ “awareness of grammatical form and structure [which] will predispose them to look for equivalent properties in the new language data they
have available to them” (p. 55). Finally, the cognitive processes are the analytical procedures and operations that take place in the heads of the learners that make the language learning possible. With regard to classrooms, Fillmore stated that “the ability of second language learners to acquire the target language depends on the structure of the classroom settings, the kind of language used in them, and the characteristics of the individual learners” (p. 64).

Swain (2005) posited another theory of language acquisition from an interactionist position. She called it “the output hypothesis.” This hypothesis states that the act of producing language (speaking or writing) constitutes, under certain circumstances, part of the process of second language learning (p. 472). Based on her own previous research, Swain outlined three components of the output hypothesis: the noticing/triggering function, the hypothesis-testing function, and the metalinguistic (reflective) function. The first function is utilized by second language learners while they attempt to produce the target language. In so doing, learners will “notice” what they lack in the language needed which will “trigger” cognitive processes, “ones in which learners generate linguistic knowledge that is new for them or that consolidates their current existing knowledge” (p. 474). The claim with the hypothesis-testing function is that learners’ output represents a “trial run” in regard to what they are trying to say, and that they improve their linguistic knowledge through modified output. That is, output that is then instructed by a target language speaker as being incorrect so that a second language learner can then improve upon his mistakes. For example, research has shown that second language learners “were more likely to modify their output and do so successfully when they were pushed to do so” (p. 477). The claim Swain made about
the metalinguistic (reflective) function is that using language to reflect on language produced by others or the self, mediates second language learning. Swain particularly looked at the role of collaborative dialogue in second language learning where learners talk with one another about the language they are trying to produce, and it is within the talk that the learning happens. As she stated, “speaking becomes a tool through which thinking can be articulated and transformed into an artifactual form, and as such becomes available as a source of further reflection” (p. 480).

These various theories about second language acquisition informed the research on understanding the knowledge teachers possess. As stated earlier, teachers in this study had an idea of how they viewed language acquisition, either implicitly or explicitly, which influenced their practices.

Exemplary Teaching

Within the framework by Bransford et al. (2005), three types of knowledge are listed as critical to teachers achieving their vision of professional practice. Though they indicated that this knowledge is key to for teachers to acquire, it is less clear as to whether having that knowledge results in teachers being exemplary. Therefore, what is the nature of exemplary teaching and how has it been defined in the literature?

Berliner (1994) examined the nature of expertise in teaching. He claimed that what is learned by the expert appears to be linked better to other knowledge that the expert possesses. It also appears that such knowledge is more easily retrievable in appropriate situations and more transferable to new situations than is most other kinds of knowledge that they acquire or that is possessed by other individuals without the commitment that the expert has to excel in a particular domain. In the domain in which they have acquired their unique skills, experts usually perform appropriately and effortlessly. (p. 162)
Berliner (1994) also described a heuristic model developed by Dreyfus and Dreyfus that specified five stages that an individual moves from novice to expert. The first stage is the novice level. “At this stage, the commonplaces of an environment must be discriminated, the elements of the tasks to be performed need to be labeled and learned, and the novice must be given a set of context-free rules” (Berliner, p. 164). In relation to teaching, Berliner said that the novice teacher is usually rational, relatively inflexible and tends to conform to whatever rules and procedures they are told to follow. The second stage is the advanced beginner level. Novices move to this level as experience is gained. According to Berliner, many second and third year teachers are likely to be at this level. This is where episodic and case knowledge is accumulated, such as learning to know what to do in a given situation based on past experiences. The third level is the competent level, though not all advanced beginners reach this level. Berliner indicated that some teachers stay “fixed” at a less than competent level of performance. For those who reach the competent level, there appear to be two distinguishing characteristics of these performers. First, they make conscious choices about what they are going to do. They set priorities, plan, and have rational goals. Secondly, while enacting their plan, they can determine what is and is not important. Berliner described this level of teacher as one who learns to make “curriculum and instruction decisions, such as when to stay with a topic and when to move on, based on a unique teaching context and a particular group of students” (p. 166).

The proficient level, around the fifth year of teaching, is what some teachers attain. Berliner (1994) described this level as where teachers’ intuition or know-how takes center stage.
Out of the wealth of experience that the proficient individual has accumulated comes a holistic way of viewing the situations they encounter. The recognize similarities among events that the novice fails to see. . . . This holistic recognition of patterns as similar allows the proficient individual to predict events more precisely, because they see more things as alike and therefore as having been experienced before. (p. 166)

From the proficient level, only very few teachers, according to Berliner, move to the expert level. He indicated that the expert can be seen as “arational.” “Experts have both an intuitive grasp of the situation and seem to sense in nonanalytic and nondeliberative ways the appropriate response to be made” (p. 166). Experts in this sense seem to move fluidly and effortlessly in what they do.

Berliner (1994) synthesized the handful of small-scale, non-experimental studies that had been done on pedagogical expertise in the 1970s and 1980s and developed eight descriptive propositions. The first proposition is that experts excel mainly in their own domain and in particular contexts. The reason for this is because experts have a great deal more experience in some domains than in others. Studies found that this domain-specific knowledge is acquired through lengthy experience that is quite contextualized. In that regard, Berliner argued that it may only be possible to obtain valid judgments about the degree of expertise a teacher possesses from observing them in their own classrooms.

The second proposition Berliner (1994) offered is that experts often develop automaticity for the repetitive operations that are needed to accomplish their goals. The studies he reviewed found that the expert teacher more frequently uses repetitive chains of behavior than does the novice. Berliner suggested some policy issues related to proposition two. The first is that novice teachers might be better off if their training
included practice in automating certain skills, such as the opening homework review; attendance taking; assigning, collecting and giving back homework; testing; introducing a new topic; closing a lesson, as so on). Secondly, he argued that since some of teaching is skill-like in nature, these skill-like parts “should be mastered and routinized during preservice education. That might . . . increase both the confidence and the efficiency of the novice teacher” (p. 171).

Berliner’s (1994) proposition three is that experts are more sensitive to the task demands and social situation when solving problems. Berliner cited a study by Housner and Griffey of experienced and novice teachers where they found that the experienced teachers were sensitive to the social and physical environment in which instruction was to take place. “The experienced teachers implemented changes in their instruction more often than did novices, using social cues to guide their interactive instructional decision making” (Berliner, p. 171). This point relates to proposition four which says that experts are more opportunistic and flexible in their teaching than are novices. “They take advantage of new information, quickly bringing new interpretations and representations of the problem to light” (p. 173).

Livingston and Borko (1989) looked at expert-novice differences specifically in relation to this kind of flexibility in experts’ thinking and actions. They looked at three student teacher and cooperating teacher pairs, observing them teaching mathematics lessons on consecutive days for 1 week of instruction. They interviewed participants about their instructional planning prior to each observed lesson and then asked them about their reflections after the lesson. The researchers found that the expert teachers did not prepare written plans for the lessons the researchers observed. All three expert
teachers described fairly extensive mental plans for the lessons, however, and reported that much of their planning occurred outside of formal planning time. The researchers described the expert teachers’ as having “mental scripts” that consist of general outlines of their lessons which are filled in during interactive teaching to ensure that their instruction is responsive to student performance. In explaining the expert-novice differences they found, Livingston and Borko maintained that experts’ planning can be described as a process of combining information from existing schemata to fit the particulars of a given lesson. Because experts have well-developed and easily accessible schemata for aspects of teaching such as instructional activities, content, and students, they are able to plan quickly and efficiently. Novices, on the other hand, often have to develop, or at least modify and elaborate, their schemata during planning. Their schemata for pedagogical content knowledge seem particularly limited. While experts’ knowledge structures include stores of powerful explanations, demonstrations, and examples for representing subject matter to students, novices must develop these representations as part of the planning process for each lesson. . . .

[Furthermore], difficulties that novices encounter when deviating from scripted lesson plans can be understood as limitations in their ability to improvise. (p. 39)

Berliner’s (1994) proposition five stated that experts represent problems in qualitatively different ways than do novices. That is, experts seem to understand problems at a deeper level than do novices. In analyzing the reviewed studies of expert teachers, Berliner found that there was evidence of “principled thought . . . Such pedagogically sound reasoning was not typical of the responses of novices” (p. 176). The implications of this proposition are that novice teachers will not be able to do “a high quality task analysis of new curricula and will have trouble sequencing instruction and estimating what will be difficult and what will be easy for their students to learn” (p. 176). Related to experts’ deeper understanding is proposition six which says that experts have fast and accurate pattern recognition capabilities. Novices cannot always
make sense of what they experience. The notion of experts being able to “read a classroom” is part of this idea of pattern recognition. Here Berliner questioned the idea of hiring new teachers right out of preparation programs simply because they are seen as having potentially more energy and commitment. He instead suggested that novice teachers will instead have great trouble in making sense out of what they experience in the classroom. He stated, “It is part of the continuing devaluation of pedagogical knowledge that leads some individuals to think that new teachers are more likely to be better at their jobs than experienced teachers. Would those individuals choose a surgeon in that way?” (p. 179).

Proposition seven is that experts perceive meaningful patterns in the domain in which they are experienced. Berliner (1994) argued here that experts attend to the most important information related to what they have previously experienced. Teachers in this case would attend to different kinds of information than novices in terms of what was critical to understand a given classroom situation, such as the age of the students, students’ affect, or the teaching/learning activity in which students are engaged. Berliner questioned alternative routes to certification here where teachers would not have the kinds of opportunities those prepared in traditional programs have to student teach where student teachers are exposed to the tasks and social demands of teaching more frequently.

The final proposition Berliner (1994) espoused is that experts may begin to solve problems slower, but they bring richer and more personal sources of information to bear on the problem that they are trying to solve. He said that “when one knows a good deal more about teaching, or some other domain, more time seems to be needed to
represent the problem and to access the relevant knowledge needed to address the problem” (p. 181). Having said this, however, it is also clear that experts bring more personal experience to bear on problems than do novices and are better able to apply that experience to solve the problems at hand. Berliner ended his piece questioning whether or not formal teacher preparation programs can truly prepare teachers for what they will need to know to effectively teach students. He suggested that instead of putting new teachers directly into full classroom teaching, that they instead should be given fewer classes with fewer children to teach and have more time to learn from experienced teachers.

Porter and Brophy (1988) and Taylor, Pressley, and Pearson (2000) also reviewed the literature on effective teachers and good teaching. Porter and Brophy (1988) drew on findings from the late 1970s to mid-1980s developed by the Institute for Research on Teaching (IRT). In looking at the findings from IRT as well as other studies over that decade on effective teaching, they developed a picture of effective teachers. They stated that effective teachers:

(1) are clear about their instructional goals, (2) are knowledgeable about their content and the strategies for teaching, (3) communicate to their students what is expected of them and why, (4) make expert use of existing instructional materials in order to devote more time to practices that enrich and clarify the content, (5) are knowledgeable about their students, (6) teach students metacognitive strategies and give them opportunities to master them, (7) address higher as well as lower-level cognitive objectives, (8) monitor students’ understanding by offering regular appropriate feedback, (9) integrate their instruction with that in other subject areas, (10) accept responsibility for student outcomes, and (11) are reflective and thoughtful about their practice (p. 75).

They say that it is possible to develop an image of a good teacher as a thoughtful practitioner who operates with considerable autonomy yet purposefully works toward a set of goals that are simultaneously differentiated
and integrated. . . . Effective teachers are clear about what they intend to accomplish through their instruction, and they keep these goals in mind both in designing the instruction and in communicating its purposes to the students. (p. 81)

Taylor et al. (2000) reviewed several large-scale studies on effective schools and teachers. They looked specifically at programs and teachers who were attaining greater than expected reading achievement with students who were at risk for failure by virtue of poverty. The effective teachers across the studies were found to be ones who had excellent classroom management skills, had balanced reading instruction, worked with small groups, and developed higher order thinking skills in their students.

Exemplary Teacher Studies

Other studies have been done that looked specifically at effective teachers in urban settings (Brookhart & Rusnak, 1993; Haberman, 1995; McDermott & Rothenberg, 1999, 2000), at effective literacy teachers (Allington & Johnston, 2000; Block & Mangieri, 2003; Ruddell, 1997), at effective science teachers (Tobin & Fraser, 1990), at exemplary teachers for specific populations, such as African-American students (Ladson-Billings, 1994), and two studies that looked at effective teachers for ELL students, specifically (Garcia, 1991; Tikunoff, 1983). Before reviewing these studies, it is important to note a conceptual piece by Collinson (1996) based on both an extensive review of the literature and on research with exemplary elementary, middle, and high school teachers. She developed a picture of the exemplary teacher as one who integrates three types of knowledge: professional knowledge, interpersonal knowledge and intrapersonal knowledge. Though somewhat like the model described by Bransford et al. (2005), Collinson’s (1996) model was different in that it included both an
interpersonal, or, people skills piece, and an intrapersonal piece that emphasizes the type of reflection stressed by Schon (1983). Collinson recognized the importance of professional knowledge including subject matter knowledge, curricular knowledge and pedagogical knowledge, but she said that it is insufficient to explain the kind of knowledge needed to become an exemplary teacher. This interpersonal knowledge is gained from individual and group interactions with many children and adults. “Teachers who develop their interpersonal knowledge learn to think in an ever expanding scope of professional community. To do so requires personal and organizational knowledge that allows teachers to understand many different perspectives and facets of issues” (p. 3).

The third kind of knowledge that exemplary teachers possess, according to Collinson, is intrapersonal knowledge. This kind of knowledge “emphasizes understanding of oneself and the capacity for introspection and reflection” (p. 6). Intrapersonal knowledge is gained by reflection on practice in addition to being something that is gained from having certain dispositions, such as curiosity, risk taking, problem finding and solving, responsibility and flexibility. Those with intrapersonal knowledge are also described as having a strong work ethic, perseverance, respect for self and others, and courage. The three kinds of knowledge Collinson described blend together to form a picture of the exemplary teacher.

Researchers that have examined exemplary teachers in urban settings (Brookhart & Rusnak, 1993; Haberman, 1995; McDermott & Rothenberg, 1999, 2000) have found that these teachers possess similar kinds of knowledge that Collinson (1996) described in her piece. The teachers all had professional knowledge, including subject matter knowledge and knowledge of teaching, and they also possessed both interpersonal and
McDermott and Rothenberg (1999) interviewed 36 highly effective teachers from low-income schools. Their results indicated that these teachers had a love for children that sustained and nourished their motivation and enthusiasm to teach. They felt good about their decisions to be teachers, and they had a sense of efficacy and empowerment when in their classrooms. They collaborated with other teachers in their buildings, and they viewed knowledge as a constructive process. These teachers were ‘passionate’ about their subject matter and viewed teaching as a caring and nurturing activity. (p. 3)

Haberman also determined that the “star” teachers he interviewed had this interpersonal and intrapersonal knowledge in addition to professional knowledge. He found that these teachers were persistent. They believed that it was their responsibility to find ways of engaging all of their students. They often used their own special interests to generate enthusiasm for learning. They had a sense not only of learning principles, but they knew what the long-range goals were for their students. In addition, “star” teachers believed that, “regardless of life conditions their students face, they as teachers bear primary responsibility for sparking their students’ desire to learn” (p. 712). Furthermore, these teachers held a genuine respect for their students, and they acknowledged their own fallibility which was understood through reflection.

Researchers studying exemplary teachers of literacy (Allington & Johnston, 2000; Block & Mangieri, 2003; Ruddell, 1997) found several overlapping characteristics related to Collinson’s (1996) model of the exemplary teacher. For example, Ruddell studied 95 teachers nominated as exemplary across multiple sites using longitudinal research extending from K-sixth grade, as well as in-depth interviews and classroom observations. They found common features of these teachers. The
teachers shared personal characteristics such as having energy, commitment and passion about teaching. They were flexible and had high expectations of themselves and of their students. These teachers were sensitive to individual student needs, motivations and aptitudes. An enthusiastic attitude was exhibited by these teachers toward the subject matter, and they created intellectual excitement around what the students needed to learn. Making material personally relevant to the students was also important. In addition, these influential teachers showed concern for their students as people and were attentive to personal problems.

Allington and Johnston (2000) and Block and Mangieri (2003) found similar traits of the exemplary teachers they studied to those found by Ruddell (1997) with additional characteristics specific to classroom instruction. These were: teachers had students create “conversational communities” with a great deal of classroom talk, they supported students in their first attempts to learn new concepts, and they were very planful of their lessons but prepared to depart from and revise plans instantaneously. In terms of the evaluation of students, these teachers “evaluated student work based more on improvement, progress and effort than on the achievement of a single a priori standard” (Allington & Johnston, p. 17).

In their work on exemplary science teachers, Tobin and Fraser (1990) also found comparable characteristics and knowledge to that described by Collinson (1996) and to those researchers looking at exemplary literacy teachers (Allington & Johnston, 2000; Block & Mangieri, 2003; Ruddell, 1997). In comparing 20 exemplary teachers with a group of nonexemplary teachers, Tobin and Fraser found two additional characteristics to those already specified in the previous studies reviewed. They found that the science
teachers used strategies that actively encouraged students to participate in the learning activities—or, to be very hands-on in their learning, and that the teachers consistently maintained a favorable classroom learning environment. The researchers indicated that their study clearly demonstrate[d] that effective practice derives from beliefs about teaching and learning and a reservoir of discipline-specific pedagogical knowledge that enables teachers to maintain a learning environment conducive to learning, to actively encourage student participation, and to monitor student understanding of . . . content. (p. 19)

Ladson-Billings (1994) studied 8 teachers who were successful with African American students, specifically. She also found these teachers knowledgeable in ways that extended beyond the professional knowledge as described by Collinson (1996). Naming what they know how to do as culturally relevant teaching, the teachers possessed knowledge about the students and their lives that traversed the boundaries of the classroom walls. For example, these teachers demonstrated interpersonal skills in making the students’ culture a point of affirmation. In order to disrupt the societal view of African American boys as educational failures, the effective teachers in this study worked actively against this conception by providing academic support for these boys while giving the other students in the class “a new view of their fellow students” (p. 117). Furthermore, the teachers built curriculum around the students’ own lives scaffolding students’ learning by beginning with the students’ own knowledge--in this sense, they were using their interpersonal skills and knowledge to access learning. In a culturally relevant view of knowledge, knowledge is “continuously recreated, recycl[ed], and shared by teachers and students. It is not static or unchanging” and it is viewed critically (p. 81). Teachers in this sense are recognizing students’ cultures in a
way that brings them into learning. Moreover, these effective teachers had the intrapersonal knowledge of themselves as both learners and craftspeople. They saw teaching as an art and had a positive sense of themselves and of teaching.

Studies About Exemplary Teachers for ELLs

Only a handful of studies have been conducted regarding the exemplary teacher of ELL students. I was able to locate only two studies, both of which focused on teachers who were both bilingual and biliterate (Garcia, 1991; Tikunoff, 1983). However, what has been done seems to be consistent with the view of effective teacher knowledge that has been put forth by Collinson (1996) and relates to the overall framework of required teacher knowledge developed by Bransford et. al (2005). Tikunoff the instruction of 58 effective bilingual teachers, chosen by nominations from principals and administrators, from Kindergarten through grade six at six nationally selected sites. The teachers were observed using qualitative and quantitative strategies during 10 full days of basic skills instruction across several weeks in bilingual classrooms. Though the researchers found a variety of program content, objectives, and instructional materials in each site, five instructional features were exhibited by all teachers frequently and consistently. The first feature was that successful teachers of ELL students exhibited a congruence of instructional intent, organization and delivery of instruction and student consequences. Students knew exactly what the needed to do and what to do to achieve their goals. In addition, the teachers communicated high expectations of the ELL students and had a sense of efficacy in their own ability to teach--more of an intrapersonal quality as described by Collinson. Secondly, the effective teachers of ELLs exhibited “active teaching behaviors” described as
communicating clearly when giving directions, specifying tasks, obtaining and maintaining student interest by pacing instruction appropriately, monitoring student progress and providing immediate feedback to students, all aspects of both professional knowledge and interpersonal knowledge.

The successful teacher of ELLs in this study (Tikunoff, 1983) also mediated instruction by using both the students’ native language and English, often alternating between the two for clarification. Related to this feature was the fourth feature whereby effective teachers for ELLs integrated English language development with basic skills instruction. That is, the teachers focused on ELL students acquiring English terms for concepts and lesson content even when the native language was used for a portion of the instruction. Finally, the successful teachers of ELLs in this case used information from the students’ home culture as a way to teach concepts, much like the way Ladson-Billings (1994) described the successful teachers of African American children. Specifically, the successful teachers of ELLs utilized cultural referents during instruction, organized instruction to build on participant structures from the ELL students’ home culture, and observed the values and norms of the ELL students’ home culture even as the norms of the majority culture were being taught. This kind of knowledge of students’ culture can be seen as related to both the interpersonal knowledge described by Collinson (1996), as well as to the knowledge of the learner emphasized in the knowledge framework by Bransford et al. (2005).

Garcia (1991) also studied the effective teacher of ELLs. He wanted to examine the teacher’s role in educating ELLs as a way to disengage from the bilingual education debate. He said,
instead of searching for the ‘best’ program by doing large-scale comparative studies, all which will likely be methodologically flawed, this new line of inquiry suggests that we search out effective programs and carefully document what makes them effective. . . . This present study attempts to advance our understanding of what makes good language minority teachers. (p. 131)

Garcia’s (1991) study looked at three teachers nominated as effective by their school and district level administrators. He used interviews with the teachers as well as observations of their classroom instruction as data sources. In addition, he interviewed school administrators and parents to give a more comprehensive picture of the teachers. Like Tikunoff (1983), the teachers in Garcia’s study were bilingual and biliterate and teaching in a bilingual program.

Garcia (1991) broke his findings down into four domains: knowledge, skills, dispositions and affect. With regard to the teachers’ knowledge, the teachers had an average of 7.1 years experience, so they were not novices. They were constantly seeking out learning opportunities, routinely participating in staff development efforts and workshops. These teachers were able to clearly articulate their instructional philosophies, and were consistently able to answer why they were using particular techniques. In relation to the skills these effective teachers possessed, the teachers used both Spanish and English in highly communicative ways, speaking to students with varying degrees of language proficiency requiring significant language switching. Garcia noted three common themes in particular with regard to skills. He said that the teachers had adopted “an experiential stance toward instruction” --that they had long abandoned a strictly skills-oriented approach to instruction, and instead used thematic curriculum. Secondly, the teachers provided many opportunities for active learning where class time centered around a series of learning activities that students pursued
either independently or with others. These were “real” reading and writing experiences. Finally, these teachers encouraged collaborative interactions among students. “These teachers organize[d] instruction so that students spen[t] time working together on a wide range of instructional activities” (p. 137).

Looking at effective teachers’ dispositions, Garcia (1991) identified characteristics that these teachers possessed. They were highly dedicated and worked very hard. They described themselves as “creative,” “resourceful,” “committed,” “energetic,” “persistent,” and “collaborative” (p. 137), characteristics which relate to the intrapersonal knowledge described by Collinson (1996). Furthermore, the teachers were not described as complacent. They were very involved with district-wide and school initiatives and felt they had achieved a level of autonomy in terms of implementing changes they felt were appropriate for their students.

Garcia’s (1991) fourth area he labeled “affect,” though it can be seen as a part of dispositions as well. Importantly, the effective teachers in his study felt that being bilingual and bicultural would enrich their students’ lives. They considered knowing a second language to be an asset, and they actively worked to have their classroom practices reflect the cultural and linguistic background of the ELL students in their classrooms. Garcia reported that the teachers’ affinity towards their students was most significant. They made comments like, “these students are like my very own children. . . . I love these children like my own” (p. 139). Furthermore, “each teacher spoke of the importance of strong and caring relationships among class members and particularly between the teacher and students. They fe[lt] that this provide[d] students with a safe environment that [was] conducive to learning” (p. 139).
The studies reviewed here on exemplary teaching provide some marked similarities. The teachers described in most studies demonstrated a caring attitude towards their students and had traits such as perseverance and dedication. In relation to their classroom practices, many of the teachers studied used small group work with the curriculum reflecting students’ interests and cultures. What is needed to build upon further is what kinds of practices have been shown to be particularly effective with ELL students. That will be taken up in the next section.

**Effective Practices for ELLs**

In Bransford et al.’s (2005) framework of the kinds of knowledge teachers need to have, two of the types of knowledge are knowledge of learners and knowledge of teaching. These knowledge bases can be seen as incorporating the limited research on effective practices for ELLs. The literature that is available in the area of effective practices for ELLs consists of conceptual pieces (Reyes, 1992; Tabors, 1998), literature reviews and reports (August, 1998; August & Hakuta, 1998; August & Pease-Alvarez, 1996; Dianda, 1992; Garcia, 1991; Gersten & Baker, 2000), empirical studies (Facella et al., 2005; Gersten, 1996; Graves, Gersten, & Haager, 2004; Lucas, Donato, & Henze, 1990), and models of language learning (Chamot & O’Malley, 1996; Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2000).

**Conceptual Pieces**

In Reyes’s (1992) article looking at literacy instruction for English Language Learners, she challenged “widely accepted assumptions about teaching limited-or non-English speakers and critique[s] current implementation of process instruction that ignores culturally and linguistically supportive adaptations for these students” (p. 430).
She essentially argued that when a process approach is used with English Language Learners, an approach to literacy that focuses on content and process rather than on skills, acquisition and form, these students do not experience success in school. She challenged four assumptions specifically: (a) that English is the only legitimate medium for learning and instruction, (b) that English Language Learners must be immersed in English as quickly as possible if they are to succeed in school, (c) that a “one size fits all” approach is good for all students; and (d) that error correction for English Language Learners in process instruction hampers learning. Reyes challenged these assumptions by citing a case study where English Language Learners experienced success in school. Noted practices in the school were: cooperative learning, explicit skills instruction and citing individual errors, heterogeneous grouping by language and ability, and the use of Spanish and English literature books. In addition, it was noted that though learning English was acknowledged as a priority for the ELL students, it was not promoted at the expense of the students’ native language. Interestingly, though the teacher in this case study was fluent in both Spanish and English (her students were both Mexican and White), Reyes was adamant about the fact that a teacher does not have to be bilingual to create a successful classroom environment for ELL students. She says that more important than bilingualism is a teacher’s “conviction about the value of diversity--namely, that differences in language and culture are not deficits” (p. 443).

In her piece, Tabors (1998) outlined how early childhood educators could best support and facilitate the second-language-acquisition process for ELLs based on research in preschool classrooms. One aspect was classroom organization. She emphasized the importance of routines as well as providing what she called “safe
havens” for ELLs where they could “spend time away from communicatively demanding activities and develop competency in other skills areas besides language” (p. 24), such as a table with manipulatives to work with, a quiet house area or a puzzle corner. Another aspect was effective language techniques. She explained that there were a variety of techniques teachers could use to aid ELLs’ comprehension. These included using lots of nonverbal communication, keeping the message simple, talking about the here and now, emphasizing the important words in a sentence, combining gestures with talk, and repeating certain key words in a sentence. She also encouraged teachers to have English-speaking children help the ELLs in their classrooms by, for example, being a “buddy” to a non-English-speaking child. The third aspect Tabors outlined was classroom activities. She emphasized the importance of the teacher working closely with the ELL children as well as giving them the opportunity to work in small groups. She suggested using predictable books and the same songs and movements with ELLs to allow the children to “find their own ‘voice’ in their new language and [to feel] comfortable in a group situation” (p. 25).

**Literature Reviews and Reports**

Effective practices and programs for ELLs have also been examined through literature reviews and reports (August, 1998; August & Hakuta, 1998; August & Pease-Alvarez, 1996; Dianda, 1992; Garcia, 1991; Gersten & Baker, 2000) and reflect the propositions put forth by both Reyes (1992) and Tabors (1998). August and Hakuta did a systematic literature search of effective programs and practices for ELLs and published a report of their findings. They identified the following attributes as being associated with effective schools and classrooms: (a) a supportive school-wide climate
with strong school leadership, (b) a learning environment tailored to local goals and resources, (c) some use of native language and culture in the instruction of ELLs, (d) a balanced curriculum that incorporates both basic and higher-order skills with explicit skills instruction, (e) opportunities for student-directed activities and for practice, (f) systematic student assessment, (g) staff development opportunities, and (h) home and parent involvement.

In another review of the literature in addition to interviews with professional educators and researchers from around the country, Gersten and Baker (2000) reported on three themes that emerged from the research. The first theme centered around the type of “balanced curriculum” August and Hakuta (1998) described. The literature and interviews revealed that often times teachers were overemphasizing content over discrete language skills instruction. Many teachers in the studies “hope[d] that language occur[red]” rather than teaching language explicitly to their ELL students (Gersten & Baker, p. 463). The teachers assumed that in teaching content, their students would learn the necessary language. They did not balance the needs of their ELL students in both content and skills, but instead, relied on content to teach ELL students the language they needed.

A second theme Gersten and Baker (2000) found was a relationship between promising approaches for ELLs and the knowledge base on effective teaching from the 1980s and 1990s. Practices such as preteaching of critical vocabulary prior to student reading, building background knowledge, and providing explicit instruction and guided practice in math problem-solving were mentioned as particularly effective for ELLs. Of note, Gersten and Baker, like August and Hakuta (1998), found that using the native
language of ELL students strategically was important in educating ELLs effectively. The objective was “to use levels of English at which students are very fluent, while simultaneously using more extensive native language to introduce complex concepts and provide opportunities to concentrate on understanding challenging content” (p. 469). Gersten and Baker cautioned, however, that the tendency to provide dual translations should be resisted.

The third theme Gersten and Baker (2000) discovered was what they called the “confusion, tension and assumptions about oral language use” for ELLs (p. 470). They indicated that “confusion abounds concerning the role of oral language use in academic instruction. . . . Discussions of potentially effective instructional practices for ELLs overemphasize natural language use and do not clearly articulate the important distinctions involved when language use is the major goal and when cognitive or academic growth is paramount” (p. 470). They reported that from the literature reviewed, it was clear that often times teachers did not know how to implement approaches that may aid in oral language use.

Overall, Gersten and Baker (2000) said that a good program for ELLs would include three components. The first would be a focus on development of proficiency and fluency in English. This would include both social communication and the more academic communication of concepts. Second would address the more grammatical aspects of English language use. “This would include high quality instruction in topics such as tense agreement, use of plurals, and word order in sentences” (pp. 471-472). The third component emphasized a focus on learning academic content. That is, a focus
on content more than language use at particular times. This echoes the balanced curriculum approach described earlier.

*Empirical Studies*

Facella et al. (2005), Gersten (1996) and Graves et al. (2004) studied effective practices for ELLs, and Lucas et al. (1990) did a study on effective schools for ELLs, specifically. Gersten observed 18 classrooms in two large urban areas over two years. All of the participating schools had ELL populations of between 60% and 85%, with most of the students coming from low-income families. The predominant language spoken by the students was Spanish. Of the 27 teachers observed, 8 were bilingual in Spanish and English. Gersten used a qualitative observation system with observations focusing on reading instruction for ELLs. He observed over 200 hours of reading/language arts instruction.

In analyzing his data, Gersten (1996) developed two constructs. The first was what he called “challenge, success and involvement” (p. 235). Here he talked about successful classrooms being those in which teachers asked higher-order thinking questions and did not water down curriculum for their ELL students. The second construct was “scaffolding, mediation and feedback” where successful teachers used, for example, guides in how to develop an argument, solve a problem, and so on. Teachers focused for a short time on a specific aspect of written language, such as verbs, adjectives, and question formation. Teachers in these successful classrooms always accepted responses in Spanish from the students, but they encouraged students to try to answer in English. Some of the other instructional practices that Gersten found to be effective were: providing opportunities for meaningful use of new vocabulary,
presenting ideas in both oral and written form, minimizing the use of idioms, paraphrasing students’ remarks and gently encouraging them to expand on their responses, and including questions and activities that required elaborated responses in English so that students could practice expressing their ideas.

Facella et al. (2005) and Graves et al. (2004) confirmed many of Gersten’s (1996) findings concerning best strategies for ELLs. In their study, Facella et al. interviewed 20 early childhood educators from two culturally and linguistically diverse communities in Massachusetts. Their data indicated that some strategies were overwhelmingly used by the teachers in their classrooms and that the teachers found the most success in working with ELLs when they varied their strategies. The strategies fell into three main categories: strategies for engaging learners emotionally, strategies for teaching language specifically, and strategies for teaching in general. Four strategies were named by teachers as being the most effective generally. These were: using gestures and visual cues; repetition and opportunities for practicing skills; the use of objects, real props and hands-on materials; and multisensory approaches. The researchers also found five strategies the teachers used to teach language specifically to ELLs. These were: adding to language to build longer utterances; encouraging students to use words in context; targeting a few specific words within a story; giving opportunities to speak and listen; and previewing books before reading.

Graves et al. (2004) investigated the literacy practices of teachers in multiple-language first-grade classrooms to explore the relationship between observed teaching practice and ELL students’ growth in reading. Like Facella et al. (2005) and Gersten (1996), Graves et al. found that effective practices included: attention to vocabulary
development, use of facial gestures and pictures to help define words, encouragement of elaborate responses, and structured student opportunities for students to speak English thus creating an environment where students felt comfortable speaking a second language.

Lucas et al. (1990) did an exploratory study of effective practices for ELLs on a school-wide level rather than focusing specifically on classrooms. They focused on 6 high schools selected as particularly effective for ELL students based on both quantitative and qualitative criteria. They sought nominations from a variety of people familiar with high schools with large numbers of ELL students including state, county, and district-level personnel and asked them to recommend schools they believed to be successful with ELL students. They also contacted principals of the recommended schools to see if they could provide quantitative evidence of success, such as average daily attendance rates, drop-out statistics, numbers of ELL students going on to college, and standardized test scores). The researchers and project staff members collected data over a period of 3 days at each site, which included audiotapes and notes from structured interview sessions with district-level personnel, principals, program directors, counselors, teachers’ aides, students, student questionnaires, classroom observations, school-wide observations, and various records and documents.

Eight features emerged from the data which the researchers believed to be the most important in promoting the success of ELL students at the six schools they visited. The first feature was the value that was placed on the students’ languages and cultures. For example, the ability to speak and language other than English was treated as an advantage rather than a liability. Secondly, high expectations of ELL students were
made concrete. “Students [saw] people like themselves who [had] become teachers, counselors, and principals and learn[ed] that professions like these [were] attainable” (p. 328). The third feature was that school leaders made the education of ELL students a priority; that is, in one school, all remedial classes were eliminated so that ELL students would not receive a “watered-down version of content” (p. 328). In addition, staff development was explicitly designed to help teachers and other staff serve ELL students more effectively. Teachers received training in principles of second language acquisition and effective instructional approaches for teaching ELL students, such as cooperative learning. Teachers and other school staff also learned about students’ cultural backgrounds and experiences. The fifth feature that emerged was that the schools offered a variety of courses and programs for ELLs, and the sixth was that there was a counseling program at all of the schools that gave special attention to ELL students. As a seventh feature, parents of ELL students were encouraged to become involved in their children’s education, though this was identified as the least developed component of the high schools the researchers visited. Finally, all school staff members at the six high schools shared a strong commitment to empower ELL students through education. “Commitment and empowerment of students involved staff members reaching out, giving extra time to further their goals of a few students, and taking part in a political process that challenge[d] the status quo” (p. 336).

Models of Language Learning

Researchers in language learning have suggested methods for teaching ELLs that best promote the language development of these students. Many of the methods overlap with the effective practices described earlier. These methods are specific
models researched by Chamot and O’Malley (1996) and Echevarria et al. (2000).
Chamot and O’Malley (1996) developed the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) as an instructional model designed to increase the achievement of ELL students. The model was first developed in 1986, and it has continued to be expanded upon and revised as it has been tested and implemented in classrooms.
Essentially, the model “fosters the achievement of ELL students by integrating content-area instruction with language development and explicit instruction in learning strategies. The model is based on cognitive learning theory in which learners are viewed as mentally active participants in the teaching-learning interaction” (pp. 259-260). The CALLA model has three interrelated components: (a) high-priority content topics, such as science, mathematics, social studies and literature, (b) academic language development based on the content, and (c) explicit instruction in learning strategies that can help students understand and remember both the content and the language. Specific strategies of the model include using visuals and demonstrations, hands-on experiences, and eliciting prior knowledge for lessons grounded in students’ native languages and cultures.

Echevarria et al. (2000) developed what they call the “SIOP Model.” SIOP stands for Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol. This model was originally designed by examining teachers working in sheltered classrooms with ELL students. “The theoretical underpinning of the model is that language acquisition is enhanced through meaningful use and interaction. Through the study of content, student interact in English with meaningful material that is relevant to their schooling” (p. 11). In this sense, language is taught through content, but skills are emphasized as well, particularly
the learning of academic language. The SIOP model integrates the standards of listening, speaking, reading and writing in English, and outlines the strategies to use in the planning and delivery of instruction to ELL students. The model includes eight specific features: preparation of the lesson, building background knowledge, comprehensible input, strategies, interaction, practice/application, lesson delivery, and review/assessment. In the preparation phase of the model, teachers having language objectives is noted as an important element in lesson planning. “While carefully planning and delivering content objectives, sheltered instruction teachers should also incorporate in their lesson plans techniques that support students’ language development. . . . As with content objectives, language objectives should be stated clearly and simply, and students should be informed of them, both orally and in writing” (p. 22). With regard to strategies to use with ELLs, the model emphasizes using rehearsal strategies such as flashcards, underlining information, and visual aids; graphic organizers, such as Venn diagrams, semantic maps, and timelines; and comprehension strategies, such as monitoring, determining importance, and summarizing.

In looking at the studies on effective strategies, programs and schools for English Language Learners, some common strands can be found. One is the importance of recognizing and building upon students’ cultures and language backgrounds. Another is a focus on more specific strategies to teach comprehension such as visual cues, use of gestures, and comprehension aids like graphic organizers and semantic maps. A third strand is the importance of developing language skills, specifically, in a variety of ways. All of the studies reviewed here emphasized the importance of language objectives for
teachers as well as explicit study of the English language to help students succeed academically.

In the following section, the development of one aspect of language will be reviewed—the development of writing in two languages. This will be reviewed so that we gain an understanding of the kinds of language skills that transfer across languages in order to successfully analyze students’ writing samples for progress.

*Bilingual Writing Development*

The final area of research that informed my study was the area of bilingual writing development in the elementary years. I collected and analyzed ELL students’ writing as evidence of the teachers’ status as exemplary. Writing was an important area to focus on since this is a critical skill for later school achievement, is understudied in the bilingual research literature, and is an area in which data can be collected regarding growth and learning of particular skills. In order to do so, it is important to have an understanding of the relevant literature regarding bilingual writing development.

Though a great deal of research has been done on the writing development of monolingual students (Hayes, 2000), less is known about bilingual students’ writing development (Gort, 2002). For this study, the areas of what educators should know about bilingual students’ writing development and the relationship between first and second language writing were reviewed since these areas were relevant to collecting and analyzing writing samples.

Research on what educators need to know about bilingual writing development is limited, and most of it focuses on bilingual development in Spanish and English. The research that is available in this area examines the influence of context on students’
writing, the role of teacher beliefs and assumptions, and the critical need to assess students’ writing in both their first and their second language (Hernandez, 2001; Moll, Saez, & Dworin, 2001; Nathenson-Mejia, 1992). Hernandez looked at the “writing events” of 4 fifth-grade students over a period of 2 years--from fifth to sixth grade. One was a United States born, monolingual English speaker, and the other 3 were bilingual Spanish-English speakers who had been born in Mexico. All 3 of the bilingual students had entered a United States school either in Kindergarten or in first grade. The writing events that the researcher observed included the students’ writing, the views of writing voiced by the teachers and students, and the student-student and student-teacher interactions. Of note, the teachers in the study “did not believe that a bilingual education program was beneficial for students learning English, and . . . disapproved of the bilingual education program at the school” (p. 5).

Results of the study (Hernandez, 2001) indicated that the teachers’ beliefs about how the second language students’ writing should look negatively affected their evaluation of these students’ writing. Though the students labeled as “weak” writers by the teachers created organized texts rich with ideas in their native language, the students were nonetheless categorized as weak due to teachers’ evaluations of mechanics, such as spelling. In analyzing the texts written by the second language learners, the researcher found that “second-language students’ poor spelling and punctuation [led] teachers to miss the fact that . . . [the] children ha[d] good ideas and organizational skills” (p. 8). Importantly, these relatively surface factors affected the teachers' judgments of the students’ writing skills with dire consequences for two of the students who were put on the “ELD Track” or “Village C” (p. 2), the lowest track for students in
the school. Another finding by the researcher showed that the writing skills of the “strong” second-language writers were virtually indistinguishable from the writing skills of “strong” first-language writers in the study when texts were analyzed in both Spanish and English, indicating the need for teachers to evaluate both first and second language texts.

Moll et al. (2001) addressed what educators need to know about bilingual learners by investigating biliteracy as part of the context of the classroom. The researchers first examined the writing of 2 Kindergarten students in a bilingual program with a “holistic emphasis on children using print in a variety of forms to make meaning . . . where [children’s] intellectual work [was] respected and their uses of both languages [were] facilitated and encouraged” (p. 4). They found that the writing was socially mediated by the opportunities to explore literacy in each language—students were active learners interacting with the resources available to them in the environment. They also found that the children understood that the marks (letters) they made on pages corresponded to entities that can be spoken and vice versa—that anything they said in either language could be represented by marks on the page.

The researchers went on to look at the writing of a student in a third-grade classroom (Moll et al., 2001). They found, as with the previous example, that her biliteracy development was not solely an individual accomplishment, but it was mediated through the “opportunities and assistance she receive[d] in doing her work” (p. 8). The students in the classroom in which the study took place were encouraged to compose their writing in either language, Spanish or English, and were given multiple resources in both languages in which to find information and explore texts. This was a
major characteristic of the classroom--that Spanish, along with English, was an “unmarked language--students could use either one or both to do their academic work and to obtain support to develop their biliteracy” (p. 10). The researchers emphasized this as a critical aspect of bilingual students’ writing development that all teachers should acknowledge and that should be valued in all classrooms.

Nathenson-Mejia (1992) analyzed the writing of one native-Spanish speaking third grader to show how teachers can identify the strengths and needs of a student writer. Like Hernandez (2001) and Moll et al. (2001), she emphasized that teachers need to look at both content and mechanics in both languages to fairly evaluate students’ writing. When focusing on the content of a piece, questions a teacher may ask are, “Does the writing make sense? Are particular audience needs addressed? Can the reader identify characters and their relationships to each other?” (p. 54). In analyzing mechanics, teachers must understand that differences exist in mechanics depending upon the language being used. In terms of working on content, she suggested using writing conferences between students or with the student and teacher to ask questions about gaps in information or wording that is confusing. In specific reference to spelling, Nathenson-Mejia noted that students who write in two languages often demonstrate influence from one language to another in their spelling, and that the students should become aware of the influence and learn to monitor their own spelling.

The second set of studies reviewed in order to effectively collect and analyze students’ writing samples looked at bilingual students’ writing process and product to determine the relationship between writing in a first and second language (de Silva, 1998; Edelsky, 1982, 1983; Edelsky & Jilbert, 1985; Gort, 2002). As one of the first
researchers in this area, Edelsky (1982) looked specifically at the relationship between first language and second language writing. She analyzed the writing of 9 first, 9 second, and 8 third-grade, Spanish-dominant students in a bilingual program emphasizing writing, a whole-language approach to literacy, and literacy in the first language before second language literacy instruction began. She wanted to examine the first and second language writing relationship to determine whether first language (L1) interfered with second language (L2) writing development or whether the L1 was applied to the L2 in writing. Specifically, Edelsky collected 477 Spanish and 49 English pieces of writing over a period of one year which were analyzed according to various aspects: (a) codeswitching, (b) spelling inventions, (c) nonspelling conventions (such as segmentation and punctuation), (d) structural features (such as beginning, endings, links between propositions, etc.), (d) other content features (such as characters, settings), and (f) raters’ subjective impressions of attributes of quality in the content.

Results of the study showed that there was both application and transfer from L1 to L2, and also, that there was no application and transfer of certain skills. With regard to what was applied from L1 to L2, one area was segmentation. As Edelsky (1982) pointed out, how to segment language into conventional words is not self-evident. The subjects in this study segmented on several bases, “revealing something about their categorization of the units of language” (p. 214). One basis was syntactic, putting spaces between but not within noun phrases and verb phrases, and another basis was phonological/ morphological, as in segmentation by syllable. For example, a student who consistently clustered together the conjunctive phrase “and then” written as
“enthen,” did the same thing when writing in Spanish, “y luego” which was written as “idlego.”

Another area that was applied from L1 to L2 was spelling. “When the children spelled in English, they generally made use of their knowledge of Spanish orthography,” such as “chi lismi siet” for “she lets me see it” (Edelsky, 1982, p. 220). Furthermore, personal style was applied from L1 to L2, such as the use of strategies to make a piece longer according to the teacher’s beliefs about the importance of the length of a piece. One student repeatedly used a phrase in both Spanish and English as a filler, “and they are” and “y lo vas hacer” in order to make his piece of writing longer.

Edelsky (1982) also found differences between L1 and L2 texts. The first difference was found in segmentation. She stated, “while most children used similar bases for segmenting language in their L1 and L2 texts, not all did” (p. 222). She also found that though children generally used Spanish orthography in their English writing, there were exceptions. One child reserved the letter “k” for English only, and all of the children used accents and tildes only for Spanish. Another area of difference was syntactic complexity where the Spanish writing contained many complex constructions, but the English writing did not; that is, use of relative and primarily adverbial clauses in Spanish versus simple subject-verb-object combinations in English. A further area of difference between the two languages was found in relation to codeswitching. Though the students codeswitched extensively in their oral language, written code switches were relatively infrequent and almost entirely intrasentential. Codeswitches from English to Spanish in texts were very rare—“it was almost as though it were a slip” (p. 224), and the switched items were almost all function words. Codeswitching in the Spanish texts,
on the other hand, seemed more deliberate, and the switched items were mostly address terms, nouns, and adjectives.

Edelsky (1982) concluded that an explanation for the contradictions in application can only be explained through understanding the complex relationship between first and second language development. Edelsky argued that the data presented in her study supported the perspective that what a young writer knows about writing in the first language "forms the basis of new hypotheses rather than interferes with writing in another language . . . Application of such knowledge can appear as either surface similarities or differences when one compares texts in two languages written by the same child" (p. 227).

Gort (2002) looked at process and product to determine the relationship between first and second language writing. Her study investigated the writing processes of first-grade bilinguals from majority- and minority-language backgrounds who were in a two-way bilingual education (TWBE) program. The researcher examined the following: how English- and Spanish-dominant first graders developed as writers in a TWBE program that used a process writing approach; trends and patterns of bilingual writing processes and skills; and the nature of the transfer of writing skills and processes from one language to the other. The researcher observed 8 children, 4 Spanish-dominant and 4 English-dominant, as they composed stories in Spanish and English Writing Workshop. Data was systematically collected three times a week over the course of 5 months.

There were three significant findings from this study (Gort, 2002). The first was positive literacy transfer. The researcher found that immature processes/skills, defined
as those that are developmental and temporary such as pointing to words when reading, first appeared in L1, then in both L1 and L2 and then in neither language. The researcher also found that mature literacy processes and skills, those that once learned or acquired are maintained, transferred from L1 to L2 with transfer contingent upon a developing bilingual's relative strength in L1 and L2 literacy--her biliterate development. Mature processes included correct punctuation and conventional spelling.

The second finding was what the researcher (Gort, 2002) called “interliteracy” (p. 13). This was where the developing bilingual writer inappropriately applied language-specific elements of literacy of one language to the other. This included two components: the temporary misapplication of linguistic elements of literacy of one language to the other, and the misapplication of print conventions of one language to the other. An example of the first component would be a misapplied sentence structure, such as the word order for possessive in English applied to Spanish writing. An example of the misapplication of a print convention would be applying the capitalization of the first person singular “I” in English to its Spanish equivalent, “Yo” within a sentence.

The third significant finding from the study (Gort, 2002) was the use of strategic codeswitching. As the researcher explained, “developing bilingual writers used their full linguistic repertoire in the process of creating L1 and L2 texts. With few exceptions (e.g. vocabulary that is related to American popular culture, names of places . . . etc. . . . the texts developing bilingual children created were monolingual” (p. 17). However, the process of writing involved many uses of codeswitching for Spanish dominant children,
and English-dominant children were only observed to codeswitch between their two languages while creating Spanish texts.

The researcher (Gort, 2002) concluded by proposing a preliminary model of bilingual writing development that included: (a) positive literacy application--the application of both immature literacy processes and skills and mature literacy processes and skills, (b) interliteracy--application of language-specific linguistic elements of literacy and language-specific writing conventions, and (c) strategic codeswitching--strategic oral codeswitching and written codeswitches. The model showed that these phenomena were contingent upon the relative strength of the student in L1 or L2 and the linguistic context. The model also indicated the expectations for Spanish-dominant and for English-dominant students in a partial immersion two-way program. In this way, it offered a new dimension of understanding the bilingual writing process.

These understandings of writing development informed the way in which I analyzed the students’ writing in my study. Though not the main focus of the research, collecting writing samples and being able to utilize the research on bilingual writing development to analyze them provided a rich description of ELL language learning across settings.

Bransford et al. (2005) suggested that teachers need to possess three kinds of knowledge: knowledge of learners and their development, knowledge of subject matter and curriculum, and knowledge of teaching. These areas of knowledge they believed to be the foundations of professional teaching. In previous research, teacher knowledge has been defined as both content and pedagogical knowledge, and teacher learning is
considered to take place both from scholars and from teachers inside their own classrooms.

Regarding second language acquisition research, the theory most relevant to this study was the interactionist model, or social model, in which children learn a second language through the process of interacting with more proficient peers (Fillmore, 1991; Swain, 2005).

In the literature on exemplary teaching, Berliner (1994) described expert teachers as those who seemed to understand problems at a deeper level than novices, had fast and accurate pattern recognition capabilities, and knew how to attend to information that was critical to understand a given classroom situation. Peter and Brophy (1988) found that effective teachers are: “1) clear about their instructional goals, 2) knowledgable about their content and the strategies for teaching, 3) are knowledgeable about their students, 4) monitor their students’ understanding and 5) are reflective and thoughtful about their practice, among others” (p. 75). Importantly, the literature on exemplary teaching indicated that the only way it may be possible to obtain valid judgments about the degree of expertise a teacher possesses is from observing them in their own classrooms (Berliner).

Finally, regarding effective practices for ELL students, the literature reviewed here suggested the importance of building upon students’ cultures and language backgrounds, having specific strategies to teach comprehension such as visual cues and graphic organizers, and developing language skills specifically (Echevarria et al., 2000; Facella et al., 2005; Gersten, 1996; Graves et al., 2004).
CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

Settings

The study took place in two contexts, a bilingual setting and English monolingual immersion settings. The site for the bilingual setting was an independent school with a two-way French-English bilingual program located just outside of a major city. The International Lycee (pseudonym) is located in a town with a diverse socioeconomic and racial population. Serving nearly 500 students from grades K-12, the school boasts an international population with students from 42 different countries speaking a variety of languages. All students, however, are either native speakers of French or English. As its core mission, the school emphasizes globalism, a respect for students’ own cultural identities within the concept of world citizenship, and a concern for each student’s physical, moral, aesthetic, artistic and academic development. Walking the hallways, a visitor can observe students’ work on the walls exemplifying this mission with displays such as the first graders writing their names in a variety of languages and a graph entitled “The Languages We Speak” outside a second-grade classroom indicating the number of languages represented in their classroom.

The International Lycee runs a two-way bilingual program from grades K-12. Students in Kindergarten receive 90% of their instruction in French and 10% of their instruction in English. Students in Kindergarten are both native French and English speakers. In entering first grade, students receive 70% of their instruction in French and 30% of their instruction in English. Students are deliberately mixed in classes to equally represent both native-English and native-French speakers. Reading is taught primarily
in French with the transition to English towards the middle of first grade. In second grade, students spend 60% of their time in French, and 40% of their time in English. In both first and second grades, the French and English teachers team-teach for an hour during the day called “bilingual time” where the lesson is taught with the teachers speaking both French and English. Students can respond in whichever language they prefer. By third grade, students are instructed 50% in English and 50% in French. This continues through fifth grade. Students in middle school have their core content courses, such as science and math, in either English or French, depending on the track they are following for high school where students can take either the French Baccalaureate or the International Baccalaureate. English as a second language is provided for students from Kindergarten through grade 10, and French as a second language is provided for students from grades 1 to 5. Students who are not proficient in French are generally not admitted to the Lower School after first grade, whereas students who speak English as a second language are continually admitted to the program.

The English-monolingual immersion district in which the two other schools in the study were located is in an outlying suburb of a major city. Approximately 4,500 students are enrolled in the district. According to state indicators for enrollment for 2007-2008, the racial makeup of the district was 80% White, 9.1% Asian, 3.6% African American, 4.2% Hispanic, 0.2% Native American, 0.1% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and 2.4% multi-race/non-Hispanic. In addition, 10.8% of the students had a language other than English as their first language, and 3.8% of the students were identified as Limited English Proficient, and the percentage of Special Education students was 16.1%. The indicators also showed that 9.7% of the students
were from low-income families (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2008). The district has eight elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school.

In one of the schools selected for the study, the Parker School (pseudonym), the racial makeup of the school is as follows: 82.6% White, 9.8% Asian, 3% Hispanic, 2.3% multi-race, non-Hispanic, 0.3% Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2008).

In the second school, the Washington School (pseudonym), the racial make-up of the school is: 65.4% White, 19.6% Asian, 8.1% Hispanic, 3.7% African American, 2.8% Multi-Race, non-Hispanic, and 0.3% Native American. It is considered to have the most racially and linguistically diverse student population in the district (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2008).

Participants

Recruitment

The superintendents of five districts in outlying districts of a major city were contacted via mail in November of 2005 (Appendix A). One superintendent agreed to the study, and then in January 2006, principals and/or administrators were contacted via mail with information about the study (Appendix B). Two elementary school principals in the district expressed interest in the study and felt they had teachers who they considered exemplary at teaching English Language Learners. Specifically, the principals and administrators were asked to recommend teachers who were successful teachers of language for these students. The criteria given to the principals and administrators were that the teachers had to have been teaching for a minimum of 5
years and that the teachers’ ELL students had to have shown progress in their language
development in past years on measures used by the school to determine progress.

Once these nominations were completed, the potential participants were
contacted via letter by the principal investigator letting them know that they had been
selected based on their work with English Language Learners and letting them know
about the project (Appendix C). Once they decided to participate in the study, the
principal investigator met with each of them at their schools to discuss the consent form
and expectations of the study (Appendix D).

Once the new school year began (2006-2007), parents of English Language
Learners in the teachers’ classrooms were contacted via letters given to the teachers
which were sent home to the English Language Learners’ parents. These were written in
the parents’ native languages (Appendix E) and asked whether or not they would give
their consent to having the principal investigator collect their children’s writing
samples. Once they agreed, children in grade three were given the assent forms written
in their native languages (Appendix F) for them to sign.

For the bilingual setting, the Head of School was also contacted via mail in
November, 2005 to explain the study and request a meeting. Once he agreed to the
study, the Academic Dean recommended two teachers whom she thought matched the
requirements of the study. These teachers were also contacted via mail to explain the
study, and, once they agreed to participate, they signed the consent form. As in the
monolingual English immersion settings, as soon as the school year started, parents of
English Language Learners were contacted via letters in the parents’ native languages
which were given to the teachers to send home. Once again, the letters explained the
study and requested that they agree to have their children’s writing samples collected throughout the year. Once the parents agreed, they signed the consent forms and returned them to the teachers.

Participants

Based on administrators’ recommendations, two teachers were selected in the bilingual setting. One teacher was a third-grade teacher who had been teaching for over 25 years. She was native English-speaking, and though not fluent in French, she had a working knowledge of the language through her 25 years of teaching at the school. She taught on the English side of the bilingual program.

The second teacher from the bilingual setting was a fifth-grade teacher who had been teaching for a total of 16 years. It was her third year of teaching fifth grade during the study. She also taught on the English-side of the bilingual program. She had also been a middle-school ESL teacher and a high school history teacher.

For both of the teachers, they taught two classes of 20 students, for a total of 40 students; due to the nature of the bilingual program, where from third grade to fifth grade, students are taught 50% of their time in English and 50% of their time in French. Teachers often experience students leaving and new students entering throughout the year, as the school has many international families. In each class, the teachers from year to year would have anywhere from 2 ELL students in one class to 7 or 8 in a class.

Based on principals’ recommendations in the monolingual, English immersion classroom sites, 2 teachers were selected from two different schools in the district. One was a first-grade teacher who had been teaching for 6 years and had been a first-grade
teacher during all that time. She had a working knowledge of Spanish, but she said that she did not consider herself fluent in the language.

The second teacher was a third-grade teacher who had been teaching for 12 years, with it being the seventh year for her at that particular school. She had been both a second- and third-grade teacher. She did not consider herself fluent in any language, though she said she had some understanding of Spanish having studied the language in high school.

At the school where the first-grade teacher worked, she had anywhere from 19-22 students in her class each year. She said that she could have anywhere from 2-8 ELL students per year. The percentage of LEP students from a total of 321 enrolled in grades K-5 is 12.1%, versus 3.8% for the district, which means they had a total of 39 LEP students school. The percentage of students whose first language is not English is 26.8% at this school versus 10.8% for the district, which means they had a total of 86 students whose first language was not English. The percentage of special education students for the school is listed at 9.7% versus 16.1% for the district, which means 31 students, and the percentage of low income students is listed at 30.8% versus 9.7% for the district, which means 99 low income students (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2008).

At the school where the third-grade teacher worked, she had anywhere from 19-25 students in her class each year. She also indicated that she would have anywhere from 2 to 6 ELL students from year to year. The percentage of LEP students for the school was listed as 5.9% of the total school population of 305 students versus 3.8% for the district, which means that there were 18 LEP students enrolled. The percentage of
students whose first language is not English was listed as 10.8%, which is exactly the same percentage listed for the district. This means that there were 33 students enrolled whose first language was not English. The percentage of special education students for the school was listed at 14.4% of the total school population of 305 versus at 16.1% for the district, which means that there were 44 special education students enrolled, and 7.5% listed as low income versus 9.7% for the district, which means that there were 23 low-income students enrolled (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2008).

Research Design

In this case, an insider’s view, or emic view, of teaching English Language Learners was desired. I was not interested in exploring this area by developing a hypothesis and deductively arriving at an answer through testing and verification; but rather, I was interested in building a theory over time through extensive observation of a phenomenon. The phenomenon in this case was the exemplary teacher of ELLs. The use of case study was particularly suited to studying this bounded phenomenon since with case studies, the researcher takes an in-depth look at context and process to gain an understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. As Merriam (1998) explained,

The decision to focus on qualitative case studies stems from the fact that this design is chosen precisely because researchers are interested in insight, discovery, and interpretation rather than hypothesis testing . . . By concentrating on a single phenomenon or entity (the case), the researcher aims to uncover the interaction of significant factors characteristic of the phenomenon. The case study focuses on holistic description and explanation. (p. 29).

The bounded phenomenon in this case was the exemplary teacher of English Language Learners in two different contexts--bilingual and English monolingual immersion.
A multiple, exemplary case study design was particularly appropriate to the investigation. The units of analysis were teachers who had demonstrated exemplary teaching of English Language Learners across two different contexts. The cases were exemplary examples of the phenomenon of interest--effective teaching of ELLs. As Yin (1993) explained, “use of [exemplary case design] rationale means that all of the cases will reflect strong, positive examples of the phenomenon of interest” (p. 12). The goal of the research was to determine what features these exemplary teachers shared, how their strategies in teaching ELLs compared across settings, what challenges they faced in teaching ELLs, and how all of these issues were mediated by the contexts of a bilingual setting and a monolingual English immersion setting. As the researcher, I was interested in what Erickson (1986) called the “concrete universals” which he said are arrived at by studying a specific case in great detail and then comparing it with other cases studied in equally great detail.

A purposive (Chein, 1981) procedure was used in this research to determine the exemplary cases to be studied in great detail. Purposive sampling “is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned” (Merriam, 1998, p. 61). Criteria must be established in order to select the purposive sample. The criteria for selection in this multiple-case study design were the following: (a) the teachers must have been teaching for a minimum of 3 to 5 years; (b) the teachers’ ELL students must have shown progress on the schools’ measures of achievement including both standardized and holistic assessments of achievement; and (c) the teachers must be
nominated by principals and/or other administrators as being particularly effective at working with ELLs in their classrooms.

I decided to use constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2000) as my method of inquiry for this research. Traditional grounded theory is a method of inquiry developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) in which data is collected and constantly compared through analysis for the purposes of developing a theory. Charmaz (2000) further developed and refined the grounded theory method into what she called constructivist grounded theory. She described constructivist grounded theory as being based on first-hand knowledge of empirical worlds and defined constructivism as “[assuming] the relativism of multiple social realities, [recognizing] the mutual creation of knowledge by the viewer and the viewed, and [aiming] toward interpretive understanding of subjects’ meanings” (p. 510). She argued that “a constructivist approach to grounded theory reaffirms studying people in their natural settings and redirects qualitative research away from positivism” (p. 510).

As Charmaz (2000) explained,

Both Glaser and Strauss and Corbin assume[d] an external reality that researchers [could] discover and record. . . . [They] follow[ed] the canons of objective reportage, engage[d] in silent authorship and usually [wrote] about their data as distanced experts, thereby contributing to an objectivist stance. (p. 513)

That is, both Glaser and Strauss and Corbin were less concerned with having the participants in their studies be involved in data interpretation than Charmaz supported in constructivist grounded theory.

As the researcher, I was interested in how teachers made sense of their success as teachers of English Language Learners, how they felt about being considered
exemplary, how their backgrounds may have contributed to their knowledge base in teaching ELLs, how and why they used certain strategies in their classrooms, and of studying all of these issues in the context of the natural setting of their regular classroom teaching. As I collected the data and was doing my initial analyses, I was constantly going back to the teachers to help interpret the data. In essence, we constructed the story together in a reciprocal fashion, the way Charmaz (2000) described so that I was able to arrive at a theory of what it takes to be an effective teacher of English Language Learners.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected over a period of a full school year, from August 2006 to June 2007. Table 3.1 shows the data sources, participants, and frequency. Table 3.2 shows the timeline that was followed.

Table 3.1. Data Collected

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Frequency per participant</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open-ended questionnaire</td>
<td>Four to six principals and administrators</td>
<td>One open-ended questionnaire</td>
<td>Four to six open-ended questionnaires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>Four teachers identified as exemplary teachers of English Language Learners</td>
<td>Two 60 minute semi-structured individual interviews</td>
<td>Eight 60 minute semi-structured individual interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulated Recall</td>
<td>Twenty teachers across two different settings</td>
<td>Three 60 minute stimulated recall sessions</td>
<td>Twelve 60 minute stimulated recall sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>Eight 60 to 90 minute observations</td>
<td>One focus group</td>
<td>One focus group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group</td>
<td>Artifacts</td>
<td>Items to be collected from students: writing samples</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.2. *Data Collection Timeline*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principals fill out Qualities of Exemplary Teaching data collection form</td>
<td>Exploration of background of participants</td>
<td>First cluster visits in each teacher’s classroom</td>
<td>Recounting one observed lesson</td>
<td>Second set of cluster visits in each teacher’s classroom</td>
<td>Recounting one observed lesson from second set of cluster visits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 2 Feb 2007</td>
<td>Observation 3 March-April 2007</td>
<td>Stimulated Recall Session 3 April 2007</td>
<td>Focus Group June 2007</td>
<td>Writing Samples</td>
<td>Memo Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflecting on and amending emerging theory</td>
<td>Third set of cluster visits in each teacher’s classroom</td>
<td>Recounting of one observed lesson from third set of cluster visits</td>
<td>Member check of emerging theory and exploration of what it means to be an exemplary teacher</td>
<td>One writing sample from each student collected each month</td>
<td>Done consistently, particularly after each interview, observation, stimulated recall session and focus group.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Before the school year began, principals were asked to fill out the Qualities of Exemplary Teaching Data Collection Form (Appendix G) to provide details of why they had nominated each teacher. This form was based on one used in a large study by Block and Mangieri (2003) to gather information from principals, administrators and teachers about the qualities of effective literacy teachers. An initial interview with each teacher was conducted in August before the start of the school year (Appendix H). The purpose of the interview with each participant was to explore their backgrounds and preparation for teaching. These interviews were tape-recorded and then transcribed by me.

A series of week-long cluster visits in each teacher participant’s classroom was done from September to October which included tape-recorded observations of three
lessons in each teacher’s classroom (see Appendix I for observation protocol). Each teacher wore a small microphone hooked to her shirt that allowed me to hear and record what she said while she was teaching and I was memoing in a corner of the room. I took memos during all observations. The recorded observations were then transcribed by me. Once this was done, each teacher participated in a stimulated recall session (see Appendix J for recall session protocol) about one of the observed lessons to gather information about her lesson planning, execution and thinking processes. Those recall sessions were also transcribed by me.

During my transcriptions of the interviews, observations, and recall sessions, I also memoed, and as I did so, I began to note initial themes and patterns that I was seeing with the teachers. I had a notebook where as I listened to each interview, observation and recall session, I would remark about what I was hearing. What I wrote in the notebook began with simple phrases or words, such as “putting themselves in the ELL students’ shoes,” “compassion,” “laughter,” “lots of questioning of ELL student,” “slow and deliberate speed when talking,” “ELL kids normal part, not isolated,” etc., putting the time stamp next to each phrase or word; as I continued to do this, I started to notice patterns with what I was writing. In this way, I was doing the initial coding, or open coding described by Strauss and Corbin (1990). I held off putting these thoughts into specific categories until I had finished my second round of observations and recall sessions so that I could see if the new data were supporting what I had already found.

Another month of cluster visits in each teacher’s classroom followed from December 2006 through January 2007. I observed two lessons in each teacher’s classroom which were again tape recorded. I also did a stimulated recall session with
each participant, but this time I came with some of the “open” codes I had noticed during these transcriptions and showed them the frequency with which they occurred so that they could comment about them (Appendix K).

I transcribed the second round of recall sessions, and once again, made memos of themes that I was pulling out from the data. Once I had finished these transcriptions, I started to categorize the themes and ideas according to the major ideas that connected them. As Charmaz (2000) explained, “Through memo writing, we elaborate processes, assumptions, and actions that are subsumed under our codes. Memo writing leads us to explore our codes; we expand upon the processes they identify or suggest” (p. 517).

Once I had expanded upon my initial codes and begun to categorize them, I created a data display, as discussed by Miles and Huberman (1994), though I created one that made sense to me and worked for my particular data (see example in Appendix L). I set up the display using the larger categories I had developed with the smaller themes within these categories listed beneath them. I then plugged in the instances for each teacher of the interview, observation, notes, and/or recall sessions where I had noted these themes occurring. Once I had completed the display, I went back to my initial second interview protocol and made adjustments to the questions based on what I had found (Appendix M). I also decided to make a visual for the participants to aid with understanding some of my initial findings from the analyses. I created a diagram called “emerging theory of exemplary teaching of ELLs,” which included the main coded categories of “teacher attitude,” “background experience,” and “classroom practices,” with details beneath each category (Appendix N). I also put together an initial Venn
Diagram related to contextual influences on teaching ELLs for each setting (Appendix O).

Then, in February 2007, I interviewed each teacher individually where I asked them to comment on what I had found. My major questions had to do with what they thought of each category and details supporting that category, did they see themselves in what I had found, and what would they add or take out related to the details within each category. We had very long conversations about the data where we, as Charmaz (2000) indicated, constructed the theory together based on my initial interpretations added with their own understandings. I also transcribed those interviews and noted what the teachers felt needed to be adjusted and/or expanded upon and what they thought was very consistent in terms of how they would interpret the data and who they were as teachers.

A final round of week-long observations--three for each participant--and one recall session were done during the months of March and April. I again transcribed all of the observations and recall sessions and continued to build and refine the theory the teachers and I had constructed.

In May, I had a focus group in which all of the teachers met to member check and refine my theory and to further explore what it takes to be an effective teacher of ELLs. In looking at all the themes from my data, I developed a protocol of key questions for the teachers related to what makes an effective teacher of ELLs (Appendix P). The focus group was video-recorded and then transcribed by me.

Writing samples from the English Language Learners in each participant’s classroom were collected each month from September to June. I collected and
photocopied the writing that was connected to the observed lessons, and I also copied samples from the students’ journals. Writing samples were analyzed for progress using a writing rubric developed by CAL (Center for Applied Linguistics and Virginia Arlington Public Schools; 1997; see Appendix Q). The samples were only used by me to assess the ELL students’ progress as an indication of the teachers’ status as exemplary.

I want to place emphasis on the fact again that I was consistently going back to the teachers with the data I had analyzed. From the beginning open codes to the final focus group, I had constant feedback from the teachers. I would ask them whether or not they saw themselves in what I was coding and beginning to theorize, and they mostly agreed with what I was finding, making very few changes. They said things like, “I never thought I did all of this, but seeing it broken down in this way, I definitely feel like this is me.” When they had the chance to set back from themselves and see their words in print and hear themselves speaking on the recordings, they were able to understand the ways in which I was interpreting the data, and again, with nearly everything I found, they were in agreement.

Procedures for Final Analysis of Data and Development of Theory

Once all of the observations, recall sessions, interviews, and focus group session had been transcribed and I had the comments and suggestions by all of the teachers, I went back to my initial coding and analysis. As I thought through how to present my findings in chapter 4, I met with my dissertation chair to discuss the refinement of my coding categories. My chair and I felt that chapters 4 and 5 would be where I would present a more holistic picture of the teachers. I would present the influences on their
teaching of ELLs due to their background experiences, what I had found to be the influences on their attitude towards teaching ELL students, and then how each context, bilingual and English monolingual immersion, influenced their teaching of ELLs. In this way, I would “paint a picture” of each teacher based on the initial categories I had developed. Chapter 4 discussed the teachers in the bilingual context, and chapter 5 discussed the teachers in the monolingual English immersion contexts.

I did a line-by-line analysis of each teacher’s interviews and of the memos I had taken during the interviews to determine what exactly from their background experiences had influenced their successful teaching of ELL students. Though in the initial emerging theory, I had put more general categories, such as traveling abroad, influences growing up, etc.; through this further analysis, I wanted to be more detailed and to look for consistencies among the teachers as well as what was different about their experiences. With four different colored highlighters, I went line-by-line using one color for the sentences, phrases or words that would fall under the category of “background experiences,” another color for “influences on and attitudes towards teaching ELL students,” another color for those instances that illustrated how the context in which the teachers taught, bilingual or monolingual affected their teaching and the ELL students, and the final color for anything that would be more appropriate to the category of practices, which would be for chapter 6.

After highlighting, I went back through the colored sections of the data, such as green for background experiences, and began to pull out the specific elements of what in the teachers’ background experiences they and I thought influenced their teaching of ELLs, both negatively and positively. For example, for Kate, this category entailed her
years of teaching ELL students, living abroad (in Africa), learning a second language, and knowing the students’ L1 for teaching purposes. She felt all of these to be positive influences on her teaching ELL students. For all teachers, some of the elements in the category of background experiences were similar and others were different.

For the chapter on practices, I went through my initial list of codes that I had developed under the area of classroom practices. I added other codes that I had highlighted in my analysis from the interviews with the teachers. I then grouped the categories into three overlying categories of those that fell under teachers’ preparation and planning, such as organization and language goals, those that fell under in-class practices, such as the use of visuals and exemplars, and those that fell under observable attitudes towards ELL students, such as sensitivity, that teachers demonstrated both inside and outside of the classroom. Once I grouped the categories, I entered all of the transcription data from the observations, notes during the observations, and recall sessions into Nvivo (a qualitative analysis software program). I then made “tree” codes for each main category, preparation and planning, in-class practices (during teaching), and observable attitudes. Under each tree code, I entered the sub-codes for each main coded, such as “organization” under preparation and planning, and “use of visuals” under in-class practices. I went through each document line-by-line coding them using the sub-codes. Once this was completed, I ran “coding reports” for each code indicating the sentences, phrases or words that fell under that sub-code for each teacher. These coding reports allowed me to see how often the certain sub-code occurred for each teacher. Once this was complete, I made tables using the main categories and sub-codes (see chapter 6) for each teacher to show which practices occurred most often among the
teachers, which occurred more frequently in one context, which occurred more frequently for one teacher, and which occurred, but not as frequently as others. Doing this enabled me to better see the relationships among the practices and determine which sub-codes I may have thought were occurring often, but in fact, were not, i.e., gestures.

Finally, after coding all of the data and refining my theory, I went back to my review of the literature and the framework upon which the review was based (Bransford et al., 2005). I added elements to this framework in order to have a complete picture of what it takes to be an effective teacher of ELL students. My final theory was a combination of this framework and the emerging theory I had developed in conjunction with the teachers in the study.

**Validity and Reliability**

“Reliability and validity are conceptualized as trustworthiness, rigor and quality in a qualitative paradigm” (Golafshani, 2003, p. 604). Issues of validity and reliability are of great concern to quantitative researchers in their quest for answers to the questions they pose and hypotheses they have generated. Though these issues are also important to qualitative researchers, the terms have been redefined to fit the qualitative paradigm. Whereas quantitative researchers are concerned with reliability as a way to evaluate the quality of a study with the purpose of explaining (Golafshani; Stenbacka, 2001), the concept of quality in qualitative methodology has the purpose of generating understanding (Stenbacka).

Maxwell (1992) reiterated the point of the fundamental concept in qualitative research being understanding rather than the term “validity” used in quantitative research. However, in order to explicate the idea of validity” in qualitative research, he
proposed a typology of the kind of understanding that qualitative researchers generally seek. He identified those understandings as “descriptive validity, interpretive validity, theoretical validity, generalizability and evaluative validity” (pp. 284-285).

Descriptive validity is essentially the factual accuracy of your account. It refers to specific observable physical and behavioral events which are free from disagreement (Maxwell, 1992). I ensured descriptive validity by tape recording all interviews, observations, recall sessions and the focus group. Interpretive validity refers to the emic perspective of the participants, described by Maxwell as what the events mean to those involved in them, or what he called the participants’ perspective. Both descriptive and interpretive validity refer to accuracy of the data. I was able to verify interpretive accuracy by going back to the participants to show them what I found and get their perspectives on whether or not I had gotten it right.

From Maxwell’s (1992) perspective, theoretical validity in qualitative research refers to your “account’s function as explanation” or your “account’s validity as a theory of some phenomenon. . . . It employs the ideas of concepts and relation among concepts” (p. 292). He explained that though there may not be consensus among participants as to the explanation or theory the researcher has developed, theoretical validity indicates that there is the “legitimacy of the application of a given concept or theory to established facts” (p. 292). I best ensured theoretical validity by my consistent, co-constructed analysis of the data as it related to the phenomenon of exemplary teaching of ELLs.

Maxwell (1992) defined two types of generalizability in qualitative research: internal, within the person studies, and external, to other persons or situations. For this
In this case, I was not interested in the category of “evaluative validity” or what is sometimes called “critical validity” (Maxwell, 1992). I did not set out to evaluate these teachers’ practices. I was interested in learning about what made them exemplary and how what I found could be useful for other teachers.

Positionality of the Researcher

As the researcher, I have a particular viewpoint that needs to be acknowledged. I have been a teacher for 11 years in both public school settings and private school settings. I have taught in both monolingual English immersion environments and as a bilingual teacher in a bilingual environment. I came to this study being a proponent of bilingual education, which in my view is the best way to educate English Language Learners based in both the research and in my personal view that one’s native language should be maintained and developed through education. As such, I needed to be careful not to let my personal biases enter into the data collection process as well as into the interpretation of findings.

As a way to mediate this potential bias, I was constantly journaling what I was experiencing as I did this research. I made sure to look for consistencies in the data rather than let my own beliefs influence the findings.

Additionally, I was able to check in frequently with the teacher participants to make sure that I understood correctly what they had said in their interviews, stimulated recall sessions and focus group to be certain that what they meant to say was accurately
recorded in my notes. Though the final theory development was ultimately my own, I believed that I was true to their words and thoughts in navigating the data.
CHAPTER FOUR
TEACHERS IN A BILINGUAL CONTEXT

Four teachers were nominated in three different contexts as being particularly effective at teaching English Language Learners (ELLs). Two of the teachers work in a bilingual setting at the same school, and the 2 other teachers work in a monolingual English immersion setting at two schools within the same district. The goal of the research was to determine what features these exemplary teachers shared, how their strategies in teaching ELLs compared across settings, what challenges they faced in teaching ELLs, and how all of these issues were mediated by the context of a bilingual setting and a monolingual English immersion setting.

This chapter and chapter 5 provide a thick description (Geertz, 1977) of the teachers and the contexts in which they teach. This chapter describes Kate and Rose (pseudonyms) who both teach in the bilingual context. Each description includes the following elements: why each teacher was nominated as an effective teacher of ELLs; the details of each teacher’s background; influences on and her attitudes towards working with ELL students; and how each feels a bilingual context affects her teaching ELLs and the ELLs themselves.

_Dual Language Immersion: A Bilingual Context for ELLs_

The site for the bilingual setting was an independent school with a two-way French-English dual language immersion program. The International Lycee, which sits just outside of a major United States city, is located in a town with a diverse socioeconomic and racial population. Serving over 500 students from grades K-12, the school itself boasts an international population with students from over 40 different
nations speaking a variety of languages. As its core mission, the school emphasizes
globalism, a respect for students’ own cultural identities within the concept of world
citizenship, and a concern for each student’s physical, moral, aesthetic, artistic and
academic development. The head of school, division directors, and teachers are
committed to bilingual education and believe in its benefits for the students. There is an
air about the school that exudes the positive feelings towards other cultures and
languages, particularly evident in the hallways where French and English, in addition to
other languages such as Spanish and Arabic, are being spoken at all times.

The International Lycee runs a two-way bilingual program from grades K-12,
with the IB (International Baccalaureate) program currently offered in grades 10-12.
Students in the Maternelle (pre-K to Kindergarten) receive 90% of their instruction in
French and 10% of their instruction in English. Students entering the Maternelle are
both native French and English speakers. By the end of Kindergarten, those children
who began in the Maternelle as non-French speaking students are generally fluent in the
language. The core curriculum of the Maternelle is based upon the French Ministry of
Education’s standards for pre-K to Kindergarten, with heavy emphasis on child-
centered activities using “ateliers,” or what the United States would call “centers” in
which to teach most concepts. The Maternelle French curriculum is internationally
recognized as one of the best in terms of its approach and results for the students.
McGovern (1998) described the success of these programs in an article looking at the
differences between American preschool programs, such as Head Start, and those of the
French. She emphasized the points that France’s preschool teachers are highly trained
and that the overall opinion of the French is that preschool is the critical element in
building citizens who will be healthy and ready to participate in society later in life. She said:

The French child care system reflects that nation's commitment to assist parents in the care and upbringing of their children. . . . France is committed to the belief that children, who are the future of society, should grow up healthy and well developed and that the responsibility for this goal should be shared between government and families. . . . In France, young children (3-6 years) are able to attend the *Ecole Maternelle*, which is a high quality preschool program provided by the National Ministry of Education. [With regard to teacher training, unlike the United States], preschool teachers are required to have a *License*, which is a university degree obtained after three years of study. Teachers must then enter *Instituts Universitaires de Formation des Maîtres* where they follow a two year professional course to obtain the *diplôme de professeur d'école* which is the equivalent of a Masters degree in the United States. (pp. 10-11)

Upon entering first grade at the International Lycée, students receive 70% of their instruction in French and 30% of their instruction in English. Students are deliberately mixed in classes to equally represent, native-English, native-French and native bilingual speakers. Reading is taught primarily in French with the transition to English towards the middle of first grade. In second grade, students spend 65% of their time in French, and 35% of their time in English. In both first and second grade, the French and English teachers team-teach for an hour during the day called “bilingual time” where the lesson is taught with the teachers speaking both French and English. Students can respond in whichever language they prefer. Most of the curriculum covered during bilingual time is science.

By third grade, students are instructed 50% in English and 50% in French. Math is mostly taught in French, with it being supplemented in English in order to ensure that students have the necessary mathematics vocabulary in English. Science is generally taught in English, and history and geography are taught in French. This continues
through fifth grade. Students from first through fifth grades have both a French teacher and an English teacher who work closely together to plan lessons, consult about students’ progress and correspond with parents. From grades one to five, there are approximately 20 students per class, with each English teacher being responsible for 40 students.

English as a second language is provided for students from Kindergarten through grade nine, and French as a second language is provided for students from grades one to five. Students who are not fluent in French are usually not admitted to the school after grade one, whereas students who speak English as a second language are continually admitted to the program. English as a second language (ESL) teachers use a “pull out” model for working with ELL (English Language Learner) students. Students beginning in English are pulled out approximately 4-5 times per week in grades one to five during their English classes, and generally follow the ESL curriculum, though some ties to the regular classroom program are made, such as studying parts of the body in ESL while the body is studied in first grade. ELL students who are in their second year of ESL are generally pulled out 3 times per week and are assisted in participating in the “regular” English classroom curriculum. About 15% of the students in the Lower School are English Language Learners (receive ESL support). Approximately 23% of the students in the Lower School receive support services for learning disabilities.

The school is considered as being very successful in educating its students. The standardized scores of its students in the elementary grades taking the ERBs (Educational Records Bureau tests) are at or above the scores of other independent schools and above the scores of public elementary schools in the surrounding areas.
Standardized scores for the French Ministry of Education National Examination for elementary schools are also above other French schools in the United States and schools in France (International School of Boston, 2007b).

The Teachers: Kate and Rose

The following section provides a description of each teacher in the bilingual context--Kate and Rose. Each teacher will be described in terms of why she was nominated by her supervisor (Appendix G), her background and reasons for going into teaching, the influences on her attitudes towards and practices used when teaching ELL students, and how these teachers feel a bilingual context affects their teaching of ELL students and how they think it affects the ELL students themselves.

Kate

Kate was nominated by Susan (pseudonym), who is currently the Academic Dean at the International Lycee. Susan has been working at the International Lycee for 13 years in various roles: as a second-grade and ESL teacher, as Lower School Director, and now as Academic Dean. Susan wrote the following on the Qualities of Exemplary Teaching Data Collection Form (Appendix G) about why she nominated Kate:

Though not trained as an ESL teacher, Kate has worked as an ESL specialist at the International Lycee. Therefore, she has a sensitivity and knowledge related to how non-native English speakers learn to speak English. Being bilingual herself adds to this knowledge. As a former (and trained) secondary teacher, Kate has a strong understanding of where all her students need to be by the end of Lower School. Furthermore, Kate holds high expectations for all her students and for herself. She is well-organized in her planning and management of her classes. She also takes the time to give plenty of feedback on student work. She treats students fairly but firmly and as a result is both liked and respected by them. These traits greatly enhance her ability to meet the needs of all her students (emphasis in the original).
Kate’s Background

Kate was born to English-speaking parents in Connecticut where she lived until she was sixteen. She then moved to Ohio until she graduated from high school, and then she went back to Connecticut to attend Yale University where she received her Bachelor’s degree in History with a minor in Economics. She did her Masters degree in teaching social studies at Brown University in Rhode Island. When she completed the degree, she moved to Washington D.C. for her first teaching job. She taught U.S. history, government and economics at a public high school in Montgomery County, Maryland. At the age of 23, she had approximately 30 students per class, 5 classes a day, for about 150 students a day. She taught at this high school for 5 years. When I asked her during our first interview about the ELL students in her class when she first began teaching, she responded that she really did not even think about their needs at that time:

When I first started teaching, I didn’t take [having ELLs in my class] as a challenge because I just didn’t deal with them. It was much easier that way! . . . This was the 1980s, it was a different time and . . . I don’t really remember like even who told me what about them you needed to know. They just were kind of in my class . . . but I was a new teacher, I didn’t have any experience, I didn’t speak a foreign language and I was just coping with teaching in general in a public school so they were in my class but they just weren’t on my radar screen very much. There were 30 kids in my class. And . . . you know I don’t remember, well I’m sure I tried to make an effort to go over to them once in a while to make sure they were understanding a little bit of what was going on, but I don’t remember having any great sensitivity to them or awareness of what I should be doing that I wasn’t doing for the rest of the kids in the class.

While Kate was teaching in Maryland, she got married; and then in 1994 she, her husband and their two young children moved to Africa. They moved to the Cote d’Ivoire and it was there that she learned to speak French. She did not speak a word of
French before she moved to Africa. She said she learned the language by studying it herself and

By having to use it in real life . . . the only English speakers there were mostly scientists working where [her] husband worked and there were a couple of Americans and then some Europeans who spoke English . . . but the population in general, none of them really spoke English . . . so if [she] went to the grocery store or the market, there wouldn’t be people there speaking English. (First interview)

She emphasized that she had to learn to speak French not necessarily because she chose to, but because she had to. She said: “I kind of had to learn [French] out of necessity (first interview).

It was in Africa that she first started working directly with students who did not speak English as their first language. She began teaching English at a non-profit center that she began with a French woman to offer courses for children who did not speak English. She worked with a French woman who was in the process of getting her Master’s degree to be a teacher of English as a second language, so the woman was being trained to do this kind of work. Kate explained that the woman “kind of trained me from what she had been learning, so that was sort of the informal starting point” (first interview). Kate also began tutoring adults who wanted to start to learn English, and she got books from some people who taught ESL when she went back to the United States over vacations and took those back to Africa with her. She then began teaching a third-grade class in Africa at the Lycee Francais where her young children attended school. Kate taught English to third graders once a week, and she said it was a lot of “learning by doing” (first interview).
When she left Africa in 1999, she applied for a teaching position at the International Lycee where she and her husband had decided to place their children, already bilingual from their time in Africa, for school. She had originally applied to the school to teach social studies, but they only needed a part-time ESL teacher. The administrator who hired her (the same one who nominated her for this study), felt that Kate had enough experience to “fill in the gaps” and was mentored by this administrator who was the head of the ESL department at the time. Again, though Kate was not formally trained in the academic sense to teach ESL, she explained that she had a lot of people helping her, attended some workshops in working with second language learners, and was able to use a lot of the teaching skills she already possessed (first interview). When I asked her to tell me a little bit about the workshops she had attended, she said that she did not remember the names of them very well but that she remembered some of the important information and experiences that she had taken away from one workshop in particular. She said there was one she recalled in which the person doing the workshop gave an example of trying to teach a science lesson in German. Kate explained that the woman teaching the workshop used a lot of visuals and gestures to help them understand, and she remembered this as she began teaching her own ESL students. She said, “[This woman] showed us how to teach a science lesson to somebody who didn’t speak the language and that they could actually get the idea because you’ve given them sort of the hooks [to help bring the students in]” (first interview).
After working as an ESL teacher for four years at the International Lycee, there was an opening at the school to teach fifth-grade English. She has now been teaching fifth grade for 4 years. In all, Kate has been teaching for 16 years.

**Influences on and Attitude Towards Teaching ELLs**

In speaking with Kate in the two interviews, she was very clear about what she felt influenced her ability to work effectively with and her attitudes toward ELL students: her years of teaching ESL, living in Africa and having to learn a second language, her experiences raising bilingual children, and knowing ELL students’ first language and their cultures at her particular school.

**Kate’s Years of Teaching ESL**

“Present material in as many ways as possible.” Kate had been an ESL teacher for several years before teaching again in the mainstream classroom, and she felt she knew what the kids learning English were going through academically and emotionally. When I asked her specifically about the skills she felt she brought from teaching ESL, she mentioned the importance of presenting information using multiple modalities, using gestures and visuals, having a small group, structured setting, and on the emotional side, needing to help build ELL students’ confidence:

I think the biggest thing is just that you’re trained . . . that students learn in different ways and that to be a good teacher, you have to try as much as possible . . . to present material in as many ways as possible. For the visual learner, for the auditory learner, for the tactile learner. I think that’s an extremely important aspect of ESL teaching because . . . you know, you’re using gestures and having visuals that help the student grasp the vocabulary . . . so that’s one thing that sort of stands out. I think with ESL teaching it helped particularly because it makes the students feel very comfortable if you have a nice structure that they can feel comfortable with, I don’t think a chaotic learning environment is healthy for anybody in any situation, but for an ESL student who has a certain lack of confidence and sort of the emotional aspect of language learning it helps even
more to have structures in place so that they can feel comfortable in the new environment very quickly . . . that the student is going to learn successfully if they are comfortable and confident and if they like you and also respect you. (First interview 1)

“I’m pretty well educated about the English language.” Later in this same interview when I asked her if she had been trained to teach language specifically in terms of the academic language needed for ELL students to succeed in school, Kate again referred to her years working as an ESL teacher. She explained that teaching ESL had educated her in the specifics of the English language that she had not been familiar with before. Like most of us educated in American public schools, she had learned English grammar, but not to the level required to teach the ELL students with whom she worked as an ESL teacher. She clarified,

When I started teaching [ESL] in middle school, I just felt I had to get a grip on what I was teaching them, so I really just kind of learned a lot more about . . . verb tenses and all that kind of stuff and just really studied it myself just to understand because I didn’t want to be able not to answer any question they had about language. Sometimes they would pose a question to me, you know, it would be like so why do we do that in English and what’s behind that? So I used the Azar (2002) series to just get a firmer grasp myself on a lot of those kinds of questions. So I feel at this point, that I’m pretty well educated about the English language—way more than I was a decade ago. I don’t think I knew a third of what I know now about the English language and how it works. (First interview)

“I kind of know where they are.” Furthermore, she said that she felt that her years of working as an ESL teacher helped her understand what the ELL students in her class would be able to do at given points throughout the school year, and that she understood their general progression of language skills. She remarked,

I know kind of some things they would normally be learning at various stages throughout the year so that when I try to integrate them in my classroom I kind of know where they are. Whereas if I hadn’t lived through the experience of being the ESL teacher I think I’d be a lot less clear on what I could expect these kids to be able to do and at what point during the year. Not to say it’s a science,
like on December 10th, they’re going to know the past tense, but you know I have a sense that by Christmas time, they probably are being introduced to the past tense and that therefore when they do a little writing for me in class I can say well, let’s try to put this in the past tense or whatever and that comes from having taught that myself. (Second interview)

She stressed how helpful these years as an ESL teacher had been; then, she discussed her years living in Africa and having to struggle to learn a second language. These experiences are presented in the next section.

Living Abroad and Learning a Second Language

Kate was adamant about the fact that her living in Africa and needing to learn a second language were very influential on her attitudes towards working with ELL students and on her ability to teach them effectively. She talked extensively about her years in Africa and struggling to learn a second language as providing her sensitivity to what the ELL students may feel when they have to learn English—the struggle and potential fear. Kate also talked about how learning another language provided insight into her own first language, English, such as the structures, and also began her love of languages.

“I don’t think I loved language the way that I think I love language now.” The following describes part of how her experiences in African learning a second language influenced her working with ELL students in terms of gaining understanding and appreciation of her own native language by studying another one:

Moving to Africa and having to learn a language myself certainly sensitized me to the whole emotional side of it, psychological side of it, it made me just more interested in language period. I, you know, was sort of a monolingual person who studied Latin in high school, so I wasn’t really that, I don’t think I loved language the way that I think I love language now, and I think that’s partly from learning another language and then you look at your own language differently because you’re actually realizing that there are all these interesting structures
and rules that as a monolingual person, you don’t actually pay attention to. And then culturally of course, myself being a stranger in a strange land, knowing how difficult that is makes me much more conscious of [what it's like for] the ELL students in my class. (First interview)

“Getting upset and exhausted.” She elaborated on her experience trying to learn a second language and how powerful this was for her relating to her ELL students in class. She talked about what she went through in trying to learn French and what a struggle this was for her in the context of living in a new country and trying to communicate with the people around her. She said that at first, it was very painful and exhausting struggling to communicate with people in French when she had been so successful academically in English, but, as she learned to relax, have confidence, and then needed to use French for a job, that is when her French really began to take off. She said:

I started off learning French as . . . using the school skills that I had always successfully used to learn but there was a limit to how far I was going to get with that and I had to learn also the psychological emotional thing [which] was basically relax first of all, have confidence in yourself, don’t worry about what people think of you, you know, just sort of lightening up a little bit and learning to be more comfortable with just, the idea that . . . you can have a conversation with somebody and you may not understand a hundred percent of what they said, but it still can be a meaningful conversation and that was a really hard thing for me for someone who had been academically successful but in a very precise monolingual way to accept that sort of gray, and that you know that was probably the biggest thing that sort of opened the flood gates in me was to be able to cope. It happened because the second year in Africa after the first year of me just plugging away and plugging away but really feeling [a] lack of confidence and getting upset and exhausted, the second year I started to do this project with a friend there where we just started a non-profit association to help people in the city that we were living in, so that, I had to use French for that. So, it stopped being me with a book in my lap and just started being me trying to accomplish a goal and French became you know the fact that I was speaking French was very, it wasn’t the focus anymore of what I was doing, that was a huge thing, and that was the huge hurdle between becoming somewhat competent in a language and being really functional in a language. (First interview).
When I asked her in the second interview again as to how she felt learning a second language in the way she did affected her working with ELL students, she said that having to learn a second language enables a person to better understand how difficult it is to do so:

Having to [learn a second language] yourself I think is the best way to understand what it’s like to have to learn a second language. And…maybe an immersion kind of situation where you have to go and you have to be kind of surrounded by the language, you know all day long, so you get the feeling of what that child [who doesn’t speak English] is experiencing in your class. (Second interview)

Kate became quite emotional when speaking about her experience in Africa having to learn another language. She was clear that this had a significant impact upon her. She felt it was very relevant to her being able to effectively work with her ELL students; understanding both the emotional/psychological aspect of acquiring a second language as well as the learning of a language itself.

*Raising Bilingual Children*

“I’ve been in their shoes.” In the first interview when I asked Kate why she felt she was effective in teaching ELL students, she discussed her ability to identify with ELL students’ parents because she “had been in their shoes,” having raised her own children bilingually in a French system of education. She said:

And you know I hadn’t thought about this before, but I’m actually also the parent of two bilingual children, and . . . so . . . in terms of dealing with the parents . . . you know, I . . . I’ve been in their shoes, I’ve been in that situation where my kids were learning a second language, and so I think I can . . . communicate with them pretty well, and . . . speak French with them if needed and make them feel comfortable. I know how important it is for the parents to feel comfortable because if the parents stress, the kid’s going to pick that up a mile away, and so that’s a huge part, is just to give them positive [reinforcement], oh, he did really well today and give them little snippets of
when you see a success. Then, they can . . . reinforce the positive feeling at home.

*Knowing ELL Students’ First Language*

Kate spoke about the advantage she had in knowing her ELL students’ first language in her ability to teach them effectively. She stressed this point multiple times in both interviews, and she demonstrated this in her teaching, which will be discussed in chapter 6. In both of our interviews, Kate mostly spoke about two major advantages in knowing ELL students’ first language: to be able to teach academic content and English grammar more successfully than if she did not know their first language, and to be able to quickly make ELL students feel comfortable in her class.

“A piece of driftwood to hold onto.” During our first interview, Kate talked about her knowledge of ELL students’ first language when I asked her to talk about some of the strategies she used with her ELL students in class. She talked about how her ability to use French with her ELL students helped get them “on board” with what the rest of the class was doing:

[being able to use French] gives [the ELL students] a chance to stay on the ship. Because we have the luxury of a French English school I will sometimes use French to get them back on board, or to give them a little hook or just to translate a word if they’ve asked what a word means, and just for the sake of speed, it’s always, I know it’s better for me to stick to English, but oh that’s this word and they can get back to the subject matter and have that be a hook. (First interview)

In relation to being able to teach English grammar effectively to the ELL students, she explained that because she knew French, she was able to compare and contrast grammatical structures in the French and English language for the ELL students:
[an advantage in teaching the ELL students in my class is] having learned French because there’s always that contrast of we do it this way and they do it that way and it makes you understand more. You know, verb tenses for example. Either the parallel is just like this, or, oh, it’s not just like this, and isn’t that interesting that it’s different, and you know, you can say things a certain way in one language but you can’t in another. And [knowing French is] also an advantage because I can make connections between French and English and make comparisons of a grammatical structures. (First interview)

She also said that her knowledge of French vocabulary helped her ELL students in that she could point out differences and similarities in French and English words:

I think [knowing their first language] is a huge advantage partly because I can use French to communicate with them to help them . . . hook into a lesson that would otherwise be over their heads. For example, a lot of times vocabulary things like the nuance of a word and kind of explain something about well that word isn’t really like that it’s more like this. I can kind of use a comparison to something in French to help the kids understand it better. (Second interview)

Kate also mentioned the advantage of knowing students’ first language in their being able to access content more easily. She spoke specifically about the math that she started to do with her ELL students in December of that year. She said that because she knew French, she was able to quickly explain a math concept to her ELL students so that they could participate in the lesson, whereas if she didn’t know the language, it would have been much more difficult to get them involved:

[I had the ELL students] start doing math just a little bit because it’s very concrete, you know it’s very specific, they feel really good about being able to do it. So . . . you know we started doing that and I would teach the lesson, I would at the beginning more than I have to do now, I would sort of just throw out some French at them sort of after we talked about something. I would sort of look at them and I would give a French explanation or ask a student to do it. Then the other kids would start working on some exercises at their desks and I would have [the ELL students] come over to the table with me at the back and sit with me for five minutes and I would go over the lesson with them in French. So they could just look at the worksheet and say oh that’s what this is about. This is how you add fractions together . . . and so that sort of got them going with the math, and now . . . it’s actually you saw the lesson that they really are doing…great I mean I really, you know, I still do the French with them a little
bit but they’re really sitting there and they’re really able to follow a lot of the
lesson. They’ve only been here since September so that’s just really cool. So if I
didn’t speak French, I don’t think there’s any way that they would be able to be
absorbing the content at this point in that way. I don’t think. Because sometimes
it’s just one word they have to know what it means and if you can just say oh
that’s this in French, they’re just like oh, and then they’re right there with the
problem. (Second interview)

“At the end of the day, he’s very unphased.” Regarding the second point about
quickly being able to make the ELL students feel comfortable, Kate said that her
knowing and being able to use French instantly helped the ELL students feel at ease.
Once they knew she spoke French, and that the ESL faculty spoke it as well, it was like
the ELL students became different, less fearful students:

I think [knowing the ELL students’ first language is] a useful tool to be able to
pull out. I think it . . . enables things to happen for these kids that wouldn’t have
if I couldn’t communicate with them. You know especially like the comfort
issue that we, the kid should feel comfortable in their class. You know that new
boy who came in today? He comes into my class, and if I couldn’t speak French
to him, there’s no way that he would be walking into my class this afternoon
feeling as comfortable as he did. And the same goes for both the ESL teachers
who met with him today. Both are able to communicate with him in French. And
so at the end of the day, he’s very unphased. He looked very comfortable and
that was his personality it seems as well but you know I picture, try to picture
his day without that . . . and . . . you know that would be . . . you know . . . a
hump he’d have to get over which would take longer than it does in this school
because that hump kind of disappears very quickly because right away the kid
can communicate with you. So they feel at ease in your classroom and they
know they’re not going to be you know out in the middle of the ocean without a
piece of driftwood to hold onto. (Second interview)

Kate’s metaphor of “a piece of driftwood to hold onto” perhaps describes what it
can be like for ELL students to enter an English classroom and the relief they feel when
someone understands their language. In Kate’s classroom, it’s not just the teacher who
understands the ELL students’ first language, but all of the other students in the class as
well.
Effects of a Bilingual Context

In analyzing Kate’s two interviews, the effects of the bilingual context fell into two main categories: how teaching there has affected her as a teacher and how it affects her ELL students. For Kate as a teacher, working in a French/English bilingual context has influenced Kate’s teaching methods. It was also apparent from her statements that she felt less stress there than she would if she had to work in a monolingual English immersion context where she did not know the ELL students’ first languages. For her ELL students, Kate felt that having a bilingual program allowed the ELL students to access academic content easily and validated the importance of their first language.

Influences on Kate

*Her teaching methods.* “Respect for the fact that that’s where they come from.”

One of the most prominent influences on Kate’s working with ELLs is Kate’s understanding of the French system of education. Having worked in a French-English bilingual context for many years, Kate felt her understanding of the French system and adjusting some of her teaching methods to reflect this system aided the ELL students when they came into her classroom. In our first interview, she clarified this:

The fact that [this context] is specifically French has a big influence on [how I teach ELL students] because I know how the French educational system works because both my kids went to French schools. And I’m around French teachers obviously as well and . . . I think that’s the educational system that these kids are used to that are coming here for the most part . . . most of the kids I’ve had who are ELL students have come from the French system and the French system is extremely structured and you know there’s a big focus on grammar and all this stuff. Even though that’s not necessarily the way an American teacher would normally teach language, it’s sort of out of . . . respect for the fact that that’s where they come from and more importantly, that’s what they’re comfortable with, you know. They’re used to conjugating verbs, so conjugate verbs with them and don’t be, even it’s that not maybe the best way to teach verbs, it gives them a comfort level with . . . language acquisition because that’s how they
think it’s supposed to look, so . . . the fact that it’s specifically French, so not mirroring the French system but sort of just respecting the fact that that’s what they’re used to [helps them]. (First interview)

*Less stress.* “Having a hook.” Kate mentioned several times during our interviews that she felt it would be harder for her if she needed to teach ELL students in a program where she could not use or did not know the ELL students’ native language(s). The best example of this is a quote where Kate summed up this feeling of teaching in the bilingual context as less stressful for her than teaching in a monolingual one when she said simply:

You know, it makes teaching in our school, teaching these students a lot easier because we do have that hook with them [knowing French] whereas if you had a multi language situation and you’re trying to teach Chinese and Spanish speakers and all of those [other languages] . . . um . . . you wouldn’t be able to.

**Positive Aspects for ELL Students**

Kate stressed two main positive features of a bilingual context for her ELL students: accessing content and validating ELL students’ first language by giving them the ability to learn through that medium for half of their time at school.

*Accessing content.* “Not a sink or swim model.” In terms of accessing content, Kate said that she and her students being able to use their first language, French, was an advantage for them. She talked about the ELL students being able to learn in their native language half of the time and how this gave them an advantage in terms of learning academic content:

With fifth-grade, there are certain academic things that we’re doing in math or science concepts that . . . you don’t want them to just miss that whole half year, half time . . . English class because they don’t speak English well enough. I have the hook of French, like with math as an example, [they are learning math in French and] I can give them enough French so they can still be learning [in English]. They’re learning a lot of math with me now which they wouldn’t be
learning if I didn’t speak French to give them the step by step to get the lesson . . . and once they get the lesson then they also have this great confidence [that] they’re learning math in English. (First interview)

Kate also emphasized the fact that the bilingual program was not a “sink or swim” model for the ELL students. She felt the ELL students were given a “gradate slope” with which to learn English since they were spending half of their time learning in French. Kate related her own child’s experience beginning his schooling in Africa in French when he only spoke English. He had to learn in the kind of “sink or swim” model that she felt was more negative for him than a bilingual program would have been on both an emotional and academic level:

I think it’s nice the way it works here. Because for [the ELL students] . . . it’s just a little more gradual process you know and it’s not just sink or swim and it’s not as traumatic really is the way I would picture it. I saw this because [David] (pseudonym) my son was . . . when we went to Cote d’Ivoire and he was thrown into a French school, and there were certainly no accommodations made for him, and it was extremely traumatic for him. It was very, he would cry every day, and he would hold onto the seat belt. He didn’t want to go into school, and yet he learned French extremely quickly and extremely well, but I think emotionally it was a very negative experience for him, so…you know, I think fundamentally it’s better to have a gradated slope [for ELL students]. (First interview)

Validating ELL Students’ First Language

“Empower the child.” Kate made several points about how having a bilingual program where the ELL students’ first language was used was a benefit for the ELL students. First, she felt that having a bilingual program explicitly validated ELL students’ first language. During our first interview she said: “when [ELL students’] first language can be respected and given [value] . . . [it can] empower the child instead of being seen as something that has to be gotten rid of or never used” (first interview).
“I don’t think they feel great stress.” Secondly, Kate underscored the fact that the school staff demonstrated every day that it is ok to make mistakes when learning another language. She felt that this was modeled for ELL students throughout the school as well as in her own classroom, and that seeing adults make mistakes in French helped the ELL students feel comfortable with making mistakes themselves in English:

I think a really cool thing that works really well at this school is that we make the kids very comfortable very quickly and we set the tone of . . . it’s ok to make mistakes, and that’s how you learn, and we all make mistakes, and that’s part of the learning process and so they . . . I don’t think they feel great stress for the most part about . . . that. And so that’s very satisfying. (First interview)

She elaborated on this point later in the same interview:

I think you know a huge factor of course is that very thing that we were talking about a minute ago that, you know, the school is full of people who are speaking all different languages, all different accents, a lot of them speak third languages, so that whole idea that you’re comfortable you know with the different accent or making a mistake, everybody is doing that in some language that they’re trying to speak. You know, me when I speak French, their French teachers that try to speak English, so you know it sets a tone very clearly of . . . you don’t stand out in the school for being a learner of another language. So I think that definitely helps the process because you get that comfort and there are tons of people around you who are samples of bilingualism or trilingualism, so there is evidence everywhere that it works and it can happen. (First interview)

Kate stressed this point again during our second interview:

[Using students’ first language is] just modeling . . . respect for . . . language or use of languages. [It’s a] communication device and . . . there are no stigmas about the whole thing I don’t think in our school. The [ELL] students are seeing that not only from the classroom teachers but from the director and the people at recess duty…that’s just pretty much across the board what they’re experiencing. It just makes them…model that as…well that’s what I’m going to do too. I’m going to be from now on speaking French but pretty soon I’ll be like those kids over there who switch off into English when they’re playing kickball. So it just makes it not be a box. It’s just all, a spectrum of . . . where everybody . . . where everybody in the school is with various languages and that’s even more languages because we have Spanish speakers, and you know you can hear that in the faculty room sometimes. It’s the same thing I said earlier about within my classroom feeling like the ambiance should always be we’re all in the middle of
learning something, we all have things that we’re stronger at and weaker at and that goes outside of the classroom in terms of language. Everybody in the building is . . . you know, I’m much more fluent in English, but still speak French sometimes. And . . . the [ELL students’] French teachers struggle to speak English but they try and it just . . . it makes the whole ambiance of the school. (Second interview).

“We all have a first language.” Kate continued during this interview in saying how ELL students seeing adults in the building in “positions of power” using both English and French with different levels of proficiency made the ELL students “feel good.” The students saw and heard these adults using different languages each day, giving each equal status. They also saw these adults needing to learn from each other and from the students. She felt it was a “healthy dynamic” for the ELL students:

I think it really makes [ELL students] feel good. Because . . . they’re . . . seeing an adult in a position of power over them whether it’s me or the director . . . [we] all have a first language. And [the ELL students] . . . well some of them don’t, some of them have two first, some of them [are] truly bilingual kids, and there are certainly a fair number of those but most of them or a lot of them have one first language and then they have a second language that they have an accent in or they’re not as strong in and they’re seeing . . . [me speak French which] puts them in a position of power in a way when they hear me speak French . . . because . . . all day long I’m the teacher, I’m the expert, I’m the one that tells them how to spell words and how to add fractions and blah blah blah. And then at the end of the day, they hear me speak and fumbling around my French with a parent and I can turn to them and say how do you say that again? And then they can tell me and it makes them part of teaching me. And I think is a very healthy dynamic for the kids. (Second interview)

Clearly Kate felt that a bilingual context was an advantage for ELL students in a number of ways, which will be affirmed by Rose in the description that follows.

Rose

Rose was also nominated by Susan, the Academic Dean at the International Lycee. Susan wrote the following about Rose in the “Qualities of Exemplary Teaching Data Collection Form” (Appendix G):
After 29 years at the International Lycee, Rose has gained a great deal of insight and understanding into how our students learn English. Most of that time has been teaching third grade, and Rose has proven that she is a very effective teacher with that age group. Rose teaches in a way that includes a lot of group work which allows for a great deal of participation by ELL students, even beginners. Rose holds high expectations for her students and communicates to them her confidence that they can succeed. She is very well-organized, making it easier for non-fluent students to understand the routines and expectations of her class.

For both Kate and Rose, Susan added the following in a memo to me concerning the forms she had filled out: “After reflecting on Kate’s and Rose’s traits, I would say the two most important traits are the degree of knowledge of second language acquisition (through training or experience) and being an effective, organized teacher in genera” (personal correspondence, June 29, 2006).

Rose’s Background

Rose was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York. She grew up with grandparents who were born in Romania and Poland and spoke only Yiddish. Her parents were born in the United States, and they understood Yiddish and could speak some Yiddish, but Rose did not learn the language. In fact, she said learning Yiddish was discouraged by her parents and grandparents:

If you were an American, you didn’t keep the tongue [of your parents and grandparents]. You didn’t teach it to your children. Yiddish was used when they didn’t want us to know what they were talking about. Then once my grandparents were gone, my parents knew some Yiddish [but didn’t use it at home]. That’s why it’s a dying language, because it was given up. And to become an American, you just didn’t speak it. My grandfather on my father’s side was on the Yiddish stage, he was an actor. You know, Yiddish was a big thing for him. But that was something . . . you just spoke English unfortunately. (First interview).

About her experiences growing up in Brooklyn, she said:
I didn’t grow up in the best part of Brooklyn. I grew up in my grandfather’s house. My father was a soldier during World War II, so he went overseas and my mother came back to live with her parents, then had me. I didn’t see my father until I was over three [years old]. Then my grandmother died and my father came back, and we just stayed in the house. It wasn’t a terrific neighborhood. But we moved when I was in high school, when my grandfather died. We moved still in Brooklyn, and it was kind of a nicer [house], and it was my grandfather’s house from when my mother was a child. (First interview)

When I asked her about the community she grew up in, she explained that it was not that diverse racially. However, she said that her high school was very diverse:

The street we lived on was mostly Italian. It was like an Italian village actually, and there were few Jewish families. Basically, it was all white. I went to a [racially] mixed junior high school and a [racially] mixed high school. The high school, the kids . . . interview came from far, so it was very mixed racially, and it was New York. It wasn’t the best. It was tough. But in those days, they had multiple high school diplomas. You could get a business diploma, an academic diploma, or a general diploma. So the kids who were academics basically stayed together, the commercial students were mixed, and then the generals were, as you can imagine, there until they were sixteen, and then . . . It was a large high school. I was in the academics. I was with all the goody two shoes. (First interview)

When I asked Rose why she became a teacher, she answered that at the time, it was one of the few choices for women:

When I was in college in the early sixties, you either were academically driven and went to a professional school to be doctor or a lawyer, or you became a teacher. I mean, that was it. There was nothing else like engineering or architecture, or computers or science. It was either medical school, law school or education. So I fell into that. And everybody I knew became a teacher. It was just the thing. My sister was a teacher and you just did it. There weren’t as many options as there were today. (First interview)

Rose’s first teaching job was in Brooklyn, in an “all Black school” near a public housing project in the Brooklyn Navy yard. She taught there for three and a half years, and said that she enjoyed teaching there. Her relationship with the parents and students was very positive--until 1968:
And then in 1968, there was a very large strike, and there was this whole problem with community control and it went downhill, and it became a very adversarial parent teacher fight. And it really wasn’t pleasant then to teach there. It was that whole time of you know the black power movement and it was very difficult to be there at that time and then I became pregnant and you couldn’t work after, once they found out you were pregnant, you basically had to leave. So what people would do is to say they weren’t or to say they were a couple of months less than they were so you could work a little longer, but you had to leave once you began to show that you were pregnant, that was it. And I had Johnny in 1970. (First interview)

After having her first child, Rose did some subbing in the New York City public schools. Since someone was always absent, she had a pretty steady stream of subbing opportunities. She made contact with one principal in particular at a junior high school and was able to substitute teach there on a regular basis. However, she said that the experience was “terrible”:

I used to go in on Wednesday and the principal would stand there and he would say, sorry, it’s the only thing, and you knew you were in trouble for the day. They locked the door, and if the [students] got out, they couldn’t get back in, and then they were in trouble. It was basically just management, it was something [not teaching]. (First interview)

Rose’s husband was an academic at that time, and he received a job offer to come to the state in which she now teaches in 1976. They moved when Rose was in her mid-thirties. She began teaching at the International Lycee in 1977, where she taught second and third grade. She explained that when she started at the school, there was only one grade at each level, so she had to teach both second and third grade to be full time since half of the students’ time was spent in French. When the school got large enough, she kept third grade. She was also the gym teacher at one point and reflected on what it was like for her at that time:

I used to do second grade in the morning and third grade in the afternoon and in between I did gym, but that was because again it was very small and everyone
had gym together. It was doable then, but then you know, it . . . I just volunteered to do it and they needed a gym teacher. Since I had been a counselor and I had a whistle, I became the gym teacher! Now we’re much more formal. (First interview)

During this first interview, I asked Rose about whether or not she had had any specific training to work with ELL students. She said that though she had not had any formal training, her years as a teacher in a bilingual program had given her “trial and error” training with her ELL students. She said:

I haven’t had any formal training, but over the years . . . well, when I first started here, there was no ESL [support]. And there was absolutely no help, so I developed over the years, a way to, you know, to get . . . first of all to make them [the ELLs] feel comfortable, and to give them a little bit extra, to keep them next to me. I would label everything in the classroom, out of trial and error, learn how to get them to . . . I think the basic thing is to feel more comfortable. Because we were all on our own then, and there was no [ESL] help. But I think if children know that you’re really trying to help them and that you care, they feel it and so it helps them. Of course, the classes were small, and it was easier. The largest class I ever had in the old days was about 16, which was pretty big, and then when [the school] moved, in 1983, to [another town], to that big school, I had seven in a huge, like this, in a big old classroom with 7 kids, we kind of snuggled into one corner. And I had six girls and one boy who had a wonderful year. It was the best year probably of his life. I just over the years learned, and it’s interesting because it’s basically the same, you know, you see the same reactions from [the ELL students], it depends on their personality but of course, now they get much more help [from ESL teachers] . . . a lot more” (First interview).

She continued to describe how she would work with the ELL students when they did not speak any English. She said that she would be sure to keep the ELL students included in lessons in a variety of ways, but that it was a challenge for her:

When I first started [teaching here], if I had four or five [ELLs] in my class, it was me. In the class, constantly . . . trying to give them things to do. To keep them occupied . . . the ones. And . . . (laughs) sometimes, you know, the group would get very strong and they became . . . you know, it was a challenge to kind of break up the thing, the group. You know because they would get very close, very strong, and they wielded a lot of power. (laughs). Now, it’s easier because you do have that [ESL] support. We had nothing . . . I guess I must have thought
and said well what do I do with these kids? And I think . . . maybe because I had no training . . . in [teaching ELLs] specifically, I just . . . used whatever . . . teaching skills that I might have had. And . . . just . . . not lowered my standards, but changed the standards that I expected for the rest of the class. But always felt that they had to be included. And that that was very important. I always managed to have them included in things that we did. But it was always a challenge. (First interview)

Rose has been teaching third grade at the International Lycee for 30 years, and she will soon be retiring.

Influences on and Attitude Towards Teaching ELLs

In reading through my interviews with Rose, certain aspects became clear as to what influenced Rose’s ability to teach ELLs and her attitude towards teaching these particular students: her years of teaching experience, knowledge of students’ first language, learning a second language, and valuing bilingualism.

Rose’s Years of Teaching Experience

Rose has been a teacher for over 30 years in various schools which have been racially and linguistically mixed. In discussing her years of working with ELL students in our interviews, there were three common threads that were woven throughout her experiences: (a) the knowledge of issues concerning and general experiences of her ELL students, (b) knowledge of how to assuage ELL students’ parents’ fears, and (c) a feeling of pride in her success with her ELL students.

Knowledge of ELL Students in Multiple Ways

“Give them as much support as you possibly can.” In our interviews, Rose spoke often about the emotional and psychological needs of her ELL students. It was clear from our conversations that her years of experience had provided her with insight into
her ELL students’ feelings, particularly in knowing how difficult it is for them when
they first arrive. In our first interview she said:

Sometimes you get kids who are not happy to be here. And those are the ones
who are really resistant. That’s tough. It takes those kids, it takes them, the
whole first year, that first year can be very miserable for them. I mean they’re
just sad and unhappy to be here and miss everything that’s home, so you can’t
push it, it has to come, it has to come from them. But you have to give them as
much support as you possibly can and tell them that . . . it’s great. You
know…even my, with [Jean] (pseudonym) . . . they’re a few times where the
kids (she claps) you know, did you hear what he just did? (she claps). He stands
up and takes a bow and has a big grin. But, [the other students] know because a
lot of them have gone through it . . . They’ve gone through it so they understand
what it means, and it’s a big deal. (First interview)

Because Rose had come to understand how difficult it might be for her ELL
students, she emphasized that it was her responsibility to be sure that the students were
comfortable in her classroom:

I just treat them [the ELL students] like you treat all the others, and give them
the work . . . and just not expect exactly the same. And if they . . . if they, you
know, if they write four sentences instead of a paragraph, that’s great. You
know, just to consider every day . . . if they do something in English, it’s good,
and then the next day it’s going to be better and not to look at it as…oh, it’s
more work [to have ELL students in your classroom] . . . I think it’s my
responsibility to make [the ELL students] feel comfortable . . . and not to force
them to speak English. But . . . to . . . once they begin to feel comfortable here,
that this is for them too, this is part of their day or their week, it’s for them
too…and gradually they will succeed. (First interview)

“A strange place, a new school, a different house, different bed.” Along these
same lines, Rose suggested the school providing specific emotional and psychological
support for the ELL students when they first arrive:

I think there should be more emotional support. I think the academics are pretty
well taken care of. But I think . . . every child who first comes to this school as
an ESL [student], should . . . have a chance to go and talk to someone about
being in a strange place, a new school, a different house, different bed. You
know? They don’t have their own bed, they don’t have their own bedrooms,
everything is completely new and they’re thrown into this, and I think . . . they
need, I think they should have that. We don’t have that yet, but I think it should just be standard that every child that’s ESL gets some emotional... psychological support at the beginning. And... that they’re watched. Not just by their ESL teacher, but someone should, separate from the academic. Because some of these kids are really just sad to be here. And then of course there are even some kids who lose one parent, one parent is here and one parent is there, so that’s difficult too. It’s hard. And then it’s a strange language, the parent might not be comfortable in the language, so there’s a lot of... I think they need [the emotional and psychological support]. I think that should be something that [the school provides]. (First interview)

“This is where we work and this is where we have fun.” Rose also discussed how her years of teaching ELLs at her particular school have helped her identify particular aspects of “cultural shock” the ELL students can experience in both negative and positive ways. She touched upon two aspects in particular: the differences in food/meals, and the set up of the English classrooms. In terms of food, she talked about the differences between American and French food in addition to the expectations at lunch time, which are quite different from those in France:

[The ELL students are] adapting to being in a new place... a new school, a new country, new home... new food... peanut butter... you know. Things like that. What were they talking about the other day and I remember [Nicolas] (pseudonym) made this face, oh, marshmallows, oh, yuck, oh American marshmallows in hot chocolate, cause one of their spelling words is marshmallow. So... there’s a lot for them to learn... you know, not having hot lunch, to bring their own lunch... not having the long lunch break... you know and that’s for parents too. They have to adjust to that too, you know. I remember and it doesn’t happen as much anymore because there is the hot lunch, but [a] poor new French kid would come with this huge lunch, you know, a fruit, a yogurt, some hot dish, and a sandwich, and tomatoes, and... put some bread out in front and the American kid is sitting there and eating a peanut butter thing on white bread, you know gulping it down, and maybe having an apple, you know (laughs)... and that changes. The parents realize it has to change but it’s kind of funny. The [ELL students] don’t eat the peanut butter but they become more Americanized in their food eating, but it’s so funny. (First interview)
When talking about the set up of the classrooms, she said the ELL students had some interesting observations about the “American classroom” over the years:

When they (the ELL students) come in here . . . into the American classroom, they . . . realize there’s a difference and I think they can relax a little bit more. It’s not going to be exactly as demanding as the other [French] side. And they all think it’s just having fun. And we have, I once had a new French kid who was in the French room, and the tables are lined up and straight all facing the front . . . and then he comes here, and he sees the round tables, and the games, I had games out, and he said, to his mother in French, this is where we work (the French classroom) . . . and this is where we have fun (the American classroom)- (laughs). Just the physical set up of the room . . . and then you know sometimes they have too much fun but they . . . it calms them. And they learn that they have to learn here also. But at least they can have a little fun doing it. (First interview).

“How long is it going to take.” From Rose’s years of experience, she has also learned how to assure parents that their children will learn English, She remarked about all of these elements in both of our interviews. In the first interview, she said:

The main concern from the . . . ESL parents . . . at the beginning is how long is it going to take before they speak English. Will they speak English soon, and you know you just have to kind of calm them and say it will happen . . . but . . . you have to give them time, when they’re comfortable they’re going to use all of the words, but they’re learning. It’s going into their heads and then depending on their personality, it’s going to all come out. Some will use one or two words that they learn quickly and use them all the time, and then there are some who are going to wait until they give you a full sentence before they speak. So you have to kind of assure them that it’s going to happen, but it’s not going to happen in October, but by the beginning of the next year, when we come back from winter break, you begin to see. And then gradually the kids just use the language and don’t even realize it. Especially if they’re arguing with each other, you can hear oh my goodness look at that, they are fighting with each other in English (laughs), so you know they’ve internalized it because they don’t even realize they’re speaking English. (First interview)

“It’s where you can see your success.” Rose’s years of experience in working with ELL students had also given her a sense of pride in her accomplishments in helping these students succeed in learning English and participating fully in the English
program at the school. When I asked her how she felt about having ELL students in her class, she answered:

I think it’s fun. It’s a challenge too. It’s where you can see your success. And I think that’s what I said . . . because you can see the success with them, so it’s a challenge that . . . is fun . . . With a kid who doesn’t speak any English when they come and then by June they’re doing what everyone else is doing and writing and drawing and running around the playground and speaking English, and you say, wow, I had something to do with that. Not total, but something, so…you can, you can see your success and it’s kind of fun. Also, seeing how when [the ELL students] do something that everyone else does and they’ve participated in an English thing, and they feel great about themselves, and that big smile on their face. You know, and the parents come and say, terrific, I mean, you know, great…I can’t believe that he’s doing all that work in English. That’s a success, and that goes with what I said before, that . . . it’s what you can see, it’s your success, you can see it at the end of the year, so . . . that’s . . . that’s great. (First interview)

Knowing Students’ First Language

“It’s just second nature.” Influencing Rose’s ability to teach and attitudes towards teaching ELLs is her knowledge of her ELL students’ first language (L1), French. Rose said that she has learned to identify common mistakes in her ELL students’ language development and how to help correct these mistakes. In our first interview, she said,

I think as you say because I’ve been doing it so long, I think it’s just second nature. [The ELL students’ mistakes] don’t stand out in my mind that [they’re] something that has to be corrected because it’s common and it happens all the time. So that, I don’t see it as some . . . terrible mistake in syntax, in grammar or usage or something because I know . . . that it . . . it’s all part of the pattern. And that it’s going to straighten itself out. (First interview)

In terms of specific mistakes that French students make in learning English, she indicated that she will help them with these explicitly:

A lot of times [the ELL students make mistakes with] the adjectives, you know, the adjectives are in the wrong place [for them]. So I just say that in English we
say the blue dress, not the dress blue. And just repeat what they’ve written the way it should be said in English and eventually they get it. (First interview)

Learning a Second Language

“I don’t have enough confidence, and I don’t have that personality.” Also influencing Rose’s attitudes towards teaching ELL students was her experience trying to learn a second language. Specifically, she spoke about how having a personality that was not very outgoing made it difficult for her to succeed in learning French. She felt that she just did not have the confidence she needed and that this gives her insight into and compassion for the ELL students who take more time to open up and use the language in class.

During our first interview, I asked her whether or not she knew another language. It was here that she began to talk about how her lack of confidence had affected her language learning and continues to affect it in some ways:

I took French . . . through high school and I took it in college. There was interest. And one of the reasons that I got the job [at the International Lycee] was because I knew some French. And in those days you didn’t have to speak French, but, if I had applied myself more I would speak it more. But, I can make myself understood with the kids. And every time I open my mouth in French, I get such a reaction that my personality says to me, woops, that’s it, no more. But . . . if I had worked harder I certainly by now could be pretty competent in the language, but I just didn’t do it. I sometimes think in French, I would never say what I’m thinking . . . I don’t have enough confidence, and I don’t have that personality. I mean even the kids that you get, they have the personality that it doesn’t matter, if I know one word, I’ll use one word, but I probably would be one of those kids that it would take me half, three quarters of the year to speak French. You know? I’m much more outgoing now than I was when I was younger, so . . . but it’s still hard. (First interview)

Rose talked about the influence of personality again in our second interview:

It’s funny because in the classroom I have . . . when I’m in the classroom, and it’s not my personality outside my classroom, I think I’m much more outgoing when I’m with the students than I am when I’m with other adults, so that…you
know, it [is] easier for me to just be there with them . . . It doesn’t matter acting out a word or you know, using body language. It never bothers me, I mean I would never do that outside of the classroom but inside the classroom, that’s who I become. And so it makes it easier. (Second interview)

**Valuing Bilingualism**

“I was always open to the idea of bilingualism, and I admired it.” Through my interviews with Rose, I found that she expressed valuing bilingualism in three consistent ways: by the importance she placed on traveling abroad thereby being immersed in different cultures and languages, having her own grandchildren be raised bilingually, and believing that a bilingual education was better than a monolingual English immersion one for ELL students.

“I think you have to experience it yourself to see what it’s like.” Rose felt that it was very important for teachers of ELL students to travel abroad in a country in which they did not understand the language. She felt so strongly about how positively these experiences had affected her that she thought all teachers should have a stipend to be able to travel to a country where they did not know the language.

For example, in our second interview, Rose talked about how important her experiences traveling abroad were for her in being able to relate to her ELL students. She felt that traveling abroad had added to her “world view.” It made her feel “amazed” at what her ELL students were able to do since she had found it so difficult to communicate in just a short time traveling in other countries. She said:

Everyone should definitely travel abroad. Not all Americans travel abroad. You have to think about [traveling to other countries] as a positive thing. If you travel abroad then you appreciate it. What you see . . . It only adds to . . . your world view. Learning another language . . . I think it’s very important. And probably . . . in every big city in the United States, every teacher should have to speak Spanish . . . People should know more about language. Development I guess of
language . . . I think I somewhat understand [from traveling abroad] what it’s like [not to understand], and I’m always amazed that the [ELL students] are able to do it (be able to learn in English so quickly). When you’re traveling abroad and you don’t speak the language . . . you have an appreciation of what [it must be like for the ELL students] . . . if you’re in the middle of Bulgaria . . . and you don’t know a word of Bulgarian you kind of have an idea of what it’s like [for the ELL students]. To be in that position to have to live, live your life here, instead of just a week . . . I think you have to . . . you have to experience it yourself to see what it’s like. I think every teacher should have a stipend . . . to go to a foreign country. (Second interview)

“I think it’s terrific.” Furthermore, Rose discussed how she has encouraged her own children to have their children be raised bilingually in Canada. When I asked her about how she felt about bilingual education generally, she talked very positively about learning and being educated in two languages:

I think it’s terrific. I’ve encouraged my daughter to do the same thing with my grandchildren, even though, and it’s very funny because she has the same misgivings as the parents here even though she’s lived with a parent who’s taught in a bilingual school all these years and I’m always talking about it, she still has the same hang ups as the American parents here. Am I doing the right thing? Is he learning the same? You know, it’s funny, but I think it’s . . . you know, I think . . . it just adds. Even if it takes longer. I mean, I wish I were [completely] bilingual. When I was growing up it wasn’t . . . you got rid of it, the other language . . . I think it’s great [to be bilingual] and so many of the kids here are trilingual . . . you know and they’re just . . . and [the other day] I was standing with one of the kids, and he knew . . . standing next to me listening to me speak to his father in English, [his mother] was speaking to him in Polish, he was answering in Polish, and this is a French school, so you know . . . it’s, terrific. (First interview)

“They’re allowed to be who they are.” Later on in this same interview when I asked her whether she thought it was better for ELL students to be educated bilingually or in a monolingual English immersion environment, she did not hesitate to answer that it is better for the students to be educated bilingually. She gave several reasons for this: bilingual education being a way to let the students “be who they are,” showing the value
of being bilingual, and reflecting the changing make-up of our country with an increasingly bilingual population. She said:

[ELL students should have a] bilingual education. I mean because . . . because they’re allowed to be who they are. Once we in the United States . . . value that other language [Spanish] that is so dominant in this country, and the culture of those people . . . I think things would be a lot easier for everybody. And . . . you know, politics aside and everything that is going on, but in the schools itself, if we value, if we showed more value . . . and not insisted they change, that it, it just makes it easier for everyone. Maybe that’s the way it has to be. Especially in the United States in certain parts of the country. Maybe everybody needs to be in a bilingual program. It’s a fact. It’s not going to change, the census shows that in what, not too much, maybe by the next census, we’ll be more than 50% of the people in this country will be Spanish speakers. So maybe we have to change. You know, look at Canada . . . so, the options should be there, and . . . you know, [bilingual education] works . . . of course that’s going to take a lot to change here. (First interview)

Effects of a Bilingual Context

Rose mentioned several aspects related to the effects of a bilingual context. She spoke about how the context affected her as a teacher, which included balancing the French and American cultures, and only having to work with one other language when it came to ELL students. She talked more extensively, however, about how she felt the bilingual context of the International Lycee affected ELL students.

Effects on Rose as a teacher. Rose mentioned two specific areas in which she felt working in a bilingual context had affected her as a teacher: balancing the French and American ways of teaching and only having to work with one other language.

“That’s what’s nice about this place is the balance.” In relation to the first point, her explanation of the French and American ways of teaching was much like that of Kate’s explanation: that her teaching had become more of a balance of the two systems. In our first interview, she explained:
That’s what’s nice about this place is the balance of the two systems . . . We on the American side try to be a little more structured and I think the French teachers learn that they can be a little less structured so that there’s a very nice balance. If the French teacher lasts for more than one year it’s great because then you can really learn how to work together. And it works. (First interview)

“Makes it easier for me.” In relation to only having to work with only one other language with her ELL students, she felt that this was an advantage for her over teachers in the monolingual English immersion contexts. She said that she felt it must be harder for teachers who work in a monolingual system dealing with ELL students who speak multiple languages. Rose said:

In some ways . . . it’s more difficult [for teachers in a monolingual system]. I mean . . . I don’t have to know four languages, for example. I just have to know one, which makes it easier for me and for the ELL students. I think for us, a bilingual setting is much easier [than a monolingual setting]. In a monolingual setting you really have to work harder to make sure . . . that the [ELL students] are included. They’re always included here—the non-English speakers. That’s never a problem, unless the kid has a personality problem . . . Now, in a, in a monolingual school . . . if you do it right . . . that absorption . . . can be really . . . complete. Here . . . [the ELL students] always have their . . . their L1 to fall back on. And they use it a lot. You know. So . . . it works, I think, easier for them and for us. (Second interview)

**Effects on ELL Students**

In examining the two interviews with Rose, three main themes emerged with regard to the effects of a bilingual program/context on her ELL students. These three themes were: the program providing a “cushion” for the ELL students, the assistance academically that learning in ELL students’ first language provided them, particularly with special needs issues, and how the use of two languages in educating ELL students explicitly shows the value of their first language.

“They can really shine half of the time.” Concerning the first point, Rose expressed various ways in which the bilingual program at the International Lycee
provided a “cushion” for the ELL students. Her description of this kind of cushion relates in many ways to what Kate discussed as the “comfort level” the bilingual program at the school provides for the ELL students. In my first interview with Rose, she brought up the point about how much of an advantage the bilingual program was over a monolingual system for the ELL students when they come to the International Lycee not speaking any English. She particularly emphasized how the ELL students could have a break from feeling like the “worst” in the class to having a chance the next day to feel completely comfortable. She also talked about the advantage of having every other student in her English class being proficient in French, and how that put the ELL students at ease immediately in the English class. She said:

And then half the time, the [ELL students are] the best! They can really shine half of the time. So that helps, it not always this heavy, so what am I going to do today. But then the very next day, they get this boost, so they can handle it and come back to me. I think that’s one of the reasons that they do so well--because they have the French to support them. It’s like down time, they speak French. And the English they want to, because they want to be like everybody else. So it’s something that comes from them. Usually, I mean there are some who don’t want to be here, but that’s for other reasons. They have that chance to shine [in French], so it makes it easier [in English] . . . and the other kids in the class understand them, and that’s why it’s such a great place for kids to come when they first get here [to the United States] because there’s this, there’s a lot of cushion for them. (First interview)

She elaborated upon this point later in the same interview:

I said this before, but I think that part of their time the [ELL students] don’t have to worry about it (learning English). It’s not a constant thing that’s on their minds, and they’re more relaxed here in learning that second language . . . Because…half their time it doesn’t matter because they can just be the best in French. I think that’s why there’s such success [for the ELL students] here. (First interview)

“It’s their training in the French.” Another area that Rose emphasized in our interviews was the assistance academically that ELL students learning in their L1
provided them. One area was in learning in a “French” academic setting to which the students are used to, and the other important area was in being able to quickly identify students with special needs. In terms of teaching ELL students, Rose mentioned how her knowledge of French pedagogy assists her in teaching them. In our second interview she said:

And [I think it’s easier for the ELL kids here in a bilingual program because] it’s their training in the French, and the way the kids learn their language. That they’re, it’s easier for them to transfer it. You know what I mean? . . . because it’s so grammar focused. And they deal more with . . . you know, the parts of speech and the tenses and they have an understanding of what this is. They spend so much time conjugating verbs that if I say to them, well you know it’s just like in French. I sit, you sit, they sit, he sits. They understand. (Second interview)

“They can get help from everybody.” Rose discussed in both of our interviews how having to use only one other language and knowing one other system of education, the French system, helped the ELL students when they had special needs. She compared how it was easier in a bilingual program like the one at the International Lycee than it would be in monolingual English immersion systems to get ELL students the help they needed. In our first interview, she said:

I can see . . . you know if you’re a public school teacher and you have 30 kids and suddenly find four kids who speak in Croatian, something you know that nobody knows the language or anything I could see where that’s a problem. But here, it’s, it’s different . . . There’s always somebody who, you know, if you have a problem with [an ELL student], you can get help. Or . . . how do I do this, there’s someone who can show you how to do this. (First interview)

She emphasized the same point again in our second interview:

Here . . . it’s different because the [ELL students] can get help from everybody . . . You know? Because everyone speaks their language and I think that’s a big thing. Maybe in a monolingual school you get . . . Japanese . . . parents let’s say. The kids come and there are no Japanese speakers in the school. Then the teacher who has the children in the classroom who realizes the special needs of
the child . . . and has to . . . advocate, be the advocate for the kid, and make sure that the parents get it right. Because you can do everything you want to, the school for the child, but you have to make sure that the parents understand why . . . or what we have to offer. Especially if you see a child with a learning disability. And here . . . if an English teacher sees that a child has some problem, and if the French teacher agrees, then you have a person who understands the French attitude. And what it all means to a French person to be told that your child has a learning disability. And can explain it to them. So that it . . . it’s the way it would be explained if they were home in their own country. But in a monolingual setting where no one speaks that language, you really have to have somebody to stand up for the . . . child and its family. To make sure that the services, the correct services, are available. We have here [at the International Lycee] the benefit of both language and culture. So . . . even if you had somebody an American who can speak Japanese, you still don’t have the Japanese culture. I mean the whole thing is quite different. So you might know the language but . . . you’re not Japanese. (Second interview)

Explicitly Showing Value of ELL Students’ L1

The third major theme that emerged from our interviews regarding the effects of a bilingual context/program upon ELL students was how using their L1 in schooling explicitly showed the ELL students the value of their language and cultures. This relates directly to what Kate emphasized as well in my interviews with her.

“I think we see the big picture.” In our first interview, Rose talked extensively about how the bilingual program offered at the International Lycee benefited the ELL students in terms of the value it showed for students’ L1 and for bilingualism generally.

She stated:

At our school we recognize that the child’s first language has value. I think that’s very important. If the child knows that his first language is valued, and important, and looked upon as something positive, it makes them feel better about themselves. And they perform better. So, you know, here it’s . . . again, it’s easy because the language is so valued because we’re creating these kids. We’re making them bilingual . . . I can’t even imagine what it would be like after all these years to teach in just . . . a monolingual school, in a monolingual setting, even though I might complain about this, it just would be so dull. Because to deal with the two cultures every day there’s a challenge, just simple things, you know? So . . . having to get through whatever the red, white and blue
tape, bleu, blanc, rouge tape (laughs). But, I think we see the big picture rather than the…isolated. We [at our school] see that when people speak with accents, it’s not so terrible, that . . . we’re not going to make French kids American kids, but we can make French kids speak English, and acquire some of…you know, understand some of the culture that they’re now sitting in. But we’re not gonna change them. We don’t want to make them Americans . . . and . . . so . . . in some ways it’s more relaxed. We’re not . . . we’re not trying to change them into something that they’ll never be, and we value [who they are]. (First interview)

In my second interview with Rose, she discussed again how the school explicitly valued the ELL students’ first language and how this differs from the attitude of most Americans towards bilingualism, particularly towards Spanish. She maintained:

I think that’s part of the problem with bilingual Spanish. You see Hispanic . . . the attitude towards the Hispanic world . . . that’s . . . I think it’s not seen positively. The parents don’t speak English . . . but if you have a Japanese family, [people] don’t think . . . it’s such a . . . you know . . . detrimental thing as . . . oh well look those Hispanic families have been here for ten years and they don’t speak any English. Why don’t we send them back? But . . . when you have the same thing in a different language the attitude is different . . . [For the Hispanic students] they’re not given…they’re not saying that it’s positive, it’s great that you can speak these two languages. It’s wonderful. You know? And you can do anything that you want to. [But at our school] everybody thinks it’s wonderful these kids can speak French. But it’s because it’s a culture, it’s an attitude. (Second interview)

Rose and Kate’s feelings about how the bilingual program/context affects them and their ELL students are quite similar. These themes will be explored with the two teachers from the monolingual contexts in the next chapter.
CHAPTER FIVE

TEACHERS IN MONOLINGUAL ENGLISH IMMERSION CONTEXTS

The goal of my research was to determine what features exemplary teachers in two different contexts—bilingual and monolingual English immersion, shared. I was interested in examining their backgrounds, how their strategies in teaching ELLs compared across settings, what challenges they faced in teaching ELLs, and how all of these issues were mediated by the context of a bilingual setting and a monolingual English immersion setting.

This chapter provides a thick description (Geertz, 1977), as in chapter 4, of the teachers in the monolingual English immersion contexts. This chapter describes Liz and Jane (pseudonyms) who both teach in monolingual English immersion contexts within the same district but at different schools. Each description includes the following elements: a portrayal of the schools in which they teach, why each teacher was nominated as an effective teacher of ELLs; the details of each teacher’s background; influences on and her attitudes towards working with ELL students; and how each feels a bilingual context affects her teaching ELLs and the ELLs themselves.

Monolingual English Immersion: Contrasting Contexts for ELL Students

The monolingual English immersion schools included in this study were in the same district in a relatively large suburb of a major United States city. Approximately 4,500 students are enrolled in the district. According to state indicators for enrollment for 2007-2008, the racial makeup of the district was 80% White, 9.1% Asian, 3.6% African American, 4.2% Hispanic, 0.2% Native American, 0.1% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and 2.4% multi-race/non-Hispanic. In addition, 10.8% of the
students had a language other than English as their first language, and 3.8% of the students were identified as Limited English Proficient, and the percentage of Special Education students was 16.1%. The indicators also showed that 9.7% of the students were from low-income families (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2008).

Principals in two schools agreed to participate because they felt they had teachers who met the requirements of being considered “exemplary teachers” of ELL students. The two schools were the Washington School (pseudonym) and the Parker School (pseudonym). At the Washington School, Jane, a first-grade teacher, was nominated. At the Parker School, Liz, a third-grade teacher, was nominated. It is with this teacher, Liz, and the Parker School that the description will begin.

*The Parker School*

The Parker School is nestled in a working class part of the district. The neighborhood is spotted with small homes, and as one drives around the area, there are families out with their children and people working in their yards. It described as a tight-knit community where people are welcoming to new families.

The Parker school currently enrolls 305 students. The racial makeup of the school is as follows: 82.6% White, 9.8% Asian, 3% Hispanic, 2.3% multi-race, non-Hispanic, 0.3% Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2008). The percentage of LEP students for the school was listed as 5.9% of the total school population of 305 students versus 3.8% for the district, which means that there were 18 LEP students enrolled. The percentage of students whose first language is not English was listed as 10.8%, which is exactly the
same percentage listed for the district. This means that there were 33 students enrolled whose first language was not English. The percentage of special education students for the school was listed at 14.4% of the total school population of 305 versus at 16.1% for the district, which means that there were 44 special education students enrolled, and 7.5% listed as low income versus 9.7% for the district, which means that there were 23 low-income students enrolled (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2008). Over 95% of the teachers are licensed in their teaching assignments, and 95.3% have been deemed “highly qualified.” Liz is one such teacher.

The school is very welcoming to its families and teachers. Walking into the school, there is student art work all over the walls, and the receptionist is always quick with a smile. When I was observing in Liz’s classroom, the principal was constantly in and out, which Liz later explained was part of the way in which he showed support for the teachers and students. It was not monitoring, but rather being present for them at all times. Liz said that the principal prided himself on creating a supportive environment for all faculty, students, parents and staff.

Liz was nominated by the principal of the school as exemplary. He wrote the following about Liz when asked to fill out the Qualities of Exemplary Teaching Data Collection Form (Appendix G):

[Liz] is a sterling example of an educator who actively seeks ideas from colleagues, professional development programs, and personal research. She has confidence in her classroom program and that confidence is strengthened through her constant self-reflection. [Liz] recognizes instructional activities that successfully promote student learning. She shares those successes with her colleagues. She is also able to recognize when things are not working or could be more successful. In those cases, [Liz] seeks ideas and suggestions.
Over her years at [Parker, [Liz’s] classes have presented her with significant challenges--some years more than others. She accepts her students and moves forward--each child of equal importance. [Liz] then works diligently to meet the needs of her students--she does not see this as above and beyond normal duties, she sees it as an integral part of her professional responsibilities.

[Liz] is willing to share with her colleagues, in formal and informal settings, her instructional challenges. She has presented case studies, reviewing things that worked and those activities that were not effective. She will then ‘genuinely’ listen to suggestions.

Because of her strong work ethic, an inclination to reflect and improve, and a commitment to do her best for each student in her class, [Liz] is an effective teacher of all students.

*Liz’s Background*

Liz grew up in a town outside of a major city in the northeast. She went to Regis College for both undergraduate and graduate school. She received her Masters of Arts in Education. At the time of data collection, she was about to enter her twelfth year of teaching, and her seventh year at Parker School. Liz began her teaching at a private, Catholic school in a neighboring city to where Parker is located. She taught first grade, second grade, and then moved into third grade. In order to earn more money, she went to a charter school for 2 years, and then after receiving her Masters, she came to Parker School. In her first 5 years at Parker, she taught second grade. In the previous year to collecting data, she had begun to teach third grade, as this was where she really wanted to be, and there had been an opening there.

When I asked Liz about the community she grew up in, she expressed that it had been an interesting one. She felt that its diversity and the variety of experiences she had as a child had positively influenced in the sense that she learned to value of including
people rather than excluding them. She described one incident in particular that she felt
related to her work with ELL students. She said:

We had... neighbors... that spoke Spanish... and... it was kind of a really
neat experience just because... the dad of the family... play[ed]... the
accordion... and my dad... play[ed] the accordion but play[ed] Irish music, so
it was really funny, like you’d see... on the weekends... just my dad going to,
literally to the fence with the Irish accordion... their dad coming over... and
just... like having a jam session of accordions... literally over the fence. And
... just to see how the music came together... it was wild!... so... so it was
really really funny... And I think just... to show that... that it’s not like
we’re always looking down the path that we’re all different, like focusing on the
differences, that... I like to try to bring together the similarities too... and
even if it’s just an attitude... just to know... that... to find what’s similar... between students... and to be able to bring that together [like my dad and
neighbor did]... to pull the connections together and it’s not just... you know
there’s ELL students... I don’t feel like that’s the case in here... and... hopefully that’s not the case in other classrooms, that’s it the group of ELL kids,
and the group of this type of kids.

She continued:

And growing up... more so I’d hear from my friends at certain public schools
that it... they would describe other kids... as like... you know, if it’s the
Spanish kids or this group of kids, and... I would never want to have that in my
class, that it’s just we’re all students... and certain kids could be speaking
different languages, have different backgrounds and that we’re all together as a
community. (Second interview)

When I asked Liz how many ELL students she has had over the years, she said
that she had had “tons” of them.” She said that she typically had at least two ELL
students a year who have “significant needs” (first interview). Liz had formal training in
working with ELL students. She took a workshop the year before this study through the
State’s Department of Education. She described it as a couple of days workshop where
they “learned strategies to work with ELLs, did a couple of reports, and did a couple of
lessons on strategies that they found useful to work with ELL students.” She said, “I
enjoyed it. It was an intensive program, but it was really valuable” (first interview).
Influences on and Attitudes Towards Working with ELLs

As a result of my analysis of the two interviews with Liz, certain details emerged as to what influenced her ability to effectively teach ELLs and her attitude towards teaching them. There were many similarities to Rose and Kate: her years of teaching experience, knowledge of students’ first language, learning a second language, and traveling abroad. Unlike Rose and Kate, Liz had specific training in working with ELLs that she felt positively affected her attitudes and ability to work with these students.

Years of Teaching Experience

“You can have more of a positive attitude that is based on confidence.” Liz felt that her years of teaching experience had positively influenced her attitudes towards working with her ELL students and had positively affected her understanding of ELL students’ specific academic needs.

With regard to her attitudes, she felt that her years of working with ELL students had helped her gain confidence that she could teach them effectively, and, that her years of experience with ELL students had made her feel a great sense of responsibility for them and their learning. As indicated earlier, Liz was entering her 13th year of teaching and expressed confidence in her ability to teach ELL students due to her number of years teaching.

I think the more that as a teacher, the more strategies you learn the more comfortable you feel. I think also knowing that we have support, I think that can make a teacher that much more comfortable. And times change, sometimes we don’t have support, sometimes we do, and the more support that teachers feel that they have, I think the more comfortable they feel. But I think the more confident I am as I acquire new strategies as a teacher, obviously the more I feel I can work with these children; but at the same time, every child is different so I
think, and coming from different areas and different home lives and I think, so I think, it’s almost an independent case, that obviously if you feel you can help a child and have more background knowledge the more confident you do feel taking care of that child. (First interview)

She continued to touch on the point of confidence in our second interview as well:

I mean . . . with, with any student in your class, you’re going to have issues . . . but . . . what do you do with them? You . . . you take the situation and you run. You know that . . . you’re going to have behavioral issues, you’re going to have to not put ELLs in this boat, but you’re going to have a variety of different students and you take them . . . how they come in and then you move them along in the right direction. So . . . I think to focus on . . . the strengths of the child . . . and . . . to . . . develop those strengths. (pauses) how I developed that? I’m not really sure (laughs). The thing that you need to know is! (laughs). I, I think having knowledge influences . . . you’re attitude. Because . . . if you’re fearful . . . of not doing the right thing, or you’re fearful of . . . just your ability . . . I think that could create a negative attitude. That you’re more . . . worried or afraid . . . that . . . I mean I think that goes right along with . . . years of teaching experience . . . that the more confident you are . . . helps your attitude. (Second interview)

Continuing later in the interview, she said:

Certainly the longer you’ve been teaching, the more experiences you’ve had . . . possibly the more ELL students that you’ve also had. That can give you . . . more knowledge, more background info which can then make you . . . feel more confident teaching ELL students . . . and I think again it can then change some of your attitudes that you’re feeling more comfortable, I think that you can almost . . . you can have more of a positive attitude that is based on confidence . . . So I definitely think . . . the longer you do teach, certainly it can have an impact with your confidence, with experiences with [ELL] students that can help you in the future. (Second interview)

Liz spoke about one child in particular as being her “biggest success story” that helped her feel confident in her ability to teach ELL students. She described:

Just thinking of Maria (pseudonym) from Venezuela. She came in..you could obviously see she was very nervous about what was going on . . . she didn’t know anyone, so I think just off of the bat to make them feel comfortable, and I had some wonderful girls in the class who made her feel comfortable so I think that’s number one, because they’re not going to learn if they don’t feel comfortable in the class, if they don’t feel like they have any friends. They need to make sure that they feel accepted by me, that they know just basic things,
know where to go in the school if they are new to the school, and so to feel comfortable and I feel like I was able to do that with her. I think she did a lot of work at home. I feel like I pulled her over with me as much as I could during our writing assignments. I felt like we developed a really good rapport, um, the kids copy their homework every day, and she would always write notes to me in her homework notebook. She would also say, she would tell me when she missed home and you know, she would even start to cry. She went to the nurse a lot at the beginning of the year, and as the year went on, she would start to write that she didn’t want to leave me, that she really liked her friends. I could see how much progress she made, and I think that’s where keeping a portfolio is wonderful so you can see where they come in at the beginning of the year and where they leave. So, I feel like she was one of my best success stories, being here, she loved the kids, I think she enjoyed having me as a teacher, like she became part of the community and she said “I’ll be back in five years.” So, I’m like look me up . . . She left back to Venezuela, and she said she’d be back in five years, so I said to please look me up. So, I think she was my biggest success story. (First interview)

“It is my responsibility.” In terms of influencing Liz’s attitude in a positive way, she felt that her years of teaching experience had given Liz a true sense of responsibility for her ELL students’ success. In our second interview, she expressed this in the following excerpt:

The way I look at it, it’s just you’re responsible for really the development and the growth of the [ELL] child in the classroom, and then I feel like the ELL teachers support . . . what I’m doing in the classroom . . . But . . . it’s my . . . it is my responsibility and I’m being supported by the ELL teacher, and with that . . . to . . . advocate for the student . . . that . . . if they need more support . . . if you think they . . . need less support, and you want more time with the child in the classroom that I’m advocating for what’s best . . . for the children. (Second interview)

Liz’s years of teaching experience had also affected her ability to help ELL students in academic ways: using her years of training as a primary school teacher to help support beginning ELL students, involving ELL students’ parents, understanding common mistakes ELL students make in terms of grammar, and anticipating difficulties with certain concepts in content areas like social studies and science.
“You really want to go back to that basic level.” Liz indicated that her years of teaching primary school in particular contributed to her ability to effectively teach ELL students. She thought knowing how students begin learning language and building on skills helped her understand what types of activities would be helpful for her ELL students. She mentioned this several times in our interviews. For example, she said:

I feel fortunate that I did teach in the primary grades because I take what I learned from those couple of years teaching first second grades and taking that into teaching third grade, I think was really really valuable too. I think just teaching English, teaching reading to children at the primary level, at the lowest level, learning how to, being able to show students, if it’s phonetic skills, vocabulary, basic writing, just really that’s really where you would start with a child who doesn’t have proficiency in English. That you really want to go back to that basic level and making them feel comfortable in that and not making it as obvious to the rest of the class because especially in second and third grade the children start to become aware of how the other children perceive them. So I think it’s just being able to teach basic skills effectively. (First interview)

During our second interview she reiterated this point in particular to how it may be “easier” for teachers in elementary grades to teach ELL students:

We probably have an easier job of helping [ELL students] just being elementary school teachers because we’re constantly working on . . . teaching phonics . . . and grammar . . . so I think . . . knowing how . . . when we were in school . . . how you actually learn language . . . how that’s directed to our teaching too. And just that, to see the correlation between that . . . to see what I need to be doing . . . with all the children but probably especially . . . ELL students too. Just to . . . to work their way up. (Second interview)

“Get the family involved as much as possible.” Through Liz’s years of teaching experience, she has also learned how valuable it is to make sure that the ELL students’ parents are involved as much as possible in their children’s education. She emphasized the importance of getting the parents involved and ensuring that they understood the expectations of the school and classroom in order to further ensure ELL students’ academic success. She said:
I think it can be difficult when let’s say you have a long term assignment planned and you want the child to be involved with that and if they don’t understand the language and if they don’t understand what you’re asking them . . . a lot of the times we do want parent support for the children and if the parents don’t understand how to support them that is when a lot of the times I’ll have the parents come in . . . I’ll try to explain the assignments, show them examples . . . so . . . um . . . I think that is one of the biggest challenges is making sure that they understand what the assignment is . . . that you get the family involved as much as possible . . . [and if a parent does not understand] either you get other parents to translate . . . that’s one thing I’ve done. I think just to get as much support that you can get in order to teach the assignment or whatever the issue may be. So, but it think it’s our job to go out and research and to find out what can we do to make sure the parents understand. (First interview)

She continued to express how it can be hard sometimes to have ELL students’ families involved as the parents can often feel intimated about coming into school, so Liz makes it her job to ensure that the parents feel welcomed and supported:

I think that sometimes parents of the ELLs can feel almost intimidated so I think you need to make them feel welcome to come in . . . I know I have a little boy coming up, and his second-grade teacher was absolutely wonderful, and I worked with him a little bit over the summer in a math program, so I really hope to meet with his parents just to make him feel comfortable and to make the parents feel comfortable. You know it’s great just hearing him use slang, and work little by little with the English, I know the question is about parents, but just to make them feel to know that I’m there for them if they don’t understand an assignment if they don’t understand homework piece that that’s ok and that I’ll work with them if they’re having difficulties. (First interview)

“The more you can know and hone in on certain skills, the better.” Liz also expressed that her years of teaching experience, from an academic sense, have allowed her to see common language mistakes her ELL students will make in English, particularly because over the years she has had students who speak the same language.

She talked about this in regard to her Japanese-speaking students:

As you grow and learn as a teacher you learn specific needs. For example, I’m thinking of . . . I’ve had some children from Japan, and I’ve always struggled with them using articles, and I have learned that in Japan, in Japanese, from what I’ve heard, that they don’t use articles, so that’s one thing that I have
learned that you really have to teach that skill and to model it and to use it as much as possible. I mean, something simple that I always just said why is this child having such an issue? And then the next year, I’d have another child from Japan, and saying, what’s going on here, and then finally learn they don’t use articles. And ok, that’s great to know. That it’s something . . . that that’s a skill that you can really dive in. So, and again, any child is different, that you may have a child who speaks Japanese who really can do that fine. But, um, so not to use a stereotype, but that’s one thing I feel like the more you can know and hone in on certain skills, the better. (First interview)

“You have to able to get just a lot of background info for [an ELL student].”

Along these same lines, she has learned over her years of teaching that some of the struggles that many of her ELL students will face have to do with content, particularly in social studies and science. She talked about this point in particular when I asked her what some of the biggest challenges were that her ELL students faced. She said:

I would say besides the English obviously content. I am thinking with social studies and science, that a lot of the content matter and vocabulary is difficult for any child, but even to have to explain some of the meaning or some of things that ELLs may not be accustomed to, you know, if we’re talking about the American Revolution, the kids here grew up in you know in [Summit] (pseudonym), they’ve been to Lexington, they’ve been to Concord, and this can be just out there for ELLs. So just to be able . . . you’re bringing in vocab that may just be difficult for them . . . and I’m thinking you’re explaining that to kids who are in the content area . . . you know they understand and have been aware of the Pilgrims and the Wapanaogs, and they have experienced that and they do a big unit on it in second grade. So you have to able to do just a lot of background info for [ELL] kid, which can be a challenge and for them to build on that can be difficult . . . just a lot of the vocabulary. I think being able to start off the writing with the children just to make them feel successful can be a challenge too, but I think it’s important to take them where they come to you and to just keep building. And I think that’s where having a portfolio is really valuable, for me, and for the parents and the child to see this is where you were in September and this is where you are in February, and March and June, so just to show that they are making progress and it makes me feel good and it makes the parents and the kids feel like this is where you’ve grown. (First interview)
Formal ELL Training and Education

Liz talked about the value of her ELL training through the state’s department of education and her years in graduate school as helping her in being effective with her ELL students.

“Ideally it would be great that all teachers should be receiving formal ELL training.” With regard to the workshop training through the state, she said in our first interview that she found it very helpful in terms of her ability to work effectively with ELL students. She described the workshop:

It was a couple day workshop. We spent time learning strategies working with ELLs, we did a couple of reports, a couple of lessons on strategies that we found useful to work with the students. I enjoyed it. It was an intensive program . . . [They taught us about using] word banks, especially if we’re writing. Typically we’ll use word walls that they can refer to. So I remember that was one of the biggest strategies and one thing that I think of the strategies we learned for ELLS also can go hand and hand with children who are lower level with writing and reading skills. That was just the one thing that I walked away with that, that the skills you use with ELLs really can be used with kids who are struggling writers and readers. (First interview)

She discussed the value of the ELL workshop in our second interview as well:

We received a text . . . to be able to refer to . . . and it was a lot of . . . specific . . . techniques. Like even I got the idea for the think, pair, share . . . from that workshop. And . . . it makes complete sense that . . . for children you want them to be able to . . . talk first about what they’re going to write, to be able to get it out, to be able to understand it, to hear your voice. To talk with another student . . . before you have to write it down. (Second interview)

In our second interview, Liz also mentioned other techniques that she learned through her ELL training.

I remember in the DOE (Department of Education) training that the teacher on the video [we watched] was teaching about a certain type of wave. And that the wave was there, and that the pictures were underneath . . . Just you know that was her vocabulary and that’s what she wanted the children to learn. [So that was very helpful to me].

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Finally, with regard to the formal training she received, she said:

Teachers are resourceful, that I think that teachers will go to ... other teachers for advice. And ... seek out information ... on their own too. But, but again ... at the same time ... ideally it would be great that all teachers should be receiving ... formal ELL training. (Second interview)

“I think you need knowledge of different cultures.” As stated earlier, Liz discussed her formal years of education through her Master’s degree as influencing her teaching ELL students. When I asked her what she thought had influenced her success in teaching ELLs, she discussed some of what she learned during her graduate years. She mentioned specifically that some of the materials she had read in certain classes had helped her develop empathy toward her ELL students:

In graduate school I was reading ... a text and I’m not going to remember the name of it, it was a teacher working in Brooklyn ... or definitely in an inner city school where there are a lot of children ... speaking a variety of different languages ... I think something like that ... you know I took ... a ... it was basically a social justice class and just to see ... I think, just even how ... learning about there’s different cultures where ... they don’t celebrate birthdays ... and ... I think the more knowledge ... that you can have ... can help you to have empathy ... with a student, to understand like you know if ... if they’re not participating in birthdays, or birthday celebration and it’s because this maybe isn’t so much for ELL but ... they’re not participating in this ... that they’re going to feel left out and they’re not going to understand why. But yet if the teacher has the background knowledge then maybe birthday celebrations will kind of go by the wayside, or something where, I think you need knowledge of different cultures to then be able to empathize ... with the child. So I think it’s ... kind of ... two different things, blending together, so more knowledge to create empathy. (Second interview)

She continued later in the interview to talk about how reading certain texts and discussing them in her classes had helped her develop empathy towards her ELL students in a positive way:

We read an article, it was just a group of articles, and it was saying ... something about like just ... again not necessarily ELL, but ... how in baseball teams ... or even sports teams, there’s, it’s basically many of the icons are the
... those symbols are... endangered species and... native Americans... that it’s really grouped together... and... so I think... this created empathy just how can we go around, or how could we have this symbol of this native American on a... you know, variety of teams... so I know that’s not necessarily ELL, but just cultural...

So I remember it was just a variety, it was a lot of discussion I think, that... that was happening I think... based on the articles. That we were reading, and just... people were... feeling able to share... their experiences. And I think that was... it... definitely created empathy. Just people really feeling... open... that... if they felt that they were being discriminated against... because of their culture... and I think... I think I’m always looking out for that now, just to make sure that the children... do you feel connected to... to our classroom community? At all times I think that’s important. So whether or not it’s almost a... school... faculty comes together... to work on... just social justice... training or seminar, discussions or... book talks. I think could be really helpful. People, and that, that would take a lot, you know, you’d have to feel comfortable within you’re, you’d have to have the time to do that... and the desire to... from... you know a majority of a faculty to be able to do that. (Second interview)

**Time Spent Traveling Abroad**

“It must be really frightening for those children.” Another influence on Liz’s attitude towards teaching ELL students that came out through analyzing our dialogue is that her years spent traveling abroad had positively affected her understanding of what her ELL students might go through in coming into an English-speaking classroom for the first time. She noted how she thought it might be “scary” for her new students; and, in that regard, she felt that traveling abroad had helped develop her empathy towards the difficult experiences her ELL students might have. In our first interview, Liz said:

I went to Germany a couple of years ago... really not knowing much German, it was very difficult, so I think if I was a child coming in just starting to learn English, I think that would be really scary. So I think, in my opinion, I think someone learning English you’d want them in a setting where they could learn English in a comfortable smaller setting before you’re throwing content at them never mind conversational skills. It must be really frightening for those children. So, not having background info and research and whatnot, personally I feel that it sounds easier for a child to learn and language and throw in some content as you go along but I think that at least a smaller setting within a school to be able to feel comfortable to learn the language... You know [from traveling abroad] I can understand how challenging that would be to walk in especially if you are just learning English, that can be frightening for a child. (First interview)
She also said:

I was thinking if I was thrown into a German school when I was over there, I just think I’d be floored. That you just feel that you have to learn German but starting to learn all of the content as well. I think that’s very very challenging. (First interview)

The effects of Liz’s travels abroad came up again in our second interview when I asked her again what she thought had influenced her ability to work with ELL students, particularly the empathy I had noted throughout my time observing her and during our recall sessions. She responded:

I think the traveling abroad I think could almost be connected somewhere with the empathy. You know, almost a line drawn, just to draw that. Because I think that’s the biggest thing that I learned from traveling abroad is just . . . to feel how . . . how scary it can be . . . and . . . the difficulties that can arise, and just . . . the loneliness . . . I think . . . those are directly connected. (Second interview)

*Learning a Second Language and Valuing ELL Students’ First Language*

“I can almost see where he’s coming from.” Liz discussed how learning a second language, Spanish, in high school and then continuing in college had helped her with her Spanish-speaking ELL students, particularly in the area of knowing the kinds of mistakes the Spanish-speaking students might make and being able to quickly help them with those. She explained:

It’s interesting because I did take Spanish in school . . . that . . . you know sometimes I can correct . . . [Luis’s] (pseudonym) errors that much easier too. I can almost see where he’s coming from. So . . . or . . . just even, or sometimes like I can tell he’s trying to write a word, or I’m able to figure out . . . what he’s trying to write quicker than [Atsuko] (pseudonym). And also it might be different just because [Luis] . . . has been in the U.S. longer than [Atsuko] too. So . . . this is . . . [Atsuko’s] just been here for a year and a half. So certainly . . . it could be a difference with that too. But I think I feel . . . more comfortable . . . trying to figure out . . . [Luis’s] grammatical errors. They’re sometimes easier just because I know some Spanish. Where with [Atsuko] . . . some, if he is writing a note, or if he is drawing something or when he’s trying to explain something, I struggle a little bit more. And again it could just be because he
hasn’t been in the U.S. . . . as long. I don’t know . . . With [Luis] I’m thinking more just suffixes. More so with [Luis] . . . that . . . that’s just something that I’m able to . . . to focus more on. (Second interview)

“I think that’s very important.” Along the same lines, Liz expressed valuing ELL students’ first language. In our first interview, she said: “I think it’s wonderful for the children to keep up their native language. I think that’s very important. To feel comfortable learning English at the same time.”

During our second interview, I told Liz that I had found that the bilingual context explicitly showed the value of students’ L1 by people in positions of power using ELL students’ first language. Liz then talked again about the value of the school being a place where the students’ native language(s) was spoken. She saw the importance of having her students be able to use their first language in the monolingual setting, but how much more she could see her students adjusting if their first language were spoken all the time. She said:

I’m sure [Atsuko] is thinking in Japanese . . . and having to put it away to say and to write in English is a challenge. Where . . . if everyone was speaking Japanese here . . . that . . . it would be easier for him I think he might feel more comfortable. So . . . just it may, so he may feel . . . that it’s his language is . . . more encompassing his daily life. So . . . and it’s tough to say what would, we could almost do about that. I’m not even sure . . . (Second interview)

In our second interview, she went into more specifics about the importance of ELL students’ using their first language. However, from these quotes we will also see that Liz does not talk about students’ using their L1 for actual school assignments nor does she seem to think it is ok to use the language for simply social purposes:

In my class, I have [Tamiko] (pseudonym) and [Atsuko] who both speak Japanese . . . and . . . they . . . at times have used Japanese . . . and . . . the way . . . that I feel about it if . . . it’s . . . during class time . . . or during working time . . . if it’s something that they’re helping each other out, probably this would go
for anyone, but as long as they’re speaking and talking . . . about . . . the . . . current topic . . . then I’m completely fine with [them using their first language]. And . . . if they start talking about something else, but it would go for any of the other kids, that they’re just talking about what they’re doing after school, I would redirect them . . . and . . . sometimes . . . you know, you know that, if they’re not talking about, like any other child . . . that if they’re giggling and laughing, if it’s . . . not, if they’re doing something, if it’s the solar system project and it didn’t call for laughing and giggling, I can sort of see what’s going on. So . . . I, that’s pretty much my philosophy, but if they’re on task, if they need to help each other . . . and explain to each other what’s going on . . . I . . . personally have no problem with that.

So I definitely want [the ELL students] to use [their first language] and they’ve done it from time to time. And sometimes it’s been good, like if I’m speaking to [Atsuko] and he’s trying to . . . explain something to me or trying to clarify something or get an answer from me and I can’t help him, I’ve had [Tamiko] help, or vice versa, they’ll assist each other too. (Second interview)

**Effects of a Monolingual Context**

In discussing the context in which Liz teaches, four salient themes emerged from my analysis in terms of how having a monolingual context affected ELL students and Liz as a teacher. The first was the issue of ELL instructional support at her school. The second was how lack of knowledge of ELL students’ L1 caused difficulty in determining the nature of behavioral and learning issues; third was standardized testing concerns; and the final issue was there not being any use of students’ first language for instruction.

*ELL instructional support at her school.* “That can be somewhat frustrating for a teacher.” When talking with Liz in both of our interviews, her frustration at the ELL instructional support at the school came out several times. In our first interview, when I asked her about the additional teaching support she had or did not have at her school for ELL students, she replied:

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We do have two ELL teachers currently here at [Parker] that work with children. One worked more with language arts and one worked with children or with one student with the math . . . in the beginning of the year. We did not have this last year and it took months to get a program in place. And obviously that can be somewhat frustrating for a teacher, especially I had a child coming in with very limited English and it can be frustrating for a teacher because the more support you can get the better because even with 18 students, other children have needs and you need to be able to reach those children as well. So I feel it’s very very important to make sure those [ELL] kids are getting the support they need. So typically it’s ELL teachers that have pulled children to work either one on one or in a small group. So I have found that to be the best support for those kids. Obviously I work with the [ELL students] within the classroom but the more independent support they can receive, I feel that is the best for them.

She continued to express some frustration at the lack of ELL support at the school:

To be honest with you, I have heard that there are various programs where the kids can be taken out more on their level that they need support. I think that’s the goal that they have tried to do at [Parker], you know, not to have just a wide range of needs. So I know that’s the goal, but I’ve heard about just various classrooms where there is more intensive working with the content area. I know that’s a goal with the ELL teachers for working on colonial times to be able to work on that with [the ELL students]. It would be great if we could have an ELL teacher come into the classroom during writing time to watch my lesson then to be able to work with the children. I mean that would be a dream to have that too.

So, I think the more support that they can get, especially more communication with the ELL teachers, you know, it’s a busy hectic schedule, that we are kind of on the fly sometimes, you know, this is what we are working on, this is what we are doing, here’s an assignment, can you work on this with the children. So I think the more they could be able to be in the classroom to see what is going on, I think that would be ideal too. (First interview)

The issue of ELL instructional support, or the lack thereof, came up again during our second interview when we were discussing how effective she had found her ELL support that current school year and if there would be anything she would change.

She again expressed some frustration with the ELL support in that now the ELL teachers had a particular curriculum that they followed, which, though she felt was important and needed for the ELL students, it also did not link at all with what they
were doing in the classroom. She felt this was detrimental for the ELL students. She said:

It’s been interesting. It has been a little bit more of a challenge this year because in the past . . . I would explain to [Mrs. Daniels] (pseudonym) or whoever the other ELL teacher was what we’re doing in class, and then that person would take the work down, and work on it in small groups. Or work on it one on one. But this year there’s a specific ELL curriculum that is being taught. And . . . from time to time . . . there is . . . time for . . . me to send down what we’re doing. So it’s a little bit more of a challenge this year.

So, and then . . . you know I feel like . . . I’m then playing catch up with [Atsuko] specifically. You know, he’ll come back up, so what are you guys doing? So . . . having the time . . . to explain . . . what we’re doing in class so that he feels connected to what we’re doing. And then obviously I want him . . . to be doing what we’re doing in class. So . . . he’s working hard. You know, doing . . . basically almost two . . . curricula.

It’s interesting, one of the goals of our school . . . is to have more communication . . . to have more communication between . . . the ELL teachers and the regular classroom teachers. So it’s not just kind of in the hallway or . . . you know by the photocopy machine, this is what we’re doing. You know [Mrs. Daniels] comes in ok, a lot of the times, it’s ok we’re just about to work on this, can you bring this down. And work on it with him . . . I think in the ideal world . . . would be that . . . if the ELL teachers were . . . able, and it’s tough, it’s like they have their certain skills that the children need to know . . . but within that . . . are almost teaching them in thematic units, to be able to . . . address the curriculum needs as well, so I think that would be . . . the best way to do it. But it’s a challenge. So . . . there needs to be more communication. (Second interview)

Learning and Behavioral Issues

“To find out where things are stemming from can be challenging.” Liz expressed in our interviews some of the issues she had faced at her school in terms of not knowing the students’ first language nor having someone readily available to help her with translation when necessary. She talked mostly about how not knowing an ELL student’s first language put her and the ELL child at a disadvantage in terms of not always being able to effectively identify whether an ELL student was struggling due to
not understanding the English language or whether the ELL student had some kind of learning disability. She also mentioned issues of behavior as well—whether an ELL student was naturally acting out due to not understanding English or if there were a deeper emotional issue that she needed to be aware of.

She discussed the behavioral issue with regard to [Atsuko]. He was acting out a great deal at the beginning of the year, and she was not exactly sure why nor what to do as she did not understand Japanese. She did find a teacher at the school who spoke Japanese, so that when she met with [Atsuko’s] mother, she was able to understand what Liz was saying and so that Liz could also understand his mother. She said:

I’m even thinking that . . . just back to earlier in the year . . . [Atsuko] . . . was just having some like attitude issues. And I really wasn’t sure if it was just kind of like ok . . . it was . . . the language piece . . . part of this . . . is that what was causing it, or . . . Obviously it was the beginning of the year so I’m still trying to get a grip on how all the kids’ personalities are . . . you know, is he just someone that . . . wasn’t . . . didn’t want to plug away and didn’t want to work hard? Or was he feeling overwhelmed . . . with the work . . . and . . . this was his way . . . of showing that? So . . . I think . . . so it made it more of a challenge [not knowing his first language]. I had to do a little more digging . . .

I met with his parents, and . . . had . . . someone who speaks Japanese here at the school meet with us to . . . just to make sure that there . . . that what my . . . thoughts were getting across to the mom, and that . . . vice versa. So, I think that [not knowing an ELL student’s first language] can be a challenge. (Second interview)

Liz also, as mentioned above, stressed the issue of how not knowing an ELL student’s first language made it very difficult for her to determine whether an ELL student had a learning disability, especially when her students spoke so many different languages and interpreters were needed. She talked about these issues in relation to some struggles that [Tamiko], one of her ELL students, had had that year. She said:
And . . . you know certainly understanding learning issues, like [Tamiko] started to have some . . . reading comprehension . . . issues. So . . . it was tough to see, is this . . . a reading . . . issue, an ELL issue, a mix? So just to find out . . . where things are stemming from can be challenging. And, I think . . . just . . . making sure . . . you know if you need to get an interpreter to understand what is going on with [an ELL student] you have to do that. Which, definitely, different teachers have had to do that. But you know, we obviously have [ELL students] who speak a variety of languages so sometimes getting an interpreter to a meeting . . . can be a challenge. So that’s hard. (Second interview).

**Issues With Standardized Testing**

“That’s something that is a challenge, but it is a reality.” A significant difference between the bilingual context and the monolingual contexts stems from standardized testing. Whereas the testing in the bilingual context is not high-stakes, the testing in the monolingual contexts is high-stakes; and this issue came up several times during my interviews with Liz.

When I asked Liz in our first interview about what she thought teachers needed to know to teach ELL students successfully, she indicated that a teacher should know as much background information about a student as possible so that ELL students could receive the support services they needed when it came to standardized testing. She also talked about the pressure standardized testing placed on the teachers and students since the ELL students were required to take the math portion of the tests even if they had just arrived to the school without speaking any English.

With regard to background information, she said:

I think from a school wide perspective, to know what services are in place. I think to know even what’s expected for standardized testing--I think that’s important to know. I think laws change too, to know the most updated mandates. So I would say know the background info from the student, family, what skills they have, where to be able to take the child. So I would say that from a student point of view, and what support you have from the school, and to know state mandates. So, it’s kind of a broad range.
She continued later to talk about the pressure placed on teachers and students when she spoke about having just received their state-mandated testing scores:

We just received our [state-mandated standardized testing] scores yesterday, so that’s one thing that is on the radar, especially in third grade. It is their first experience with the [testing], and not that we try to, not that it just encompasses our day, but it is something that we do think about. I know for [my new ELL student last year] she didn’t have to take the ELA, the English Language Arts, but she did have to take the math, even though she had just come in September or August. So I think that’s something that is a challenge, but it is a reality, um, so it’s something that we are thinking about, and not that is the end all be all, but it’s something that our town is concerned about. (First interview)

No Use of Students’ First Language for Instruction

“I never thought about it.” Of note, neither during the interviews, nor during any of the observations or recall sessions, did the idea of using ELL students’ first language for instructional purposes come up in our discussions. Liz did mention that her knowledge of some of her students’ first languages could help her in her instruction, but having students use their first language as a way into instruction, such as letting them compose a writing assignment in their first language to begin with, was not apparent.

When I asked her about this in our second interview, whether or not she ever let ELL students, particularly brand new ELL students, write assignments in their native languages, she replied:

I never thought about it . . . I think it’s probably more useful at the younger grades . . . where [Atsuko] . . . at this point seems to . . . be doing . . . fairly well with . . . getting it down in English. But I’ve seen in the homework, especially from time to time . . . it’s done in Japanese and then underneath in English, and I think that’s great. It hasn’t happened in my class, but I wouldn’t have a problem with it. If [an ELL] wanted to do that. Because certainly I think that’s what I would do, if I had to write a story, write a sentence if you’re just starting to learn it that’s how I would work. I wouldn’t be opposed to . . . certainly that would be a great strategy if they wanted to do that. (Second interview)
But again, here we see that though Liz thinks it could be a good idea to allow the ELLs to do use their L1 for academic purposes, she had not thought to use this kind of strategy in the past. Issues such as this one occur with Jane in the other monolingual setting as well, which will be discussed in the next section.

The Washington School

The Washington School is, as indicated earlier, in the same district as The Parker School. Of note, however, the Washington School is the only school in the district with students on a free and reduced priced lunch program. Whereas the district’s percentage of low-income students stands at 9.7%, Washington’s percentage is over 30%, which is just over 2% higher than the state’s average.

The Washington school is very diverse, with various races, ethnicities, and languages represented. The school currently enrolls 321 students, 26.8% of whom list their first language as not English, versus a district total of 10.8%, and a state total of 15.1%. The percentage of students considered to be LEP is 12.1%. This is compared to 3.8% in the district and 5.8% in the state. The district profile lists the following in terms of enrollments by ethnicity: 65.4% White, 19.6% Asian, 8.1% Hispanic or Latino, 3.7% African American or Black, 2.8% multi-race, 0.3% Pacific Islander or Native Hawaiian. Of the 23 teachers at the school, 100% are licensed and 100% are considered “highly qualified” (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2008).

The school is located on the East side of the district, where there is low-income housing available. There are also a variety of working-class and middle-class homes. The school itself sits on a large piece of land with two playgrounds and a large field. As
soon as you walk into the school, the first sign you see is displayed in Figure 5.1. The message is clear:

*Figure 5.1. Parents as Partners*
Jane

Jane was nominated by her school principal, and then this nomination was further supported by one of the ELL teachers at the school. The principal wrote the following on the Qualities of Exemplary Teaching Data Collection Form (Appendix G) about Jane in response to why he nominated her as an exemplary teacher of English Language Learners:

[Jane] works from a strong literacy base for all children. She collaborates with grade level colleagues and support staff (including ELL). She sees literacy and numeracy for all of her children as her responsibility. Student performance data is regularly used to influence [her] teaching. She respects students and their families. She sees herself as a continuous learner, and collaborates regularly.

One of the ELL teachers at the school, who heard about the study and wanted to also provide information as to why she thought Jane was exemplary at working with ELL students, wrote the following about Jane and her teaching on the Qualities of Exemplary Teaching Data Collection Form (Appendix G):

[Jane] understands that all English learners are not alike. That they come from many different backgrounds and have many different school experiences. She knows that different pathways are needed for academic success.

[Jane’s] classroom is an exemplary model for sheltered instruction. It is filled with visuals and interactive activities that build background and provide comprehensible input. For example, she uses supplementary materials, visuals, realia, and adapted texts to extend her teaching to include all learners. She also actively demonstrates these activities.

The strategies [Jane] uses in her classroom are multisensory. They incorporate modalities of listening, speaking, reading and writing to balance language acquisition while also being hands on.

Most importantly, [Jane’s] classroom activities are meaningful. They not only align with the [state] frameworks, but they make sense to the non-native speakers.
As with the other teachers in the study, below I will discuss Jane’s background, the influences on and attitudes towards teaching ELL students, and then provide details about the influences of the monolingual context on Jane’s teaching and the ELL students themselves.

Jane’s Background

Jane is in her early 30s and grew up in a small city right outside of a major United States city. She was born there and remained there through her college years. The city is located about 10 miles from the Washington School where she now works. She had been teaching at the Washington School for 6 years, the seventh of which began during this study. Teaching first grade was her first assignment at the Washington School, and she has been teaching first grade there ever since.

Jane spoke in depth about her childhood experiences growing up in a diverse community. She felt that this had heavily influenced not only her ability to teach and work with ELL students, but also her desire to do so. These points came up in our first interview when I asked Jane about her feelings towards teaching ELL students and whether or not these feelings had changed over the years. She replied:

I don’t know if my feelings have changed. I think probably my approach has changed because I think the more accustomed you are to having children from all different backgrounds in your classroom I think you become, you develop your own approach and you become more comfortable with what you do and how you can do it.

But I think all along . . . I lived in a very diverse community growing up, and we had a lot of ELL children in our community. So I don’t think that I ever, I think I would feel . . . more . . . I think I would have kind of bad feelings if I were at a school where no one spoke different languages because I think that’s less of what I’m used to. So I think I feel like I’ve always wanted that and been used to that, and that’s what I’m accustomed to, and I think that’s what makes a classroom what it is. Like the people just bring what they have, and it makes it a
more interesting place. So I think I’ve always kind of felt that way, but I think just more my approach has changed as opposed to my feelings.

[When I was little], my classroom was very diverse, when I was young. All the way through my grades. I went to private school for high school, but Kindergarten through eighth grade it was really really diverse. I mean when you see this classroom, you’ll or I haven’t seen this class this year, but you’ll note that this school is very very diverse, and where I went to school really is similar to this school. So, I feel very comfortable [here]. (First interview)

She spoke about her childhood community again during our second interview when we were discussing her background experience and how she thought it may impact her working with ELL students. She again felt that growing up in a diverse community had positively influenced her attitude towards diversity:

Growing up in my community was really positive for me, and I think because I’ve had those influences growing up I was more interested in going and seeing other parts of the world. But I feel like if you didn’t have any of those [experiences growing up in a diverse community or traveling] you’d be really isolated from what other people experience and what other people are doing. If you live in a community that’s just, it’s the same people and they’ve lived there for generations and people don’t really move out I think you do get isolated. And if someone moves in that’s different, I think that people look at it and say, oh this person is different, I don’t think that . . . it’s like, oh they’re having a difficult time because they’re ELL, they’re trying to learn, they’re doing these things, people just don’t understand or they say like why can’t, why doesn’t that family speak English, and people say why don’t they speak English. But I think it’s almost like well why do they speak with an accent, as opposed to . . . I think that people can be that jaded cause they think that with an accent isn’t actually English. You know? (Second interview)

Along these lines, she said towards the end of our second interview, “I remember you know just even when I was a kid just being fascinated with other people speaking a language that I just didn’t understand.”

Jane seemed to be a person who valued her experiences growing up in a diverse community including valuing people who spoke various languages. This, it seemed, had affected her desire to work in a diverse community as a teacher.
With regard to Jane’s experience in working with ELL students, she has had on average about 6-7 ELL students per year. She said she has had anywhere from 11 of 20 (which happened the past year before we began this study) to 4 the year before that.

In terms of her training in working with ELL students, she said that when she was in graduate school, she had “one class on ELL, but that was it” (first interview). Jane had taken the same training on working with ELL students through the state that Liz had taken. Though more of the details of what she learned there will be discussed when I talk about influences on her ability to work with ELL students, I did want to mention this in her background experience as it is relevant to how her teaching has developed. She said:

In terms of what they showed us, I think they, a lot of it was like understanding how ELL children learn, how when children are acquiring a second language, things come in almost like different waves, you know, like they develop that conversational language, and then they develop um, some academic language and written language and things just come as they go. I think that . . . one thing we learned is you know that children start to acclimate at like their own kind of pace, so when a child comes in who is ELL that maybe doesn’t speak any English, that maybe they start out with just knowing a few words like hello and goodbye . . . I’ve learned from that course and through our ELL teacher here that if it’s a child who is pretty new to the language, you have to focus on one thing at a time and not everything because you can’t say your sentence structure is off and your vocabulary is off and this and this and this because it’s just completely discouraging and they can’t pick up everything all at one time. So maybe focusing on just getting out the words that mean the right thing for their picture to match and then once they’ve kind of accomplished that goal, which I think that would be kind of second step after kind of just copying is getting words that go with it and then the next step might be trying to put those words in order and then the next step might be adding details. So I just think it’s making sure that things are step by step and you’re not just overwhelming an ELL child. Because you can’t go to a new country and have a new language and be expected to have it in five days and be able to do it. It has to be structured. (First interview)
Influences on and Attitude Towards Teaching ELL Students

Four major themes came through in analyzing my conversations with Jane in terms of what has affected her success in working with ELL students. These were: learning a second language, traveling abroad, formal training in ELL teaching techniques, and her years of experience working with ELL students.

Learning a Second Language and Traveling Abroad

“I think it is a great experience.” During our second interview, Jane discussed what learning a second language was like for her when I asked about the potential importance of anything in her background experience that affected her ability to work with ELL students. She said that experiencing first-hand the difficulty of trying to learn a second language enabled her to understand some of what her ELL students went through in her class. She said:

I think learning, I did study Spanish you know for many years, and . . . I think it is a great experience, I think that you realize how difficult it is to . . . I certainly, I took Spanish for six years and I’m certainly not fluent. So, I realize that six years of Spanish, I mean I wasn’t immersed the way ELL children are, so I know that that’s a little bit of a different situation but it shows you really how difficult it is to learn a second language. And . . . with . . . even 6 years of studying it, if I were thrown into an all Spanish speaking country, I know that . . . I mean I could probably get by, but I’d have to ask everyone to speak to me slowly and I’d have to ask lots of questions. So I think it really gives you the sense of . . . what it would be like [for my ELL students]. I mean I would love to be fluent, but . . . (laughs). But I’m not! (Second interview)

“I was afraid.” Jane also discussed her experiences traveling abroad as affecting her success in working with ELL students. When she was in a country where she did not understand the language, she was actually afraid, and she could speculate as to how her ELL students may feel that same sense of fear:
I think that traveling abroad is a really good experience for anyone who is teaching because I think it brings a lot of background about what you’re going to be doing and working with children. I think it’s good for working with ELLs because I think you get that sense . . . you also get that sense when you’re traveling abroad, especially if you go to non English speaking countries of what it is like [for ELL students] . . . I was afraid . . . So I think it kind of gives you that . . . It kind of internally you can feel like almost the same trepidation that an ELL student feels coming into a new situation. (Second interview)

Interestingly, Jane felt that if a teacher did not grow up in a diverse community, then it would be even more important to for the teacher to experience learning another language or traveling abroad somewhere where English was not the first language. She said:

I almost feel like . . . you could have, I feel like . . . if you had a diverse community growing up, I think you already have a good understanding and you wouldn’t necessarily need the traveling abroad or the learning another language. But I feel like if you didn’t have any diversity or know, you know people of different languages or cultures growing up, then traveling abroad and learning another language almost might be a necessity. I think that . . . I feel like it’s good that I’ve had all of [those experiences], and I feel that’s really positive for me and I think because I’ve had those influences growing up I was more interested in going and seeing other parts of the world. But I feel like if you didn’t have any of those you’d be really isolated from what other people experience and what other people are doing. (Second interview)

Formal ELL Training

“To feel what those children are feeling.” In discussing what helped Jane become effective in working with ELL students, she mentioned the formal training she had had. This included a workshop at her school, in addition to training done through the state. With regard to the workshop, she talked specifically about how the trainer taught a lesson in another language (not English) and how it gave her a sense of what it would feel like as an ELL student in an all-English-speaking classroom:

“I think one thing that can influence people, I’ve seen it done different ways, is the type of workshop like we’ve had here [at Washington], and I know my
mom’s a teacher and she’s had it at her school, where someone comes in and teaches a lesson to them in a completely different language; and then people really get to see, what it’s like to not understand and only to catch on to parts and then the person calls on you and you’re not sure what to say and you’re kind of, I mean granted in that situation everyone is kind of in the same situation but I think it does give you a feel for what it would, what it feels like [for ELL students]. So I think that that’s one way to . . . to really . . . look at it and give people an idea of how to . . . how to . . . feel what . . . [the ELL] children are feeling when they’re in your classroom. (Second interview)

Jane also talked about the training she had received through the state as positively influencing her ability to work with ELL students. She discussed this several times throughout our interviews. In our first interview, she described the training in terms of specific techniques she was taught, such as preteaching concepts and vocabulary to the ELL students:

It was an intensive four day ELL class where we learned that a lot of the techniques we use for teaching the children that have other needs maybe special needs or other needs in the classroom, like attention, work with ELL kids as well as all the children. So, like giving children some of the questions before hand, giving a little preteaching to children that might need it, or showing them some things ahead of time or using buddy systems and different things like that that work with lots of different needs really help with ELL children’s needs too. (First interview)

During our second interview, I asked Jane about the training again--to add any details that she may have not said before, if she wanted to do so. She did have quite a few things to say about the training and its importance for her and for other teachers generally. When I asked her what was most valuable to her in the training, she talked about how it helped her to pay specific attention to what the ELL students would need when she was planning her lessons. She replied:

I think it made us understand that we’re like doing these things to help the ELL children and that . . . this is a way that you can do it, these are steps you can take to do it better. If this doesn’t work you could do this instead. I think it gave, it took what we were already doing and kind of . . . consolidated it, but then
expanded on what we were . . . thinking, like gave us different ideas. Added some things to it. So I think it really was . . . really a positive experience. We had to do some outside work and do some different things, and I think doing that part of it too really made me think about how am I going to give this in this specific lesson, like teaching something backwards, like giving children the questions before hand and then giving them the reading and then talking about the questions after. I think . . . knowing that you’re going to do that with a specific lesson helps you to branch out and say well I can do that before we do reading group. Or I can do that before we start a lesson in science and that might help those children. So I think having that training and then making up a unit that goes with it can help to expand it to everything. (Second interview)

When I asked her about anything else she could specifically say the training helped her with, and/or ideas the training gave her, she talked about learning how important it was to use “visual cues,” “modeling,” and having a “buddy” for ELL students:

I think one thing was visual cues, lots of visual cues modeling with, not just with me, but with other children. Having other children model. Really having a buddy to work with and not just necessarily for the school work because I think that . . . children tend to, will tend to help each other do things for school work, but for social times. Saying to you know a child like oh will you be . . . so and so’s buddy today because . . . they’re not sure who they want to play with at recess so I think those ideas. And I think for the first graders, I think almost . . . the learning part is . . . not as challenging as the social part at recess because . . . I think a lot of children in first grade might struggle with language for whatever reason and not necessarily an ELL reason but then when they get outside they know the games they know how to play, so I think when the ELL children go outside, they are a little more tentative, so I think that the buddy piece for social works well. (Second interview)

Later in the same interview, she expressed how important she thought this kind of training would be for new teachers:

I think for new teachers I think that’s really good. I do think experienced teachers they do have the experience to rely on and that can kind of build for them and they have developed a set of you know a bag of tricks, if you will, for what they’re doing but I think for new teachers to have a specific training in working with ELL students would help them know how . . . to deal with issues that are specific to ELL children as opposed to children with special needs. (Second interview)
Years of Teaching Experience

As stated earlier, Jane has had seven years of teaching experience thus far, all in the first grade. She felt that her experience has greatly affected her ability to teach ELL students successfully in a variety of ways. In examining her comments, there were five ways in which her teaching experience appeared to have affected her success in teaching ELL students. The first I will call her “broadening repertoire,” the second is a sense of advocacy and responsibility for her ELL students, third is a knowledge of how ELL students will adjust to their new environment in terms of behavior and what to do to help them adjust, fourth is understanding the kinds of academic difficulties her ELL students will normally face including what I will call “language awareness” or the knowledge of specific areas of language that will be difficult, and the fifth is a greater cultural awareness.

“You’re challenged every day to come up with new ideas and new ways to do things.” The first area with regard to Jane’s years of teaching experience is the way in which these years and experiences with ELL students have broadened her repertoire of teaching tools and her ability to take risks in her teaching. In our first interview when I asked her whether or not her feelings had changed over the years about working with ELL students, she replied:

I don’t know if my feelings have changed. I think probably my approach has changed because I think the more accustomed you are to having children from all different backgrounds in your classroom I think you become, you develop your own approach and you become more comfortable with what you do and how you can do it.

She continued along these lines when I asked her later how things had changed for her in working with ELL students since she began teaching. She said:
I think that for me in the beginning knowing how to show ELL children things and to explain it in a way that would be understandable to ELL children and kind of understanding the difference between explaining it to children who are not ELL and explaining it to children who are. Because I think it’s almost hard to differentiate at the beginning; and then you begin to understand more that you can’t just keep saying it the same way and expect that they’re going to get, understand what you’re saying, you have to think of a different way, more creative, and using the different venues to get it across instead of just saying it. You need to think about what else can you do and how else can you explain it to [ELL students]. And that sometimes for standard ed children you know you can do those same things and they’re going to get it just because you repeated it and now it’s gotten into their memory; but for ELL kids it’s maybe that they’re not, they don’t even have the vocabulary to understand how you’re explaining it. So, how can you get it across in a different way [is important]. (First interview)

Jane also used the phrase “pushing the envelope” when talking about how her years of experience had broadened her repertoire:

I think one thing is just experience with having a lot of ELL children in your classroom because I think that you know no matter what children you have in your classroom, you’re challenged every day to come up with new ideas and new ways to do things, and I think with ELL children that just pushes that challenge, the envelope a little bit further because not only are you trying to make it fun and enjoyable for children who already are going to understand it no matter how you tell them, but you really have to make sure everyone really knows what you’re talking about. (First interview)

When I asked Jane some more questions about her background and years of teaching experience in our second interview, she talked again about how important she felt her years of teaching were to her ability to work with ELL students effectively as she had learned a variety of ways in which to work with them:

I think that . . . as time goes on . . . you can . . . broaden . . . things. And . . . just add more to your repertoire of what you can do. So I think that the years allow you to . . . add more tools to your teaching trade. To do all of these different things. And I also think the years of teaching allow you as a teacher to take risks that you might not have taken your first year because everything is new to you and you’re trying to learn everything yourself, but I think when you have new ELL children you think well I can after three or four years of teaching you think well I can pair them with this other person . . . and this other child can work with them for the day, and it’s not, and it’s going to help both of them, it’s not going
to hinder the other child or do different things. So I think it just broadens your horizons when you have more years. (Second interview)

“Everyone is your responsibility.” Jane expressed that through the years, she had learned to understand that her ELL students were her responsibility, not just the ELL teacher’s, and not anyone else’s. She talked about how she needed to be the one to ensure that the ELL students were successful in her classroom. She did not mean that supports were not in place for the students, nor that she wouldn’t look for help for them, but she felt strongly about the fact that she needed to ensure her ELL students’ success. During our first interview, she said:

I think it’s like everyone is in your class, everyone is your responsibility to get to these expectations and what you have to do to get them there whether it’s taking pictures of things on the playground and saying what the names are, whether it’s really pushing for more ELL services, you know, whatever that case is. These [ELL students] are your children for the year, and you’re responsible for that. So I think that’s part of what the success is too, is like the expectations that are placed on the teacher not just on the kids. (First interview)

Jane was particularly adamant about the fact that over the years, she had realized that the IEP (Individualized Education Program) process was particularly complicated for the ELL students. She felt that she needed to do a better job at advocating for ELL parents to have translators, if necessary, so that it was very clear to them what their and their children’s rights were. Jane felt that sometimes ELL parents did not fully understand what was being said about their children at IEP meetings. In our first interview she talked about her frustration with the IEP process:

I’m thinking about one of my ELL children went on an IEP this year, and when [the special ed team] was explaining the IEP, like some of the tests, I almost felt like we needed more to explain the results. Like when they were talking about the IQ test and they said what the child scored . . . I felt like, but I don’t think these parents understand what the score is out of. Like we might know because we’ve heard of IQ scores a million times, and we know it’s not out of a hundred,
but I felt like these parents really didn’t understand like those logistics. I almost feel like for things like that, that there needs to almost be like a cheat sheet for ELL parents in their language to understand. If they’re going to a meeting that really concerns their child’s education, and the steps to take to help their child understand better and to learn better, that I feel like sometimes we send people in almost blind and you know we give them all this information and not like they wouldn’t sign an IEP or sign the letter anyway, but I feel like they go in and it’s almost like here’s all this information and now we want you to sign this form.

It’s almost like [ELL parents] sign under duress almost because they don’t understand it and they think like that this is what’s best, but I really feel like it probably is what’s best because the people who know what the tests mean are judging them, but ELL parents really need a sheet to understand what things mean . . . At least just so they know what they’re getting into, what they’re heading for before they even go to a meeting.

“It must be really frustrating.” The third area that has developed for Jane through her years of teaching is knowledge of ELL students’ general behavior in the classroom. She knows what to typically expect from her ELL students and has learned various techniques to help them feel more comfortable in the classroom. In our second interview she said:

I think that experience of seeing how ELL children can develop and seeing how the standard ed children in your class develop . . . and how . . . we know, it really can run parallel and they can help each other as opposed to hinder each other. It really does come with experience.

Later in the same interview, Jane talked about the kinds of behaviors ELL students can typically exhibit. She mentioned how ELL students will usually copy what the other students are doing when they first arrive, and that this was a way for the ELL students to adjust to their new environment:

When children come in and they don’t really speak English, I think one of the first things I’ve noticed is that they tend to copy like they’ll, even like to the point that they’ll just copy what someone else wrote on their paper. But that’s really using . . . other children to start to learn and to internalize what the culture is, what the environment is, how to work in that environment . . . and in the
beginning maybe they’re doing that and a month later maybe they’re putting some of their own things, but maybe by the end of the year, they’re doing it all on their own.

Jane has also noticed a lot of the social behavior that her ELL students exhibit when they first arrive from their home country, and she elaborated upon this point when I asked her what some of the biggest challenges were that her ELL students faced (aside from learning the language). She talked specifically about how recess time can be difficult for ELL students who are girls since the girls tend to socialize whereas the boys will play. She said:

I think some of the bigger challenges are . . . just friendships and making sure that children have people to be with. And, I think in first grade it’s a little easier probably than in other grades, because first graders are generally accepting. But I find, I found that for girls sometimes it can be a little bit harder, ELL girls than for the ELL boys because girls are definitely more talkative whereas boys are more play oriented at recess and different times of the day. So when they go out, a lot of my ELL girls will tend to play with the boys because it’s more like physical as opposed to them having to have a lot of conversation or they might play a little bit more independently. So I think one of the biggest challenges is to try to integrate everybody, especially children who have more minimal language. If a child is ELL and they’re pretty proficient in both languages then you don’t have as much of an issue but if the, if there’s not a proficiency in English then I think there’s a tendency for it to be easier for the boys than for the girls. So I think making it easier for the ELL girls because young girls are very like, they’ll sit and just talk the entire recess as opposed to play. (First interview)

Jane was also very much in touch with how ELL students can generally feel coming into an English-speaking classroom where they don’t understand the language. She talked mostly about the frustration they must feel, but also, about how much of a sense of pride they must have when they do understand and succeed in a task. She said:

I would imagine despite however much you know about ELL learners and you’re using different ways to get points across to them that it must be really frustrating no matter because, you just see that other people are picking up on things with just a few words and you’re sitting there and you have to you know listen and then maybe you’re hearing it and then you almost have to translate it
into your own language and then by the time all of that is done and that the whole process is done, steps are missing and things feel like they’re not in place, even though you’re doing a lot of things, it must be frustrating. Less frustrating than if people weren’t using all these different cues and things to help you, but I feel like it probably is a stressful situation.

And you know, someone is teaching you to write and telling you to do it a certain way, but in your other language it was the other way, and it’s almost like trying to put these two pieces together, you’re six and you’re taking these two really different things and trying to merge them together and it almost doesn’t always make sense, so I would imagine there is frustration. But I would imagine too that when you really do get something, you feel a lot of success because you feel like you’re becoming a part of . . . you’re able to be a part of these two things that a really good, so I feel like probably two extremes almost you know? I almost feel for them that there’s not a lot of middle ground because I feel like that middle ground is I feel like where everyone else sort of sits, and the [other students] might feel successes but probably not as strong [as the ELL students], and the [other students] might feel frustrated but almost not as strongly [as the ELL students]. (First interview)

“I think one challenge is just building confidence.” Jane had also learned various techniques over her years of teaching to help her ELL students feel more comfortable and less frustrated in her classroom. In this sense, she had really tapped into their feelings and knew how to help them adjust. In our first interview, she talked about the importance of building ELL students’ confidence from the start:

I think just one challenge is just building confidence, [for the ELL students] to feel free to just raise their hand and give an answer . . . and I think some of the ELL children know [the answer] in their heads, but they’re not quite ready to shout it out because they’re afraid that children will laugh or it might not be quite right. So it’s just really building confidence.

I then asked Jane how she helped build that confidence, and she talked about really celebrating the ELL students’ efforts at all times:

I think one thing is just if children do give an answer and it’s not the correct answer not to just say no. But to say that that’s a good idea, and to also just really to celebrate the successes like if they’re doing well in their writing to really be complementary and a lot of times if you complement a child and I say like I really like how you wrote that sentence, it was really interesting, that other
children at the table will say, yeah, that was really interesting, I liked that too. That was really good. So I think that sometimes when you’re supportive, then the other children are supportive, and when the other children say that they like something, I think that really like gets the [ELL] kids’ confidence going because that’s really what they want the support of the other kids. (First interview)

In our second interview, Jane talked again about how encouraging her ELL students to take risks helped them gain confidence. One way of doing this was when she was sure an ELL student knew an answer, she would call on him/her. On the other hand, if she thought the ELL student really did not know the answer, she would “bypass” the student to save him/her from feeling badly. She said:

I think encouraging ELL children to take risks and to try to take, to give out an answer and even if it’s not right, but say that was a really good try . . . I’ve had a mix of different reactions from ELL children, some are ready to jump out with any answer all the time, and other children who don’t want to raise their hand at all. But I think that . . . always I think encouraging oral language [is important], and one way [to do this] is always calling on them if you know they’re going to have the answer right. Because (she laughs) if you think that, if you think that there’s a chance that it is going to be really off and you’re not sure that they’re not understanding, I think that maybe sometimes bypassing purposely is ok. But if you know that some, that they have the right answer and they’re ready to give it and then calling on them gives them that courage to try it again and to do it again. (Second interview)

Jane also indicated that she had learned from her years of teaching experience that pairing the ELL students with other more English-proficient students could help the ELL students gain confidence. She stated:

I think knowing who to pair ELL children with I think is something that comes with experience. Because you can have children that . . . are working on a really high level of English but they can’t really mentor or help another child to develop skills. So knowing who, I think if a child has the empathy and the sympathy and the positive attitude with other children, then that child will work well with the ELL children. I think that’s part of [years of experience], knowing who would work well with other children. (Second interview)
“You have to be willing to put yourself out there and ask questions.” The fourth area that relates to Jane’s years of teaching experience is her knowledge of some of the specific language difficulties that her ELL students will have as well as knowledge of how ELL students’ language generally develops. I have labeled this area as knowledge of ELL students’ academic challenges with language as well as general language awareness.

Firstly, Jane discussed how she thought that her ELL students acquired English. She talked about the importance of interacting with more proficient English-speaking students and working in small group setting with the ELL teachers. She stated:

I think [English development] comes in a lot of different ways, but I think one way that they really develop language is through play with other children. I think being in the classroom and hearing me talk . . . they pick up some things but I think it’s really the conversational, playing with other kids, doing different things, listening and wanting to be a part of it almost that helps them to develop even quicker than what we would do just from me teaching them and them listening to me, I think a lot of it has to do with children. I think the ELL children who develop [English] the quickest and the easiest are children who you know are playing with other children and that are listening in class . . . So I think [the language] does develop for ELL children at a different rate, but I think that they do pick up a lot just from being with other children.

I also think that signs and different things around the room and independent conversation and working with the ELL teachers who really really know the strategies and can be with the children in a smaller group [helps] . . . I think a setting, I think often a setting with a few other ELL children where they feel comfortable because they’re not afraid make a mistake because the other children are doing the same things as them, makes them feel like they’re in a good setting too. (First interview)

Jane also talked about how over the years she had learned what specific kinds of language errors, what I would call more academic language errors, some of her ELL students made. She had learned this by working with ELL students from particular countries over a number of years and noticing the kinds of mistakes they would make.
But, she emphasized that she also made the effort to find out why certain mistakes were happening and had “put herself out there.” She talked about this during our second interview:

Because I’ve had a lot of children from Japan over the years, and I’ve spoken with the ELL teacher here and I have more information about the mistakes they can make . . . I think with experience you get that, you discover that knowledge of the language awareness and then it helps you to teach the children because you can see that this is an error but you can explain to the children, well here we do this differently or you know the use of like [Peter—pseudonym] who’s from Korea, like he doesn’t always add “ed” so . . . so I explained to him about what it means to have the past. So I think language awareness does make a big difference but I think it comes with experience and with a lot of asking questions about what’s going on. What other languages are like, because there’s however many different languages and there are however many different rules, so it’s such a broad expanse that you have to be willing to put yourself out there and ask questions about it too. (Second interview)

Jane discussed other academic challenges in terms of language for her ELL students in our second interview when I asked her what some of the biggest challenges were for her in teaching academic language specifically to her students. She talked about difficulties in teaching various rules in English, like plurals, where there are always exceptions to the rules:

I think that . . . one of the . . . specific . . . I . . . I don’t know how to phrase it. I think it’s almost like the . . . the really specifics of English have been really difficult. Like we do some vocabulary and I think that we’re building everyone’s vocabulary so I think it can work in that way that everyone is getting some vocabulary but like really specific things like you know you don’t say mouses you say mice, or, I think those are the things that are the biggest challenges. It’s almost like . . . we have all these rules but then there are thousands of exceptions. And they’re not like thousands of exceptions that come up when you’re in fifth-grade reading the science text, they come up in every book. They’re all the time. So I think that’s the biggest challenge is like all of those really little nit picky things that are . . . everywhere! (Second interview)

Jane talked about some of the ways she helps her ELL students through all of these academic expectations and challenges. She mentioned not correcting all of the
mistakes “at once,” to focus on both the process and the product, and to help ELL students develop language through “small steps.” She discussed these strategies in our first interview:

I think somewhat of what I was saying before about that everything can’t be corrected at once. Like it can’t be . . . in the reading of the writing like maybe children just get the decoding part first, and then you have to work on the comprehension or maybe it’s that they can write a few words, but it’s not in a sentence. But, I think it has to be a process and not a product. I think sometimes we really are looking for like this end product and there’s a lot of steps to get to that product, and, you know the children who have been really schooled since they were a baby in English, they’re going to get to that product that we want a lot quicker than someone who’s ELL. And I think that the important focus is not to overwhelm someone or to make them feel really frustrated about what they’re doing, but to make them feel successful in the small steps to get to a product. The children who are ELL can be really easily frustrated, so [you need] to celebrate every success . . . as each success comes add another little piece to it, not huge chunks, but little pieces. (First interview)

Furthermore, Jane’s “language awareness” came through when I asked her about whether or not she thought it would be an advantage to know her ELL students’ first language in terms of aiding them academically, and she felt that it would definitely be an advantage. She mentioned that she would be able to explain ideas and information “better” and be able to “make it click” for ELL children if she knew their language. She said:

I mean I definitely think it would be helpful to know . . . you know at least bits and pieces of it because . . . I think when sometimes when you’re trying to explain something just one word could make it click for . . . children. And I think when you’re trying to explain something [to the ELL children] and you’re trying to think of a different way to put it that would explain it better, but just knowing one or two or even a phrase in that language might help to give that [ELL] child what they need to move on . . . For the most part I think that . . . knowing it would just be . . . helpful to you in general because you would have more understanding, but I also think it does help in terms of . . . just giving an ELL student a clue or a key to help them to kind of jump into what you’re doing. (Second interview)
“When you find out something like that it really changes how everything is working.” Finally, Jane’s years of teaching experience had helped her develop cultural awareness. One aspect of this was the knowledge she had gained about particular cultures that had helped her in working with various ELL students. For example, she talked about how learning the roles of men and women in traditional Chinese families had helped her work with an ELL student more effectively. She said:

I’m just thinking of a specific instance with . . . last year I had a little boy from China and . . . he . . . it seemed as though . . . if it was a man’s opinion, not necessarily opinion but if a man were saying something that he was more . . . taking it in than a woman. So . . . he had, we had a behavior chart because he had behavior challenges. He . . . it wasn’t working . . . and then . . . when I asked the dad to sign the report every night, that like . . . that’s the family dynamic that the dad was definitely the head, the dad was in charge of discipline, the dad was in charge of making him work, and as soon as the dad started signing it, and the dad would come and say I’m sorry he behaved this way, so it was much more, it became much more cohesive and more . . . much easier to work with him once I understood that piece. So when you find out something like that it really changes how everything is working. You see like how important knowing that cultural thing is! (Second interview)

Along the lines of cultural awareness, Jane had also learned how to assist ELL students and families connect with families and students outside of their own cultures when they came to the school. One way was to encourage having “playdates” with students outside of the parents’ cultures. During our first interview she said:

I’ve mentioned to a lot of ELL parents, like you should really try to have play dates with children, not just the children that speak your own language because sometimes what happens is, we do have a lot of diversity, but then we will have chunks of diversity that are the same, the same diversity like Japanese or Chinese or, you know Pakistani, or whatever it is, and a lot of times they tend to play, you know, a Pakistani child in here may have a playdate with a Pakistani child in another classroom because their parents know each other and their parents feel comfortable with those other parents because they’re speaking the same language. So I really try to encourage that they have play dates with children who are . . . from different cultures as well. And this year I had a child who came in from, I can’t remember where he’s from now, but um, his mother
would write notes to parents, like can we have a playdate, and you know, it was great because he had a playdate with almost every child in his class, just like, to be more social with other children and it really worked for him. He was doing great.

During our second interview, she talked about how her years of experience working with ELL students from various cultures had sensitized her to how the English-speaking students could react to differences among cultures, like food, which could potentially hurt an ELL student’s feelings.

When we’ve had birthdays in here, one year one of the children from Japan brought in like a rice pudding as opposed to a cake. I get nervous about the foods because I’m afraid . . . if they don’t like it, then that’s fine, but I don’t want them to say it. Because I don’t want to hurt the child’s feelings. So I always give this big speech that if you don’t like something, cover it with your napkin and don’t talk about it. I kind of do it that way (laughs). I’m like always so nervous, even if it’s like someone brought cookies, I’m still like oh my gosh, they’re going to insult them and this child is going to be scarred for life!

(Second interview)

Effects of a Monolingual Context

From my analysis, I identified four main themes concerning the effects of the monolingual context in which Jane taught. The first, like Liz, was the issue of ELL instructional support; second were feelings and conceptions about bilingual education and second language development; third was no use of first language support academically. Finally, Jane was very explicit about the fact that her school in particular expected success from its ELL students, and this had positive ramifications across the school consistent with the research on the traits of successful monolingual schools for ELL students (August & Hakuta, 1998; Lucas et al., 1990).
Instructional Support for ELL Students

“I feel like they’re kind of torn.” Like Liz, Jane expressed frustration at the kind of ELL support the students were able to receive at her school. She was not critical of the ELL teachers themselves, but of the curriculum that was used in ELL class as well as the ELL teachers being unable to be present in the regular classroom due to having so many students and demands on their time. In our first interview, she said:

I definitely feel sometimes like more in-class support would be helpful. I know that our ELL teachers have so many ELL kids across K to 5, so you know they’re time availability is . . . already pulled to the maximum, but I think that especially during like reading and writing lessons, I think writing more than anything because I think having someone sit in here with them just to be really like almost a small group one on one support but still doing the same things that we’re doing as a whole class, but someone just sitting at a table and going over it again, or giving an illustration that might be a little bit easier because otherwise you know I’m up there teaching the lesson and then I’m trying to do something on the side, to help and do this and do that, and I think, it probably would strengthen the children’s you know learning if they could just have that time, that individual time but still be a part of the classroom because I don’t necessarily agree that children should be pulled all day.

She talked about the issue of ELL support in our second interview as well. For example, she said:

I feel like the poor ELL teachers are kind of like torn because they have this . . . curriculum that they’re supposed to use, but . . . the curriculum doesn’t necessarily match what’s happening in the classrooms, and I feel like they . . . want to use the curriculum because they know that there are positive things about the curriculum but they also want the children to be understanding what’s going on in their classrooms, so I feel like they’re kind of torn. (Second interview).

Feelings and Conceptions About Bilingual Education and Second Language Development

“Being taught in your native language it almost, it almost isolates those children.” Another aspect that emerged from my interviews with Jane regarding the
monolingual context in which she taught, was Jane’s feeling about bilingual education in the sense that she did not see this as a positive educational option for ELL students. That is, she believed that a monolingual context was the preferred option for an ELL student attempting to learn English. She expressed this several times during both of our interviews. Though it is difficult to say whether or not she felt that a monolingual environment was better for ELL students due to her teaching in a monolingual context, she did say that she believed that ELL students were better off being in a classroom with English-speaking students, rather than in a bilingual classroom. For instance, in our first interview when I asked her her opinion about children being educated in their native language in a bilingual program, she answered:

I think I like this model as opposed to the other [bilingual] model. For me personally, I think this [monolingual] model is best because I think that being taught in your native language it almost, it almost isolates those children from being with all the other children, and, I know that sometimes they’ll be like ELL classes as opposed to a bilingual class because a bilingual class is just in, with children of that language and ELL would be more the other languages that almost didn’t have enough children to have their own class. So, it’s . . . and when I substituted before I actually taught, and I substituted in an ELL class, and I almost found like that environment was great because the ELL children, they were speaking English and they couldn’t rely on their native language because everyone in there kind of had something different going on, whereas the bilingual children, and those children I think easily played with the standard ed classes out at recess, and were able to integrate pretty easily. Whereas I feel like bilingual classes, I think might almost be more isolated because they have their language and maybe they’re speaking their language to each other, and they don’t necessarily have to move forward and the other kids don’t necessarily have to include them because they have a group.

I think it just moves along a process of [ELL] children being with each other in I guess English immersion, but you know, like coming together, I think that it’s important for the children. And, I’ve never really seen a lot of bilingual classes, but I think at a big public school, where there is standard ed, and ELL and bilingual, I almost feel like it starts to feel like different groups as opposed to one school. (First interview)
During our second interview, Jane mentioned again how she felt that a bilingual setting for ELL students would be isolating for them:

I think it’s a great experience for a lot of children and that . . . knowing other children that you know speak your native language but also speak English, but at the same way it’s a little bit isolating too. Because . . . they’re not exposed other diversity other than people who speak both languages. So they’re in a way, that’s limiting also I think it’s great that children know that other adults can speak their language and can explain things to them, but I think there are a lot of positive things to being immersed in English and then seeing other children that I speak you know Russian at home and I speak English here and this child speaks Japanese when they speak English here and just seeing that like all around diversity. (Second interview)

From these examples, it is apparent that Jane feels strongly that English “immersion” is best for the ELL students.

“He couldn’t keep track of which was which.” In addition, Jane showed her conceptions about second language development. This came through in both of our interviews. I felt that perhaps her conceptions were due to working only in an English monolingual immersion environment, and, in that sense, not having that in-depth knowledge of second language development that the bilingual teachers shared in working in a bilingual environment every day.

For example, during our first interview, she talked about how her ELL student was “confusing” his two languages and therefore encouraged the family not to use his native language so much with him at home. She said:

If you can get the family involved, in you know, supporting the English development then I think that that really does help the children to learn faster. So, one of my ELL students, I asked the family of the child that they really try to not speak their language as much at home because one of the issues is that he was just getting so confused, he couldn’t keep track of which was which.
Furthermore, Jane expressed this idea of separate systems for language in our second interview as well, particularly in the sense that ELL students did not “need” their first language to learn English. She said:

I’ve had children who’ve come in here, not this year but other years, I’ve had children come in and don’t speak any English and you know by, and they come in September first and they might be really quiet and by the end of the year they’re speaking so much English and they’re really getting like the nuances and all of the different things that are happening in English so I think that . . . children can get a really . . . strong English background and not necessarily have to use their other language to get there . . . It almost becomes they’ve categorized their two languages and they’re learning it almost separately and they don’t necessarily have to coexist. (Second interview)

_No Use of ELL Students’ First Language for Academics_

“There’s almost like the first block of the building is missing.” Like Liz’s monolingual context, Jane did not utilize students’ knowledge of their first language to aid in academics. That is, though Jane would use what she knew in students’ first language to aid them with learning when possible, she did not have the students use their first language for academics.

For example, when the students were trying to write, she did not encourage them to use their first language to do so. She solely relied on their using English as much as they could. Though this will be elaborated upon in the next chapter when I discuss the teachers’ classroom practices, students not utilizing their first language was in stark contrast to the bilingual context. It seemed that there was little awareness by Jane that this could be done or that it could be helpful for her ELL students. For instance, when I asked Jane about some of the challenges her ELL students faced in her class, she talked about the language expectations without mentioning how the ELL students could use their first language to help them. She said:
My students are reading these small chapter books by the end of first grade, and they have to be in this place and they should be able to write like six sentences that go together. And all these different pieces of language, they’re taking what they learned in Kindergarten and trying to put it together and really build upon it. And I think the big challenge for ELL students is that if they don’t really have the strongest grasp on the language, that it’s hard to take a lot of pieces and put them together if you don’t really have the first piece yet. So I think sometimes the expectation is high that you’re going to be able to put all these pieces together, but there’s almost like the first block of the building is missing. You know? Like, when, I think that the biggest challenge is like building that first block. (First interview)

Washington School’s Expectations of Success

“That’s part of what the success is.” On a different note, Jane was explicit during our interviews about how much she felt her school supported the ELL students emotionally and academically. She felt that this message exuded from every area of the school. During our first interview, she connected why she feels she is successful with ELLs herself with the expectations of the school and its principal:

I don’t think there’s ever, I feel like there’s never a question with our principal or with us that ELL children should not be as successful as the standard ed children. I think it’s like everyone is in your class, everyone is your responsibility to get to these expectations and what you have to do to get them there whether it’s taking pictures of things on the playground and saying what the names are, whether it’s really pushing for more ELL services, you know, whatever that case is, you know, these are your children for the year, and you’re responsible for that. So I think that’s part of what the success is too, is like the expectations that are placed on the teacher not just on the kids.

She continued along these same lines later in the same interview:

I think it is easier to teach ELLs if you work in a school that supports that that is just part of the culture of the school as opposed to something you’re doing that’s like extraneous from your teaching skills. So I feel like if you were in a classroom and you had ELL children and every time you got an ELL child the office was like you have an ELL child and they made it seem like it was something that was out of the ordinary and that this was going to be a burden on you, but I just don’t think that our school reacts to ELL in that light at all. I just think it’s like, oh, this is your new student and you know almost like it’s never a
discussion as to whether they’re ELL or not, you kind of find out when you read through the records yourself.

So the entire school kind of makes the environment a place where ELL is considered just part of what you do, not an extra thing to what you do. And I think that that’s when teachers get frustrated with it is when it’s, when people put it on you as an extra and I think that you know this school doesn’t make it seem that way, I think it makes it seem like that’s just the expectations of you . . . And I think the kids benefit from it because I think they just feel integrated. I think they feel like this is their community and this is the school where they go and they’re a part of it and they’re accepted and they do what they do. (Second interview)

When I asked Jane in the second interview to tell me how she had developed such a positive attitude toward ELL students, she mentioned the effects of the school culture again. She said:

I also think being positive is definitely a part of [our] school culture. I think that if you’re in a place where you know children are always being yelled at and it’s like strict and they can only do these certain things, I think it’s really hard for a positive attitude to shine through. But I think that if the, if everyone comes in and says good morning, and it’s a friendly place, then . . . I think that everyone starts to be more positive and I think it rubs off on the children and you know it’s kind of self-fulfilling, the more you’re positive the more . . . the results you get from children too. (Second interview)

Finally, she talked about how much the teachers at her school collaborated and how she felt that this benefited the ELL students as well as all students. For example, in our first interview, Jane stated:

The first-grade teachers here, we all plan together and I know that the Kindergarten teachers do and the second-grade teachers do, so, I think in general like the, if we have an idea and if we’re doing something different, that we share it with each other. And I think that that helps with the ELLs because sharing the ideas amongst the classrooms really helps to give you new ways to do things. (First interview)
The facets of the school Jane describes--positive attitude, collaboration, responsibility--are all consistent again with research about effective schools of ELL students, and the Washington school seems to reflect these ideas.
CHAPTER 6
INSIDE THE CLASSROOMS

In this chapter, I will present my findings regarding the teachers’ classroom practices based on observations, my notes during observations, and recall sessions. Each teacher had her own way of teaching, but there were numerous commonalities among the teachers in terms of preparation and planning, in-class practices, and observable attitudes towards their ELL students. I have placed the findings into a table at the outset of each section to present the data, and then I will go into the findings in more detail using examples from the teachers’ classrooms.

Preparation and Planning

The teachers in the study all demonstrated commonalities in their preparation and planning. The occurrences for most of the categories listed below were relatively equal. Those will be presented first. The highlighted categories below are the ones where the differences between the teachers in the bilingual context and monolingual contexts differ significantly as well as those in which one of the teachers in the monolingual contexts, Liz, had a higher number of occurrences than the other teachers. The differences in context will be presented second, and the differences in occurrences in one teacher versus the others will be presented last.

Occurrences of Preparation and Planning Categories That Were Relatively Equal

Use of themes and units. Each of the teachers used themes and units when organizing their planning. I am defining a theme as an overall exploration of a particular topic, such as “islands,” “Native Americans,” and I am defining a unit as a specific element of study, such as “topographic maps” in the island theme or “the Navajo” in the
Native American theme. The teachers felt that using themes and units was one of the best ways for ELL students to access content in a meaningful way. The reasons they gave included academic reasons, such as the development of vocabulary, as well as knowledge of “what works” for ELL students, such as the use of “hands-on” materials, in terms of instruction and creating a less stressful experience for the ELL students.

Table 6.1
Number of Occurrences: Preparation and Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Kate bilingual context</th>
<th>Rose bilingual context</th>
<th>Liz monolingual context</th>
<th>Jane monolingual context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Preparation/Planning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Use of themes/units</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Making connections among concepts</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Knowledge of students</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Adjusting expectations</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Grouping/pairing (in planning phase of lesson)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>28</td>
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<td>6. Comfortable environment</td>
<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Focus on academic language&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>63</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Word rich environment&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>10. Organization&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Exemplars/models&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>39</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>Occurrences that were higher for Liz
<sup>b</sup>Occurrences that were much higher in certain contexts

For example, in our first recall session about a social studies lesson, I asked Liz why she taught using themes and units and if she thought planning her lessons in this way helped her ELL students. She cited academic reasons for using themes and units,
such as making meaning for students and building a foundation for them to access other content. She said:

[I think it helps ELL students] 100%. And even just the training that I got . . . from the ELL workshops, that absolutely, when things are in content units . . . that there’s more meaning behind it. You’re able to . . . start at more basic . . . knowledge and then you’re building on a foundation. So . . . absolutely, that again, there’s . . . usually a purpose . . . behind what you’re doing behind the lessons and a focus. And . . . [the ELL students are] able to . . . again develop and grow . . . on a particular skill . . . as well as developing their vocabulary, but . . . absolutely. To use . . . units and themes is definitely . . . is the way to go. I don’t even know how you would do it any other way.

When I asked Rose a similar question about why she used a unit about Native Americans at the beginning of the year and whether or not she thought that was an effective way to teach ELL students, she mentioned the “what works” aspect in using units and themes in that they really get the ELL students involved in the material:

Probably since they’re so many hands on things . . . that go with the unit that . . . it just makes it more relaxing, [the ELL students are] more relaxed . . . because . . . when they work in those groups doing hands on things they’re learning a lot . . . about the subject . . . but it’s not all . . . just sitting and writing and having to read a book. I think they learn a lot . . . without having that stress. They don’t have to sit and read. And write something. I couldn’t see doing things in any other way. After all of these years of doing this.

Rose repeated this point of hands-on learning as important for ELL students in our second recall session when I asked her again about why she used themes and units in her teaching:

Using units is so much a part of what we do in the class. And there’s a lot of hands on, so, there’s a lot of tactile learning, you know, the [ELL students] actually do it. And, so, it, [Jean] has a pretty good command of English, but for some of the new ESL students, it’s the time actually doing it and seeing it that they can actually understand what’s going on in the reading and the writing. It’s a way, the hands on stuff, and, and picking out language arts things from the greater, from the the . . . you know, big project things, I think is a way of including everybody. Because everybody can have a part in that.
Kate echoed the academic advantage for ELL students as well as the reduced stress level for them in one of our recall sessions when I asked her about her using themes and units in her planning and teaching:

I think [using themes and units] creates a lot more excitement about what we’re studying when the [ELL students] start to connect everything together and I think that goes for . . . a non-ELL student and ELL students as well. That . . . you know it creates sort of this buzz and excitement . . . that you don’t get if you just teach . . . isolated . . . non interdisciplinary kinds of subjects. I mean not that you can’t get excitement out of those lessons as well, they have their place but . . . this was a nice lesson for the ELL students because it does lead to a creation of an island which is a very physical kind of . . . hands on activity. Which they can be really actively involved in and feel like they’re part of the group.

Making connections among concepts. All of the teachers relied upon making connections among concepts in their planning and preparation. This category is defined as connecting previous concepts that had been taught before to current concepts, and connecting new concepts to previous work the students had already done. Below are examples from Jane utilizing both of these connections in a writing lesson with her first-grade students. In the first example, she is reminding the students about a lesson they had already had on writing a story using a “seed,” “sprout,” and “flower” as metaphors. Here Jane reminds them of the terms they had used to describe the writing of a story:

One thing I want to do before we start writing our writer’s workshop stories is the other day we talked about different kinds of stories, that some stories start out as a seed and then they become a sprout, and then they grow into a flower. So a seed . . . remember a seed is just the smallest part of the plant . . . a seed, the writer has made a beginning by writing something on paper, that’s just the seed, right? A sprout, the seed is sprouting, the writer has added a little more information so the writing is like a sprout pushing through the ground. So we start with the smallest, the seed, then we get a little more added to the seed, we get the sprout and then finally what do we get . . . a flower . . . we get a flower. The seed has blossomed into a flower, the writer has added a lot of interesting information, so we start small, we get a little bigger, we get a little bigger. So then we talked about three different stories that we had to decide whether something was a seed, a sprout or a flower.
Jane then shows an example of a story on big chart paper to again remind the students about the concepts of a “seed,” “sprout,” and “flower,” and she chooses a student to come and point to each part of the story. She makes certain to have an ELL student come up at this point.

Next, Jane wants to teach the new concept of writers needing to have a “message” in their stories, and in particular, a consistent message. She uses the example of the story she just showed the students to introduce the concept of the author’s “message.” After the students identify the message in the example she showed them, she asks for an example of a story a student already wrote to enable her to connect this new concept of a “message” to work that the students have already done. Below is an excerpt of Jane asking a student to tell the class about her story and then Jane prompts the class to tell her what the message of the story is:

So . . . the story that [Sue] wrote about is her kitten getting lost and having to find her and bring her back. What do you think [Sue’s] message was in that story? What does she want you to know if you read that story? What do you think? If you were listening carefully I bet you can figure it out . . . What do you think she wants you to know? [student answers] . . . about her kitten getting lost, exactly. [takes more examples from students]. Now when you write a story, this is the important part, everyone’s eyes on me, when you write a story, you have to know what you want to tell people. You have to have a message, if your story’s about the beach and that’s your message, should you start writing about, I went to the beach, I had a snack, I went in the water, I like toys . . . does that make sense as part of your message? What sentence didn’t make sense as part of my message? What part didn’t make sense? I went to the beach, I had a snack, I went in the water, I like toys. What doesn’t belong? [student answers]. I like toys. It’s not a part of your message because it doesn’t have to do with the beach. And when [Sue] told us about her cat, Lily’s my cat, she went out..we were playing in the front yard, she got away, I had to get her, she was lost, my dad is fun. Which part doesn’t belong with [Sue’s] message?... which part doesn’t belong with [Sue’s] message? [student answers] . . . my dad is fun because everything’s about her kitten and then one sentence isn’t. All of your messages..you need to know what you want to tell people and then stick with it. All right? So when you’re looking at your stories today, make sure you have a
message, and you know what that message is, and when people meet with me, I will ask what was your message? OK?

Knowledge of students. Knowledge of students for these exemplary teachers of ELL students was more than an understanding of test scores and basic information about the ELL students’ levels in particular subjects. Knowledge of students in the cases of these teachers meant clear understandings of their ELL students’ previous schooling experiences, languages spoken at home, issues of culture that can/will interact with their learning in school, and consistent attempts to understand their ELL students to their best abilities in order to facilitate learning English at school. In this sense, knowing students for these teachers meant knowing them as both people and as learners. This knowledge was demonstrated in numerous ways in the teachers’ planning and preparation processes.

In the following examples, Liz demonstrates how knowing her ELL students’ backgrounds helps her to better plan for their academic needs. In the first example, Liz describes how she approached a unit on colonial times her ELL students. She discussed one student in particular who was from Japan and how she helped him access the content through multiple approaches, knowing that due to his background experiences he would most likely find the content difficult to understand. This excerpt comes from our second recall session:

I think especially when . . . if some of the language isn’t as familiar; you know [Asuko], coming from Japan, probably isn’t as familiar with the Boston Tea Party as someone born and raised basically right outside Boston, where you’re going into town all the time, you see the ships, so I think he doesn’t have kind of the common background that other kids just from growing up in the area typically might. So--I think it was important that--just to bring in the visual and the--again the presentation we went to at [another school] on the colonial people--it was just so geared to third grade that--and just little stories that
appealed to the kids -- that it is important to just get the [ELL students] at any angle you can. Like I have a ton of colonial videos that we can watch too that you just have to keep trying whatever avenue you can to make them understand it and, you know not have it as two-dimensional as reading a book or just doing a study---a teacher lecture. To literally see things come alive is so helpful which obviously you can’t do it all curriculum areas but as much as possible.

So, again, this kind of--common knowledge to other kids it’s not common knowledge to him. So even--I mean he’s--just the vocab of some of the main components of colonial times like so many of the other kids have been to Plymouth plantation and--this is something that he may not have been exposed to. I know that’s a different period of time but just--you know just common things that some of the other kids have been--that they’re aware of and have grown up with may be different for him. So--so I’m glad that we’ve had different experiences that he’s seen people in dress, you know at our--at the colonial presentation. And in a way he’s seen--he has seen a play the--Paul Revere’s Ride but he hasn’t seen an actual script. So--so I think that was the biggest challenge it’s just the background information that the other kids may be more familiar with.

In the second example from Liz, also from our second recall session, I asked her if she thought the other ELL students in her class had similar struggles with the content on colonial times. Her reply shows us that she knows her ELL students very well in terms of what they may or may not have experienced due to their previous schooling experiences and/or family lives.

It wasn’t. I think because more so too they’ve been here for a lot more of the lessons that I don’t think it was as much of a struggle. I get the impression that [one of the other ELL student’s] mother takes her out and about to some of the more, you know just out in town a little more. I know [Ricardo] doesn’t have that type of home life where that type of thing is going on as well but he’s been here for some of the field trips last year. I--like you know if they’ve been to some of these other places throughout the years and [Asuko] just came to this school last year so he’s kind of missed some of the commonalities in even field trips that the other kids have done.

Another example of these teachers knowing their students comes from Jane who talks here in our second recall session about the patterns she sees in her ELL students when they first arrive from another country without speaking English. She understands
how the ELL students will act generally as learners and what to do for them to support
their transition as new members of the community:

I think that if children are . . . pretty much non speakers, we try to put them with
other children that we think will be supportive of their learning, so someone who
could be helpful or show them where things go. And it’s pretty easy to do that in
first grade because the children want to help someone out. Even at recess, giving
them someone to guide them but . . . in terms of the work, I feel like the first
level of work for the ELL 1s tends to be that . . . they get the paper in the fall
and the routine but then they tend to maybe copy someone else’s work, which to
me at the beginning is fine because they’re . . . acclimating themselves to what is
going on in the classroom. And then as the year goes on the expectation
becomes that ok will you try this part on your own, and I know you can do this
part, or . . . do this. So I think we kind of gradually, it starts with the acclimating
and maybe copying but then by the end of the year, we’re expecting that certain
amounts of things are done by that child by themselves.

A final example comes from Kate in the bilingual context who talks about why
she thinks math is a great subject in which ELL students can participate and generally
feel success at an early stage. We see from this example how Kate is in touch with what
will work well for many of her ELL students in order to access content, and she is also
very aware of how a particular ELL student’s strength in math helps boost his
confidence, aid him in accessing the curriculum, empowers him to learn English, and
allows other students in the class to see him as an equal learner. This excerpt comes
from our 3rd recall session, and I have just asked her why she thinks that math is a
particularly good subject for ELL students to participate in:

I’m not sure most people would agree with me but . . . Why do I think that? I
had one ESL student one year, a boy, and . . . we just kind of figured out that he
was good, you know, good in math. So that was sort of a reason that that became
something that we tried with him. And . . . it just . . . it worked. Like it was just
something that by November or December we do a kind of a two month unit on
fractions, which is very . . . you know, it’s very . . . it’s not amorphous, you
know, math is not kind of like . . . you know, write a better short story, and use
interesting vocabulary, you know, it’s just there. You know, can you add these
fractions together, can you draw a picture of this fraction? Do you understand
what a fraction is and so . . . it’s concrete in the sense of, there’s a clarity to what you’re trying to teach, and there’s a clarity on the students’ part on what they’re trying to learn . . . it’s sort of like it’s correct or it’s not correct. And so . . . and it’s . . . you know, there’s words obviously involved in math, there’s a lot of vocabulary words involved with math, there’s word problems and all that kind of stuff, but there are also just problems and calculations, you know, one half plus one third, what does that equal.

And then, as . . . as the [ELL students] started to get their feet under them with English and with me, and with math . . . they took the fractions test . . . right before Christmas vacation that all the other kids took, and I think with like a couple of word problems on the test, I would, I said if you want me to translate the word problem for you I can, and I don’t think they actually needed me to do that . . . and they succeeded at a level of like you know, you know, it’s not at the same level as the kids who . . . are Anglophone or who are . . . fluent in English I should say . . . but on the quiz, I think they both got like 20 out of 30 or 18, so . . . to me I mean I just make it very clear to them, this is, you’ve learned this, this is not about what you’re not learning, this is about what you’re able to learn, and I said if you can sit here and take this lesson and . . . walk out knowing 20 out of 30 worth of fractions that’s . . . way better than you sitting here and just doing busy work for [the ESL teacher]. You know and I think math lessons are very concrete.

And it just makes them . . . start to feel good. I just like . . . since I started doing that with those boys . . . it’s like their attitude really switched around, like they just really started to feel like part of the class. They started to feel like there was an expectation of them to be part of my class, there was an expectation that they would try to learn. And then it gave me a chance to connect with them a lot more than I had up to that point.

Then, in the following example later in the same recall session, Kate discussed one boy in particular and how using math helped boost his confidence:

And with [Jean] (an ELL student), he’s just . . . he gets everything. It’s just, it’s so cool, I think he’s just like, oh my, I’m learning in English! You know? Like it just, it blows him away a little bit, like we broke into math groups . . . for the [standardized testing] review, three different groups, and I put him in the strong group, and . . . like so he sat there with me and I . . . did it all English, and it was like we would go off into surface area and all this more complicated stuff cause it was the kids who were able to do that and he was like with us on everything, it was unbelievable. It was very cool. You know and I think the other kids were like wow, cause I would like, I’d explain something in English and talk about it and ask [Jean] the answer, and he’d just be like you know 18, and everyone would be like, (laughs) . . . what? He doesn’t even speak English and he’s
getting the answer, and I don’t, and you know, it’s a real confidence booster for him.

Adjusting expectations. It is important in defining this category to emphasize that these exemplary teachers did not water down curriculum to help their ELL students. Rather, they anticipated what might be particularly difficult for ELL students and planned their instruction to support them. Their adjustments reflected their knowledge of what beginning ELL students would need and what those with more exposure and practice in English would be able to do. The adjustments for those ELL students with a bit more exposure to English included providing the students scaffolded materials, supportive tools such as picture dictionaries, and consistent breaking down, repetition and clarification of directions. For beginning students, teachers provided materials that enabled students to participate in some way in the lessons, and the teachers demonstrated knowledge of the typical needs ELL students will have and behaviors they will exhibit when beginning to participate in the class.

The first examples from the teachers are ones that reflect the teachers’ adjustment of expectations for ELL students with more exposure to English. In the following excerpt, Kate, the fifth-grade teacher, is talking about a lesson she did with the students on interviewing a family member for a family history project. Kate knew from experience that question formation is particularly difficult for ELL students, but she still expressed that the goal for all of the students, to write effective questions with which to interview a family member, was also the goal for the ELL students. She said:

Formation of questions is a big issue for ELL students. It’s something they always have trouble with. Word order for questions, just like I do in French. And also the issue of yes/no questions and information questions. I just think question formation is . . . students are much more able, more quickly to speak
I don’t’ know how you say it, in non question form, just in straight sentences, subject, verb, you know there are some word order issues there from their native language. They put the adverb in the wrong place, or, but the sense of the . . . sentences usually it gets straightened out pretty quickly but with questions I think because kids don’t necessarily ask that many questions when they’re learning language because they tend to be more absorbing of the language and asked to respond to questions that giving them practice on writing questions is I think is a, is a big issue for ELL students.

I then asked Kate what the target was for the ELL students and if it were the same for them as for the other students in the class. She answered:

With every lesson the objective for the class as a whole is still the objective for the ELL students too. I think that the whole, the organizing your thoughts and putting questions in categories before you start so then you have a solid piece of work to write, that that’s something they all have. Because I’m not just trying to teach them (the ELL students) language, I’m trying to keep them progressing the way other fifth graders are progressing. So, I want them to be on a parallel course. There might be a subtext for their requiring more language skills than a native English speaker who doesn’t need to learn question word order because they’ve spoken it their whole lives, but the objective for those other kids is still an objective for the ELL kids as well. You know, especially for the students the second year ELLS because they’re basically capable of understanding what’s happening in the class and understanding the objective of the lesson.

We can see from this example how explicitly Kate thinks about the fact that her goals for her ELL students need to mirror those of her “regular” students; however, she is also very specific about the ELL students’ needs in particular and how to emphasize their needs while still maintaining the integrity of the project for all of her students.

The following excerpts from my recall sessions with Liz demonstrate how she adjusted her expectations for her ELL students who had a bit more exposure to English. In each example, she talked about how she modified her materials for the lesson in order for the ELL students to participate effectively. The first example comes from our first recall sessions when we were discussing a writing lesson in which the students were expected to write a descriptive paragraph about their “fuzzy ball.” For this lesson, Liz let each
student choose a “fuzzy ball” (a colored pom pom) about which to write a creative story. Liz expected all of the students in the class to use descriptive words using all of the senses in their stories. As she knew that this assignment would be more challenging for her students learning English, she added the additional scaffold of her own fuzzy ball story example which she read aloud, and a sheet of the senses for the ELL students which included pictures as well as descriptive words to help them (see example of senses sheet below the excerpt). When I asked her about how she got the idea for the fuzzy ball writing assignment, she said:

The fuzzy ball surprise lesson I um got the idea from a different teacher from a different school. And . . . then I sort of branched off and made it my own, the . . . the piece that I modeled was my own writing. And then I included kind of making my own like picture dictionary part for some of the ELL students. I created, I made the five senses chart [Figure 6.1] and I added in for the ELL students, certain verbs and actions and adjectives as well as some different pictures. Specifically for the ELL students. These were words for them. This wasn’t on the other students’ papers.

Liz also used other strategies, including “QuickDraws” and “Think-Pair-Shares” to help the ELL students to generate ideas. She explained that these methods helped ELL students generate their ideas and gave them opportunities to speak before they had to write:

I think I try to include the think pair shares, have them share their ideas . . . prior to having the children write, lets [the ELL students] hear themselves speak, generate their ideas, and even for the children who have difficulties writing, that [the ELL students] are able to generate, generate their ideas first before putting it down on paper. I have found this has been a good strategy for children who do struggle with their writing.
### Five Senses Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>See</th>
<th>Tap, Pat, Stroke</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>look, glance, notice</td>
<td>pain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ball</td>
<td>cow</td>
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<td>food</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Feel</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>inhale, gasp, breathe in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>smell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>smell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inhale, gasp, breathe in</td>
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<td>smell</td>
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<table>
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<td>flavor, nibble, bite</td>
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<td>hula, pen, oil</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>garlic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>salt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cheese</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Six Trait Writing, J. Cobian, 2003*

Figure 6.1. Senses scaffolding chart.
You have been given a fuzzy, ball-shaped pom pom! Using your imagination, what can you draw that incorporates your pom pom within the drawing? Maybe, it’s the center of a beautiful flower that a butterfly softly lands on in order to drink its nectar? What if it is the fuzzy tip of a clown’s colorful hat worn by him at the circus? Have you thought of it as possibly a gumball in an old-fashioned gumball machine? Do a quick draw in the squares provided below of any ideas you have for utilizing the pom pom.

Looking over your quick draw pictures, choose five of them to elaborate on and include as drawings in your “Fuzzy Ball Surprises!” booklet. Next, write about each of your drawings using as many of the five senses as you can when adding supportive details and descriptive word choice within your booklet entries.

Figure 6.2. Quick draw sample.
In my second recall session with Liz, we talked about a lesson on transitional words and phrases that the students were doing as part of a social studies unit. The students were writing about their “treasure maps” where the use of transitional words was the expectation for all students. However, Liz thought ahead of time about what would be difficult for her students still learning English, and she modified certain materials for them. When I asked her about her planning for the lesson, she said:

I think when I was creating the lesson I did it with them in mind. So, having the students circle the words I . . . I envisioned that that would be easier for the ELL students where I might have just had the, had the list written as a tool for the other children, but I thought it might just be easier for [the ELL students] to go through, to circle the transitional words or phrases.

As stated before, Liz’s goals were the same for the ELL students, but she anticipated what might be more challenging for her ELL students:

My goal was for them, as well as all the boys and girls, to be able to use the transitional words. But I knew maybe not as much for [Tomika] (one of the ELL students) but I think for [Atsuko] and [Ricardo] (the other ELL students in the class), I think . . . I think this was a little bit more of a challenge for them . . . because I don’t think they’ve used a lot of these words as often, but [Tomika] is a little bit of a better writer and could start naturally and a better reader too, she’s been naturally including and had more experience with some of these words.

But for this case, I think my goal for [Ricardo] and [Atsuko] was to include the transitional words and to be able to include some of the vocabulary words that we’ve used in social studies, so that was really my goal for [the ELL students] to be able to take . . . and to add extra details to make it more creative.

In this final example from Liz, I asked her to explain why she repeated the directions for her lessons and/or had students repeat the directions multiple times during the lesson (this one on transitional words and phrases, though she did this in all of her lessons):

Definitely to reinforce what’s going to be happening . . . because sometimes [the ELL students] can hear me talk, but to hear another child and even sometimes
someone that you want to make sure that they understand the directions that they
can clarify it then you know that the, pretty much everyone else should be on
board too of what to do.

Just to make sure that [the ELL students] are clearly understanding what the
expectations are and what the directions are . . . I think obviously kids are at
different levels of understanding, so just to make sure that they’re aware of
what’s expected. It could be frightening if everyone else starts and [the ELL
students] are not aware of the first step. And even to break down steps too. I
think is really important. Just so you’re not ok now take three pages and go for it
but to break down the steps as much as possible. I think . . . makes it that much
more comfortable and clear for the [ELL students]. Especially for the multi task
directions, I think writing it down is easier for them.

Teachers also planned for the support of their beginning ELL students and
anticipated what might be difficult for them. In the following example, Jane talks about
what she has her new ELL students do during “workboard stations” (Figure 6.3) when
they first arrive in her class. These “workboard stations” are activities in which students
are grouped in various groups, mostly mixed-ability, mixed-language groups. Students
participate in these activities often so that Jane is able to meet with students one-on-one
or in small reading groups. These workboard activities include language study, math,
and art, among others. I asked Jane what kinds of activities she would do with her
newer ESL students during workboard, and her response indicated the ways in which
are made, which I observed during the actual lesson as well:

I have the [ELL students] go with the work board group and they’ll still meet
with me, the same way, but I have them really--someone work sitting next to
them. And a lot of times they might just copy what the other person’s doing. It’s
kind of--it’s kind of a good place to have models for kids is work board because
they’re being independent and they’re working with someone else and the other
children never--they tell on other children, like, “He or she’s copying,” but they
seem to know that’s an Okay thing for someone who’s not speaking the same
language, I never get complaints from things like that.

I give the [ESL students] a dictionary and they might draw a labeled picture
which would be fine as opposed to doing a lot of writing but they might just
label things in English. So sometimes they’re just making their own modification, like, this is what I’ll do.

*Figure 6.3. Workboard stations.*
Rose also discussed how she adjusts her expectations and strategies when she has beginning ESL students. This excerpt comes from our third recall session when Rose was talking about a math lesson she had done about sets. She explained what she would do when she had true beginning ELL students in her class, and how they could participate in this particular math lesson by doing the parts where they had to fill in pattern shapes. She also talked about using her new ELL students’ native language to help them access the content:

A real [ESL] beginner wouldn’t be able to explain to me what a set is (in English). But they certainly would be able to fill in the shape. Using the pattern blocks—and I would be able to explain to them to use four green, three red, and they would understand that. I could explain that to them in French—four green, three red, two blue. I would do that, if they were very beginners [I would use French]. And that way they would be using the blocks and manipulating them, but not doing exactly the same because further on what they would have to do is they would have to trace them, and color them in, and make the design on the paper, so they would be able to do that. And that would keep them engaged using the blocks while the others were doing the other problems—were not up to that yet.

I always have something that they would be able to do with, you know, a little different explanation. And that way they would be able to be using the concept too. I try never—I try not to give them something completely different, because that really isolates them. It’s bad enough that they’re here not understanding—so—always manage to give them something that’s similar, but on a different level.

Grouping and pairing. All of the teachers in the study thought ahead of time about how they would group the students for certain lessons, and how they would group the students generally in class if the class were set up in that manner. The two teachers in the monolingual contexts had tables or groups of desks where the students worked. The third-grade teacher in the bilingual context had round tables where students worked throughout the year (and she would change up the groups during the year), and the fifth-grade teacher had individual desks where students would often work in groups moving
their desks together. For all of the teachers, they were very sensitive as to how students were grouped together in terms of continually having their ELL students in mind. They all made efforts to ensure that their ELL students were with other students who could assist them academically when needed and/or with whom the teachers felt their ELL students would be most comfortable. Therefore, all teachers planned for grouping and pairing in terms of its impact on ELL students’ learning and for socialization purposes.

For example, Liz often had students do a “think, pair, share” in her lessons. I asked her why she used this particular strategy, and her answer demonstrates her goal for her ELL students’ learning. We will see from this excerpt that her academic goals included scaffolding language and an emphasis on generating ideas using oral language in a small setting. This comes from our first recall session when I asked her why she had used this grouping and strategy for this lesson:

It’s important to give [students] time to talk to one another. I try to include the think pair share for them to get the jiggies out, have them share their ideas, and that was one skill that I learned about when teaching second grade, just having them . . . share their ideas . . . prior to having the children write, lets them hear themselves speak, generate their ideas and even for the children who have difficulties writing, that they’re able to generate, generate their ideas first before putting it down on paper. I have found is, has been a good strategy for children who do struggle with their writing, especially the ELL students.

I actually learned that term from ELL training to have the students talk about their writing . . . before they do it, or as much as possible to talk about it especially for struggling writers, the more that they’re able to . . . discuss what they’re writing before they go and do it, the more success they will have. So . . . basically I . . . you know hoped to . . . have them draw a picture . . . to talk about it . . . to do some writing, go back and talk about it . . . the more that they’re able to do that if they get stuck, or if there’s writer’s block . . . that to have other students to help them out. And to be able for the ELL students themselves to be able to . . . think out loud . . . the better that they’re able to . . . do their writing.
As stated earlier, all of the teachers were sensitive to the ELL students’ needs in terms of their being with students with whom they could feel success. In the second recall session with Kate, I was asking her why she had grouped the ELL students the way she did for a social studies lesson I had observed. She had placed each ELL student with a mixed-ability, mixed-language-strength (meaning either stronger in French or stronger in English) group. She gave both academic and socialization reasons for her grouping strategies. The first excerpt demonstrates the academic reason for the grouping for a lesson on making a topographic map:

[With this kind of mixed grouping] there’s a better chance they’ll (the ELL students) speak English to the students in their group and . . . there’ll be first language kind of English. I didn’t want the [ELL students] . . . glumped together because then they don’t, they just speak French obviously and . . . they go together all the time because they’re always going to ESL together and I take any chance that I get to have them not be glumped together and instead to be around natural English being used. You know? And then this project in particular I’m really seeing . . . you know they’re just really taking off, the boys that came in September, I mean there’s [Pierrette] too, but the three boys that came in September.

Kate then mentioned more of the socialization aspect of the grouping in other students in the class being able to see how far the ELL students had come in their knowledge of English and thus give the ELL students a boost of confidence. She said:

You know this project is really kind of . . . showing the other students how much the [ELL students] understand. It’s really also really showing the other students how much [the ELL students] understand because they will really sit there and listen to my instructions now, and they (the ELL students) get it basically. You know. And so, that’s a great chance . . . when they’re working in a small group to go over and say, you know speak English to him because he really gets it. You know I just keep reminding the kids, the [ELL students] understand what you’re saying! They really do, and . . . the boys are nodding, and I think the kids are surprised, cause they don’t, they’re so used to speaking French with them. So yeah that’s definitely, putting them in separate groups, there was no doubt a purpose there. Absolutely.
In my first recall session with Rose, I asked her how she grouped students as I noticed that the ELL students were at various tables throughout the classroom. Rose mentioned both academic reasons and social reasons when she responded to my question:

Well these are the tables where the students sit and I move them according to . . . everyone is going to change one or two people. But . . . then these groups have worked together before . . . and . . . the groups worked well together. They did the Native Americans [projects in] this way. In those groups (mixed-ability, mixed language groups).

So, and the students basically work all the time as a group. Cause they’re always sharing with each other. So . . . the [ELL students] are sitting with . . . a group where I think they will get the best help. And with people who are . . . who are tolerant.

Comfortable environment. The teachers in this study felt that it was critical to provide a comfortable classroom environment for their ELL students in particular to give them the encouragement and safety to participate and succeed in class. The teachers facilitated this in numerous ways: through using explicit messages in the classroom that all students are learners, focusing not just on mistakes their ELL students’ make but on all students’ mistakes and through choosing ELL students’ work as examples for other students to emulate.

Kate provided an excellent example of how she provides what I am defining as a comfortable environment when we were discussing a lesson I observed. In this example, we see how Kate shows that all of her students’ are learners focusing on all students’ mistakes to demonstrate that all of her students need to improve upon their English, not just the ELL students. In this way, she facilitates a comfortable environment for the ELL students. This excerpt comes from our second recall session:
I try to set that tone of just . . . yeah, it’s that mistakes are all natural, they’re all part of the learning process and they’re nothing to be embarrassed about. In fact they’re something to learn from. I definitely can feel with the kids at the beginning of the year this sort of bristling almost that happens cause they’re not used to the teacher just saying no that’s not correct . . . sometimes I feel that they’re not used to teachers actually being . . . corrective of them. It’s sort of like even with the English grammar kind of corrections; and I can at the beginning of the year I can kind of feel some of them, and even the native English speakers where I’ll fix their pronunciation or I’ll correct a grammatical mistake, and . . . they kind of get their backs up, and I just kind of keep doing it, and then the [native English speakers] start to just realize that oh ok . . . it’s not like a life changing event . . . So yeah, absolutely, that’s just a huge . . . factor for all the students and that is particularly helpful for the ELL students because then . . . they don’t have to be afraid of making mistakes either, you know? And I almost purposefully will correct the English of the English speakers. Just to sort of say to them . . . you make mistakes too. You know, we’re all on a spectrum here, you know it’s not like there’s a box of the kids who make mistakes, and there’s a box of the kids who don’t make mistakes. It’s more like there’s a spectrum and we’re all at different places making different mistakes about different things and you’re all going to be corrected because you all need to try to improve your English in whichever way it needs to be improved, whether it’s choosing more interesting vocabulary words or varying sentence structure or if it’s just being able to make a complete sentence, you know?

Another example from Kate comes from my third recall session. I am asking her about how I noticed that she explains vocabulary words not just to the ELL students but to all of her students. She also will often ask her ELL students for a vocabulary word in French. In this way, she creates a comfortable environment for the ELL students by creating this feeling of a community of learners in the classroom. Below is an excerpt from that dialogue:

I feel like it also takes the burden off the ELL kids that I only explain the words to them. That can make them feel like we’re the dumb ones, we’re the ones who don’t know these words, so I’ll stop and explain a fairly simple word to the ELL kids but at the same time I’ll stop and explain a word to the English speaking kids who may not know that word. The whole tone of the class is we’re all here learning and we’re all learning different vocabulary words, but it’s a . . . you know that I often times I will, I’ll ask [the ELL students] for words in French to show them my interest in expanding my vocabulary, that I’m also a language
learner . . . I’m asking them to show that I’m also a language learner so that the whole tone of the class is language acquisition.

Another example of the teachers’ wanting to provide their ELL students with a comfortable environment comes from a recall session with Liz. I was asking her about a lesson I observed where she specifically used examples of ideas an ELL student had generated about being an “expert.” I asked her why she chose to highlight this student’s work in particular, and she said that it was part of helping the ELL students, and other students who have particular needs, to “feel good” about their efforts:

I think . . . you know just . . . if we have [ELL students], like [Rodrigo] who may be struggling in English, but you know at the same time, I have a child with Aspergers, to come over to him and to be able to highlight his work, and [Jake] has some behavioral issues, so all of them from time to time have something that they may be struggling with, but as much as possible . . . to go around and [highlight their work] . . . and the [other] kids recognize it . . . I’m sure the [other students] see that he’s, his English isn’t . . . as proficient as theirs. But again like they all are an expert at something . . . I do try to just . . . to . . . to make them, especially the ELL students, feel good about what they’re doing, and that they’re successful too.

Occurrences Where Numbers Differed Significantly Between Contexts

Focus on academic language. This is the first of four categories where the differences between teachers in the bilingual context and monolingual contexts were the greatest. In each case, the number of occurrences for the bilingual teachers was far less than those of the monolingual teachers.

Teachers in each context demonstrated a focus on academic language; that is, not just the conversational language that is commonly acquired quickly, but rather the academic language that is required for students to be successful in school. Cummins (1981) referred to this as the difference between what he termed “BICS,” basic interpersonal communication skills, and “CALP,” cognitive academic development.”
the monolingual context, teachers demonstrated a greater number of occurrences where they were focused on ELL students’ academic language development. Through their careful preparation and planning, teachers demonstrated their knowledge of their ELL students’ general academic language needs for all content areas, units and lessons.

One major area in which I was able to observe this planning for academic language needs was in the teachers’ focus on expanding their ELL students’ repertoires for effective writing. For example, teachers provided tools to aid their ELL students’ with their writing, such as posters, thesauruses, picture dictionaries, models, and other visuals. The teachers found these tools to be particularly helpful for the ELL students’ writing in several ways: expanding their ELL students’ word choice in their descriptive writing; helping the ELL students incorporate key content area words into their writing; and aiding ELL students to understand the benefit of planning before writing.

For example, here Liz is talking to the class about word choice in their writing. She is using an example of a story she had written on chart paper about a ride on Space Mountain in Disney World. She was reading it to the class to get them to see how word choice is very important in writing. This excerpt comes from one of the first recorded observations:

. . . began to shiver, I know that it talks about shiver over here, scariest ride, even that word scariest we can add a little bit more vocabulary there. Um . . . began to shiver. Ok, and certainly looking at dimension, the other thing that I used to say when I taught second grade . . . boys and girls, is this part here. Space mountain is very very scary. Now when I taught second grade, the kids used to write the monster was really, really, really, really, really big. Well, what I was thinking, you could have fifteen really, but really really really, one after the other, in someone’s mind, it doesn’t necessarily make that monster any bigger. Tell us more about that monster. It has colored teeth. Its hair was sticking five feet out of it, ok? Its ears were two feet long. But to say, that it, boys, really really really big, does not give us many details about the monster.
With this example, we see that Liz has planned out her lesson to be sure that she is focused on word choice, which, in talking with her later, was the focus of the lesson. She uses concrete examples here to help the students connect to what she means by word choice. Liz also talked about using posters and other visuals to help her ELL students expand their word choice. In the following example, she talks about two charts she has on the wall of her class to help students, particularly ELL students, make more effective word choices in their writing:

I also tried to put . . . words up on a chart just for the [ELL students] to visually see the words also. I do keep that chart, the “then” chart, up throughout the year (see picture below) just for them to be able to use that. It’s almost a cheat sheet for them to look through. They do have a mini thesaurus and transitional words in their writing folder, but I think for them to see it constantly up in the classroom, they’re going to, from my experience, they’re more willing to use something that is constantly up than having to open up their folder and to look through. As much as I would like them to be able to do that because the one in their folder is more in depth, but I think they’re going to use something that is more visual and constantly there. And in the past I’ve seen [ELL] students constantly look up at the poster. I have another “worn out words” poster that they’ll get up in the middle of writing time and constantly go over there. But at the same time, you need to explicitly teach this to them. That if it’s just something that is hanging up in the classroom they will not use it. They need to have someone point it out, that it is a tool for them to be able to use.

Also, I think . . . for the [ELL students] to realize that there are charts and tools for them to use throughout the year [Figures 4 and 5], I’m glad that we do this lesson in the beginning of the year just because especially in September you typically get “then then then then,” you know in every single sentence, and just let’s start off the year, here’s some tools that you can use to increase our vocabulary, increase our word choice.
Figure 6.4. “Then” word choice chart.
Figure 6.5. “Synonyms” word choice chart.

Another example from Liz comes from our first recall session in which I am asking her about her academic language objectives for a lesson I observed. She discusses here her thinking processes before presenting the lesson on transitional words and phrases within a social studies unit on mapping skills. She describes how she wanted the ELL students to not only be able to use transitional words and phrases effectively, but also to incorporate content area vocabulary:

[The academic language] focus was definitely transitional phrases but at the same time we were incorporating skills from our social studies curriculum, the mapping unit, so, using north, south, east and west, using . . . I mean those are the big ones.

So they were putting together a lot in there. There was a lot of vocabulary included in this lesson. And I think just constantly using those vocabulary words
throughout the day. The social studies curriculum words, the vocab words there, they had probably at this point had two or three weeks of experience using the transitional words, that might have actually been October 16th, so they had had at least a month that was our . . . first full week of school, we started in on mapping skills, so these weren’t new words to them. But certainly the transitional words, that was new, that was the new added [language] piece of that lesson.

Jane also focused a great deal on academic language in her preparation and planning. Here she describes what aspects of academic language she was trying to convey in a lesson I observed on writing. She wanted her ELL students to expand upon their ability to use a variety of more sophisticated words to describe objects. She explains in this excerpt how she used brainstorming and what she called “backwards description” to build the ELL students’ descriptive vocabulary. This excerpt is from our first recall session where I ask her about what aspect of academic language she was hoping to teach the students in the lesson:

Well one piece was . . . words that you can use to describe things. I think that was you know the biggest piece. I think . . . knowing the difference between words like rough and smooth, or what . . . you know are colors bright or dull. So we talked about different aspects of what you see, and . . . really . . . what . . . I think like . . . really getting at how can you be the most specific that you can be.

[And for the ELL students in particular] the target was to be, to be able to look at an object . . . think of words and be able to write them down because I think you know when you have a limited vocabulary in a language, it’s really difficult to describe something because . . . you do have those you know restrictions about the language. So . . . working with us when we were brainstorming different words you could use [was good for them]. And before we did that lesson we had done a lot about our objects in class and had used a lot of words, so we had done maybe four or five other things that we had described too. So . . . you know, getting a, giving the children a lot of vocabulary that they could use to describe was specifically targeted for the ELL children.

And we also did like a backwards description, like I described something and they had to figure out what it was . . . and then one day we had everyone . . . take off their sneaker or shoe, and describe their shoe and then we put all the
shoes out and when I read the description, they had to figure out whose was whose.

Jane also mentioned an important academic language focus for her ELL students was to be sure that they planned out their writing before they began to write. She felt that making a list of words first, brainstorming, was an easier way for the ELL students to then be able to construct sentences. She said:

I think the [ELL students] definitely liked doing the list [of words], and I think one of the things we emphasize in first grade, and I think that goes on throughout the grades, is that you can’t, you shouldn’t just write it off the top of your head. You really always have to plan, and that not everything has to have the same kind of plan. You can do one kind of plan or a different kind of plan, but I think making the list and then going back and trying to put those words into sentences is easier for the ELL children.

And I also try to get the [ELL students] to not have their big focus just be the colors of things . . . so I said . . . I tried to limit them that if their thing were red, blue, yellow, black and white that they couldn’t use five of the lines for that. They had to write all the colors on one line. And then . . . (she laughs) and then think of other things because they could fill all the lines with colors. I say, that’s not a description! It’s just a list of colors! (laughs)

Language objectives. Though all of the teachers had language objectives in their preparation and planning, the teachers in the monolingual contexts had a great number of occurrences in this category. In determining the language objectives for a particular lesson or unit, teachers would make explicit the language demands of the content they wanted/needed to teach, and they worked to be sure to focus upon this particular language so that the ELL students could participate successfully in the lessons. These objectives were more specific language goals for each lesson or unit in addition to general objectives for all students, such as understanding the idea of estimating.

In the following example taken from one of the observations I did in Liz’s class, Liz is talking to the students about writing a play. She is emphasizing here the
differences between the language of writing an imaginative story and that of writing a play:

What we’re going to be doing today . . . for our language arts . . . block . . . is you . . . either independently or with a group, are going to be writing today . . . a colonial play. Ok? (kids are excited). There are some differences . . . from . . . doing imaginative writing which we’ve been working really really hard on . . . and . . . doing a play . . . and I know all of you love writing dialogue . . . We love having characters talk . . . but so often we have to say . . . you know, have the narrator tell the story. For a play . . . now you get to have . . . the characters do the talking. But when we’re writing a play, the people or animals, that are in the story we call that the cast (wait time). Ok, those are . . . who . . . the people are in your play. And instead of using the word setting, which we use during our imaginative writing . . . instead of using the word setting, it’s now what? (wait time). The scene . . . ok? So where the story . . . where the play takes place (wait time). We’re going to call that the scene. So if you go from one area, a classroom . . . that’s one scene . . . to a home, that’s another scene. Ok? Then . . . there’s something called stage directions. These can be really fun to write about. [Asuko], these are the movements, the things that . . . the characters do. Ok? . . . so they’re the movements or the actions . . . the characters take . . . so and you get to write that. So, we’re going to read a little bit . . . about . . . creating our own play.

Creating a play . . . who would like to begin reading that for us? [Alex] go for it . . . (student reads aloud). Good, before we continue on . . . parentheses, what the characters do . . . If you’re talking about a character moving somewhere . . . she ran down the street . . . period . . . you’ll put . . . what the character does . . . [John], in parentheses . . . ok?...these bracket looking things, that’s going to show what the character does. Those are the stage directions.

Here we see Liz making explicit comparisons between writing an imaginative story and a play. She contrasts the vocabulary needed as well as conventions such as parentheses. Liz has clearly planned the language objectives of the lesson ahead of time to be sure that the students understand the differences between the language of a story and that of a play. She also had the terms displayed on a chart (Figure 6.6).
Another example comes from Jane in the excerpt below from one of our recall sessions about a math lesson she did on estimating. She talks here about language objectives in terms of connecting similar language from other lessons to aid the ELL students in understanding the word estimating in math:

The first objective was to go over what estimating was and to think about what would make a good estimate because we had done an exercise on estimating and the [ELL] children were kind of way off the target. As the first-grade team, we talked about doing a lesson on estimating.

But we’d also been working on measuring, so we wanted to put the two together. So we wanted them to estimate their heights because we’d been talking about inches and how big an inch is and how that works, and then seeing if they could get close to what their real height was.
And relating estimating to what they already knew, which was like making--a hypothesis, which is what we had talked about before in language arts which was prediction.

And in science we had drawn theses hypotheses, about why--hypotheses--why they thought the moon got smaller and bigger, so about hypotheses, kind of relating that--estimating is the term we use in math and hypothesis is what we use in science and predicting is kind of the term we use for a similar thing in language arts. The language objective for the ELL students was to get the terminology of what estimating is.

Jane continued to discuss some of the other math terms with which the ELL students can have trouble, such as heavier and lighter. She said:

For this specific lesson, I know that there are certain terms [with which the children who are ELL] have a really hard time, especially like heavier and lighter, remembering which one is which, or greater than and less than, remembering which one is which. So I did want to spend a little extra time with some of the ELL children.

So I did spend extra time every day that week going to that group just making sure all of them understood, heavier means like a balance would go down--because we actually did heavier and lighter, the balances earlier in the year back in January and talked about the term. So everybody remembered it and remembered what it meant. And actually most of the [ELL students] did say, “Oh, if it’s heavier it’s going to go down, like that.”

I feel like I constantly have to reinforce the language for the ELL students. Like, is it longer is it shorter? Is it the same? So always going over those terms, because they’re terms that always come up all the time in math and for them to get the good basis, so is it higher or is it lower, is it shorter or taller? I think that they’re terms that always make me think about the ELL students. They really have a hard time with those terms. The comparisons, I think, are the issue.

Here we see Jane is aware of the types of language for certain concepts that will be challenging for her ELL students and how she sets goals for her language instruction in order to be sure that the students understand and can participate effectively in the lessons.
*Word rich environment*. Both Jane and Liz had more occurrences than Kate and Rose in the category of word rich environment. All teachers demonstrated a word rich environment in their “pushing” their ELL students, and all of their students, to expand upon their vocabulary. They used multiple methods of providing this environment including a focus on word derivations, using more complex vocabulary with their students, and being constantly aware of the importance of building ELL students’ language. Again, though Kate and Rose provided word rich environments, the number of occurrences in this category was much higher for Liz and Jane.

Below is an excerpt from my first recall session with Liz about a lesson she did on transitional words and phrases. I told her that I noticed that she was constantly coming up with synonyms for words she was using and/or asking for definitions of words, and I asked her whether or not she noticed that she did this:

I do. I sometimes feel like I’m a human thesaurus . . . that I do try to throw out vocabulary words; and then I’ll even say, a synonym for that is, or this means. So, so constantly, because you can’t just keep . . . speaking in just, um, common everyday language, that you do need to . . . raise the bar on the [ELL students’] vocabulary while understanding that it may be difficult for them but then to . . . show them what those words mean. And sometimes even say, which means . . . and then explain the definition or whatever it is, so, I do try to do that.

Jane also provided a word rich environment for her ELL students. In the excerpt below from our second recall session, she is talking about the fact that though it is important for beginning ELL students to obviously have the basic vocabulary in order to function in the classroom, it becomes critical as ELL students acquire more English to expand upon this vocabulary in ways like using word derivations. She talks first about the limitations of the first-grade picture dictionaries and then how she uses the word derivation strategy as a word learning tool:
The thing about first-grade picture dictionaries . . . are . . . that they are really basic . . . and . . . they’re almost based on vocabulary that the [ELL students I have have] already acquired, so it’s like people in your family and they know the people in their family, but it’s more like that next step of vocabulary that I think is more challenging for the [ELL students] because they are proficient in that basic vocabulary.

I mean they know the difference between an apple and a grape, but when I say which one do you like better, like that term, the comparing, that’s part of the language that is more difficult. So I try to be more specific about seasons and different things like that so that way they are picking it up more. And the other day, I had written the message “it will be another frigid day.” So then I had them try to figure out what frigid meant and I said well where have you heard fridge before, and they said refrigerator, and I said what does a refrigerator do, and they said it keeps things cold, and it was cold outside, and that’s one of those big reading things where they try to figure out unknown vocabulary.

Jane mentioned that she wanted to continue to use these kinds of word building strategies with her ELL students as she felt these are effective and contribute to this idea of a word rich environment for ELL students.

Occurrences Where the Number was Much Higher for Liz Than the Other Teachers

Organization and exemplars and models. There were two areas in the planning and preparation phase in which there were a greater number of occurrences for Liz than for the other three teachers. The areas were organization and exemplars and models. Organization is defined as having specific lesson plans and objectives for ELL students. The category of exemplars and models is defined as those prepared before the lessons were taught so that ELL students had models of what was expected of them in the outcome of the lesson. Again, all of the teachers demonstrated organization and exemplars and models in their planning phases, but Liz had the greatest number of occurrences. Therefore, examples from Liz’s planning and preparation will be highlighted.
Liz was highly organized in ways that benefited her ELL students’ opportunities for learning. She thought through her lessons ahead of time to be sure her directions and expectations would be clear for her students. She prepared lesson materials with her ELL students in mind which provided the ELL students with scaffolded steps and a logical progression from one step to another.

In the quote below during our first recall session, I asked Liz about how she prepared for the lesson. The example demonstrates how she thinks through her lessons ahead of time:

The night before I went through it and really just went step by step, um . . . analyzing how the ELL students would perceive the lesson, would it be clear . . . I even had someone else, I had my fiancé look through it just to see if this would be clear for him, someone who’s not necessarily in the field and just to make sure it’s clear.

Below is another example of her organization which highlights her preparation of materials to scaffold her ELL students’ learning. For this lesson, the students were writing about something about which they were an expert. Liz prepared materials for the students for each piece of the writing process: a graphic organizer (“web” page), a picture page, the title page, and a page on which to list questions. Liz is talking through what the expectations are for this lesson and is showing the students each sheet they will need to use:

So we’re going to start a web today [John] too, ok? The next thing we’re going to start is our title sheet (she holds this up) . . . and you’re still starting to think of ideas. And then what I did next . . . it’s a question answer page (she holds this up), and we’re going to ignore that for right now, all you have to do is color in . . . is color in . . . the first picture page, with your ingredients. Why are we doing this? We’re doing this so it can help you generate a list of things that you need. And as you’re drawing, you might say, oh yes, I need this, or I forgot that I could certainly use that.
People who are doing sports, what could we use? What could we draw? (students answer). Perfect, certain type of pants . . . great . . . there you go . . . we’ll start with the cover. We’ll start with our cover, then we’ll go onto our picture page. Then . . . I would like you to use this graphic organizer (holds it up to show students). It says right here, the graphic organizer, [Susie], and I’d like you to start making a cluster. You can either do it up here on the side, on the back, whatever works for you, just so you can start to make a list of your items. Use your pictures to help you . . . so you’d say, ok, spoons, jar, whipped cream, scooper, um, the ice cream flavor, hot fudge, the cherry, I mean, the more that I was doing this, the more I realized I actually needed, even a jar, a bowl . . . I almost forgot to put that down, so think of every single thing you’ll need, make your list.

And this is where I’m going to start to have you put . . . question one . . . question one (holds up paper), is where you’ll put . . . the question about the ingredients or supplies. Yes? (student asks question). For today I’m just going to have you do the list about supplies . . . or ingredients, yes? (student asks question). Yes . . . yes, I’m going to let you do the picture first and the reason for that is so it can help you generate ideas. Then on this . . . graphic organizer I’m going to have you start to write the question, the reason I’m not going to have you jump right in onto, this is our final copy page, is because if I have to correct any of your spelling, if there are any errors that we made, I want to correct them before we go on to the final copy. So, I don’t think you have to make a rough draft picture, so I figure we can do the supplies here first . . . so . . . you may start with the cover, then the picture. After that, now I’m going to time us, I’m going to give us a short amount of time, and then I’m going to say, now we need to move on to making a cluster list on the graphic organizer. I’ll give you one of these first, give you the packet first, and then I’m going to say, it’s time for us to start to work on the graphic organizer.

Again we see how organized she is in terms of prepping the students and having materials ready to help them be successful with the assignment.

With regard to exemplars and models, Liz also had a greater number of occurrences in this category. She consistently had exemplars and models for her ELL students to follow so that they knew what was being asked of them for the outcome of a lesson. The first example of this comes from my notes during an observation from the second round of observations where I am noting how Liz is using a descriptive paragraph example she wrote about being a scoop of blueberry ice cream. She takes the
students through her thought processes in terms of coming up with vocabulary to go with each of the five senses, and then reads her paragraph example aloud to the students. Again, this comes from my notes:

She shows the students the paragraph she has been working on the big chart paper. She does quick sketches and shows them to the class. She explained that she thought of an ice cream cone first. Then thought about being a blueberry (has the visuals drawn on the paper). Then she shows a smaller sheet with same sketches on it. On the paper she said to think about their five senses. She has them listed on the large paper. See, Feel, Smell, Sound, Taste. She has examples of these things as a ball on an ice cream cone. For SEE she has spoon, ice cream cone, light from freezer, other scoops of ice cream. She has for FEEL cold/shivers from freezer, hot fudge, feel being lifted up, other scoops around me. SMELL hot fudge, being poured on. SOUND dripping sound of ice cream melting, hear kids making “happy sounds.” TASTE hot fudge on me, taste the cone below me.

She tells them to think of synonyms--has chart for five senses for words that mean the same thing for see, feel, smell, sound, taste. She gives examples of these things. See: look glance, notice, saw, observe. FEEL: touch, grab, stroke, pain, ouch, pinch. She asks students to think about how you would feel. Some words involved with SMELL scent, you might inhale, grasp, breathe in, whiff, aroma, draw in.

Words that may go along with the sense of sound--noise, I hear the noise of children laughing, hear, heard, listen, observe. The last sense on the chart is taste--tongue, nibble, lick, bite, delicious--put this down thinking that this is a word that might be helpful to you.

She reads her own story out loud. “Hello, I am a single scoop of blueberry flavored ice cream. It has been a wonderful life so far. Please let me tell you my tale: I woke up early today and I could see a bright light shine into my freezer where I live. Someone suddenly stuck in a large, silver spoon, and I could feel myself . . . the smell was just too delicious. A small bite of fudge went into my mouth. Oh what a treat this was to my tongue as I tasted the rich chocolate the taste of the sugar cone was also a joyous snack, drip, drip, drip, the sound of melting ice cream can be heard falling to the floor. I now hear the giggles of laughter of a young girl. Oh my, I see that she is going to dine on me. She will certainly enjoy me and eat the rest of this ice cream delight.”

A second example of having thought about exemplars and models for the students in the planning and preparation phase comes from our second recall session
when I am asking Liz about the example she had written for a lesson about being an expert. She talked about the importance of having a model for the ELL students to follow:

I wanted to model the expectation. So . . . the [ELL students] can see . . . what’s . . . what they . . . what should, their end product should look like. So as much as possible I make sure I have that done. So I did it on chart paper just so the entire class could see it but also I wanted to show the ELL students a final copy of what . . . their product should look like. So I did both of those. I . . . did . . . some vocabulary words that I thought they might need to be able to use. And I made sure again that . . . I passed out their expert sheets. So this was their . . . you want to call it their rough draft, but at the same time I made sure that they had their final copy paper so they could start doing some of the pictures too.

I think with writing, our third-grade team has talked about that--to show a model. And . . . to . . . I think it’s . . . metacognition, to think about your thinking, and to show them how I was thinking and how I went through the process. And . . . you know hopefully, they’ll start to . . . you know think about their thinking and their writing that much more, so I’m . . . actually modeling that to show them that this, these are the steps that I went through.

In-class Practices

The teachers in both contexts, monolingual and bilingual, shared commonalities in their in-class practices with ELL students. These practices fell into the categories listed below. Those practices that had the highest number of occurrences among all teachers will be discussed first. I will then stress and provide instances of the practices that were more frequent in a particular context. Next, I will again underscore the practices that had a higher number of occurrences with one particular teacher than with the other teachers in the study. Finally, I will provide examples from the remaining categories in which the number of occurrences was relatively equal for all teachers, but lower than the other categories.
Use of visuals. Teacher’s use of visuals as a tool for ELL students to better access the curriculum was a category with the highest number of occurrences during the teachers’ lessons. The use of visuals included posters, videos, drawings, artwork, and books, among others.

Table 6.2
Number of Occurrences: In-class Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Kate bilingual context</th>
<th>Rose bilingual context</th>
<th>Liz monolingual context</th>
<th>Jane monolingual context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B. In-class Practices (during lessons)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Use of visuals&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Explicitness&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>73</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>77</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Frequent check-ins with ELL students&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>74</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Use of first language&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Repetition of key vocabulary and phrases&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Routines&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Prompting/coaching&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>162</td>
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<td>8. Use of exemplars/models&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>10. Gestures</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Rephrasing</td>
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<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Making connections</td>
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<td>42</td>
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<td>50</td>
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<td>13. Slow speech</td>
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<td>29</td>
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<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Humor</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. Grouping</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. Selective about corrections in writing</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>Occurrences that were the highest for all teachers
<sup>b</sup>Occurrences that were higher in certain contexts
<sup>c</sup>Occurrences that were higher for Liz

As an example, the following excerpt is from a lesson I observed that Kate did on topographic maps. Notice here how she uses drawings from students to demonstrate
contour lines using the terms “mountain,” “mesa,” and “canyon” that, she explained later, she felt were key to understanding topographic maps and with which she felt the ELL students may have difficulty understanding without the visuals. She adds the detail of naming the drawing the student does on the board after the student him/herself:

Question number two, somebody read it for us? [Michelle]? (she reads). What would the contour lines look like for a mountain?...for a mesa?...or for a canyon? Who would like to try a mountain for us on the board? [Jean]? (he comes up to the board). Mount [Jean] (laughs) . . . I think you need your lines spaced differently just so we can have a question about it, just go ahead, that’s ok . . . good, you guys agree that’s a mountain? . . . ohhhh, very good [Kelly], why could it be a hole? . . . right, it just means the elevation is changing either to a point, or to a hole . . . so, what does he need to do to make it show that it’s a mountain? You need to put some numbers, so let’s see, how tall is Mount [Jean]? A billion? Then you’re not on planet earth, which in your case is maybe appropriate (laughs). So, let’s start it, let’s start with 200, start at 200 that seems like a good starting point, yeah, you kind of just write it right next to the number, put the next one up is 400 maybe, and then as soon as you have a couple of numbers, we know what direction we’re going and you don’t need to label actually every single line [Jean], ok? Ok. So. That’s a very very pointy pointy mountain, right (gestures here and points to the board)? Um . . . but it’s still, I think it’s still a mountain, it’s just a very pointy mountain. All right, who would like to try to do the mesa for us, [Sophie], try the mesa. So let’s . . . write my words up here for the ESL guys. All right, mesa . . . good, mesa [Sophie], so do you guys agree that this would be a mesa? (wait time) . . . a mesa [Sophie] . . . um, and what’s the, what’s the difference between a mountain and the mesa? The contour lines, [Mark]? (he answers). Right, so there are no more lines here, what does that mean about this area? (wait time). It’s flat, or a very, there’s not enough elevation change that you’d actually go up 10 feet for another contour line, so the top of the mesa is flat, and she’s labeled it so it shows that it goes . . . up . . . instead of down, which we need, I would be surprised to see a mesa that was a perfect square in nature. I’ve never seen one that was a perfect square, but . . . maybe, you never know. All right, any questions about these two? (wait time). All right, canyon . . . a canyon was the other one that we thought we’d try, um . . . (laughs) you’re all going to be doing these on your own maps in a little while . . . um . . . I don’t like kids who stand up and scream in my face, [Alex]? (he draws on board). So this is a canyon . . . just stop immediately, do you think that so far that this is . . . this is ok? . . . So what do you think the problem with this is? (wait time) . . . too steep? . . . [Patrick]? . . . yes, a canyon isn’t . . . closed . . . right? A canyon is sort of open, and what’s usually in the middle of the canyon, a river, so maybe a good place to start is to just give yourself a blue line and give yourself a river so you sort of know that it’s there. So we have a
river in the middle of our canyon [Alex]. You guys agree that that looks . . . like a canyon? . . . ok, shhhhhh . . . tell me about this (student answers). It’s like two mountains next to a river . . . it’s more like a cliff, a longer cliff . . . right . . . so it’s more like the contour lines should be . . . um . . . just sort of next to, if you have the river here . . . you just have . . . the contour lines kind of going . . . up . . . on each side (she is drawing on the board) . . . and then what happens, that way and this way would have to sort of know the bigger landscape, but in general, the canyon just sort of goes along the edges of the river and sort of like that and then there has to be a starting point up here some place, so you have to see the bigger landscape to get it but it wouldn’t necessarily be closed on each side. So, this is canyon . . . oh my markers . . . canyon [Alex] . . . all right, so that gives you a little starting point for some of the things you’ll be putting on your maps, yes, questions?

From this lesson, the students in Kate’s class, in mixed language groups, went on to design their topographic maps which were then used to create model islands (Figure 6.7).

![Figure 6.7. Example of model island.](image)
A second example of using visuals to aid ELL students in particular, comes from my notes during an observation of Jane in which she is doing a lesson with her students about descriptive writing. Jane has pictures on the classroom walls representing the senses which she keeps up for the particular use of her ELL students so that they can constantly refer to them. Jane also uses the visual strategy of drawing a picture of a word she is saying while she is saying it. I remarked later in my notes how this keeps the ELL students focused and aids them in understanding the goal of the lesson, which is using descriptive words for the senses. The following are some excerpts from those notes during my observation:

She (Jane) has pictures and words on the window with pictures of five senses. Pictures of an eye, ear, hand, nose and mouth. She has descriptive words next to each picture: eye has: writing, colors, numbers, shape, size, pointy. Next to ear, she has scratchy, loud, crunchy, quiet, squeaky, drippy, snip, snap, fast, slow. Next to the hand, she has the words, rough, soft, smooth, bumpy, cozy, fluffy, cold, hot, heavy, light, warm, cool. Next to the nose picture, she has peppermint, sweet, spicy, rainy. Next to the mouth, it says salty, peppery, dull, sour, sweet, spicy, hot, cold.

She takes out pen/sharpee and she draws an eye on the chart paper and writes out the word “words” and then next to them, she puts sharpie, fine point, permanent marker. A student says that he sees a cap. She writes blue, gray, black on the chart paper. She asks what else they see. Someone talks about the shape, writes the words “long oval” on the board.

Then she asks what they feel, and she draws a hand on the chart paper. One of the ELL kids feels it and says it feels smooth. Another student comes up, and feels it. She writes smooth, and one bump where the clip is. She has another ELL student feel the pen. He says it feels hard. She writes the word hard on the paper. She writes that it opens and closes.

She asks if they can taste it. She draws a mouth and says no. Asks if you can hear it, and she draws an ear on the chart, and puts the word no next to it. Asks if you can smell it. Draws nose on the chart paper. She writes the word chemicals on the chart paper. She writes, “yuck! I do not like that it smells like chemicals” on the chart paper.
There is a word wall that is very prominent. Can really see the words.

We can see from this example how Jane uses visuals over and over again to connect concepts and language together. Later, when I was speaking with Jane during our recall session of this particular lesson, she explained why she feels it is critical to use visuals for the ELL students during her lessons:

I think it’s good for the [ELL] children, if they see a picture of it, and . . . that I’m expecting them to write about it, even if someone wasn’t sure of . . . what sense . . . feeling was or touching was . . . if they see the hand, I think they’d know what I would want them to do. Or if they saw the eye they would know what I would like them to do, so I think it gives children a sense with . . . ELL children . . . a chance to . . . look at it and be able to do it without . . . having to . . . spend a lot of time trying to figure out [what I’m asking them to do].

Explicitness. All four of the teachers in this study were very explicit with their ELL students about what to do for the lessons. That is, there were very clear instructions for the ELL students, ensuring that the ELL students knew what was being asked of them. In addition, when something needed to be corrected in the ELL students’ work, the teachers were very explicit with them about what to correct and how to do so.

During my second recall session with Rose, we discussed some of the challenges she thought some of her ELL students had during a particular lesson related to a legend Rose had read in class. In the legend, the main character needs to give up her most valued possession in order to appease the Gods. The girl in the legend decided to give up her only doll and burn it in a fire to help the rains return to the land. Rose thought it was a difficult concept for her ELL students, and for all of her students for that matter, to understand the difference between something being valuable in a monetary way, and the kind of valuable that was described in the legend. I coded this as explicitness due to her describing how thorough and “explicit” she needed to be for the
ELL students in particular for them to be able to access this content, and in observing her giving the students multiple examples to demonstrate this idea of “valued possession” during the lesson as well:

I think the ELL students make you focus more when you’re doing something. To make sure that whatever it is that you’re trying to teach them, or, you know, get across to them, that you do it, that you do it thoroughly, because there’s those who might not, you know, understand if you do it superficially, that you have to make sure that you’re, you hit all the corners. Because there are a few children who don’t understand everything you’re saying, so you have to . . . make sure that you . . . cover all, all the points.

In this lesson, I think for [the ELL students], specifically it was this most valued possession, what does that mean? It’s not valuable, it’s not something that costs a lot of money . . . but what’s valued to you. So . . . I think . . . the distinction between those two things. I think was important . . . cause I think they understand what something valuable is, it’s expensive, it costs a lot of money, you know, it’s very valuable, be careful with it I paid a lot of money for that, you know? But that’s not what it was, and I think that that was the most, the only thing that I thought I had to really go over with [the ELL students] carefully, that usually something that’s valued to you is given to you by someone that you hold dear, right? That’s special to you.

Kate also demonstrated explicitness in her teaching that aided the ELL students. This example comes from one of our recall sessions where I am asking her about her work with an ELL student who was in her second year of learning English. Kate talks here about the explicit way in which she works with this ELL student to correct mistakes in verb tense in her writing. Kate acknowledges here that one needs to repeat and repeat and repeat in an explicit way in order for the ELL students to eventually be able to correct the mistakes in their work; and even then, the tense may not be used correctly by the ELL student at all times:

She made a question with “did” and then used the past tense. That’s an extremely common mistake with these ELL kids. The other two do it too, actually some of the ones not in ESL still do it! I’m still correcting [Michelle] on it. I’ve explained it to her at this point you know fifteen times, and then in her
writing she’s still doing it, and I just keep on correcting her and waiting for it to settle in, that’s the best you know as you know. You’re going to explain the rule and they’re going to keep on making mistakes, and they start getting it right a little bit and they’re going to slip back. Same with there, their and they’re and wear and where, and that’s not just even the ELL kids. I’ve got native English speakers who are still really having trouble with that.

And then the writing journal of those [ELL] kids, if I see them make a mistake I’ll circle it and on the bottom of the page I’ll write it out so that it’s in their writing journal so when they are writing again, they can actually look back to remind themselves of what they are doing that’s incorrect and how to fix it.

A final example of the teachers’ being explicit with the ELL students to be sure that they understand what to do comes from the third observation I did of Liz in the first round where she was doing a lesson on transitional words and phrases. Here she is talking about the example she wrote as a model, and she is asking the students to identify the transitional words and phrases in her example. In having the students state the words and phrases out loud, she is being explicit about which words and phrases fit into this category and as such which to use in their own writing:

So, who can start us off? (wait time). [Laura], start us off. What’s one of the first transitional words I used . . . begin . . . excellent. [Tomiko] (ELL student), what would be another one I used? . . . now . . . even travel, I could have highlighted that one too . . . What would be another transitional word? We did now, travel and we added in the direction north, what would be something else? Another transitional word, transitional phrase, looking right at the writing, and you’ll see some more transitional words and phrases. So [Josh] looking right at the writing, what are some of the other transitional words and phrases I used? [Kevin] . . . very good, without delay, travel northeast. Ok? So, without delay, meaning do it right now, don’t wait. So keep traveling, without delay, without stopping . . . oh, definitely, move east, good, thank you [Ricardo] . . . someone we haven’t heard from, [Maya], begin, I think we might have heard that as a transitional word or phrase . . . exactly, go north, that’s another one, I think we mentioned them all.

Liz took a great deal of time during this lesson to point out the transitional words and phrases to be sure the ELL students understood the concept. In this sense,
she was very explicit about how to identify and effectively use transitional words and phrases by providing concrete examples for the ELL students to follow.

_Frequent check-ins with ELL students._ The final category in which there was the greatest number of occurrences for all of the teachers is frequent check-ins with ELL students. All of the teachers, time and time again, made certain that the ELL students understood what was being asked of them. They would constantly go to the ELL students during and after presenting lessons to be sure that they knew what to do, and in this way, to ensure their success.

One example comes from Jane. The following excerpt is from my notes during an observation I did in the second round of observations where the students are working on their descriptive writing. Here she is working with [Rodrigo], one of her ELL students who is writing about his dinosaur that he brought in for this assignment. She went to him and the other ELL students frequently during this observation to help them with what to say and how to say it correctly in English. Here she works with [Rodrigo] on formulating sentences by using questioning techniques with him, and she helps him with specific areas of language, such as plural forms in English:

She goes over to [Rodrigo] to work with him. She helps him to formulate his sentences correctly. She writes it directly on the paper. She shows him how “it is hard” is a good sentence. She suggests that they put the eyes part with the other things he said about how it looks. She helps him with the plural of colors by asking him if there are 1 or 2 colors, and that we put “s” when it has more than one.

She asks him to get another small sheet. He knows what to do and where to go. She prompts him to tell her about [the dinosaur’s] tail. She writes it down for him on the paper, its tail is long. She asks him to tell her about its legs—he says “middle,” and she says his legs are middle size. She asks him what is coming off the legs. He says “claws”–she asks how many claws are on each foot. Then she
prompts him with the closing sentence. She says I play with it when I want to play with my toys. She writes this down for him.

A second example comes from an observation of Kate done in the third round of observations. Here she is working with a small group of students, several of whom are the ELL students, on math problems. She is ensuring here that the students understand certain math concepts, such as radius and diameter, “regular shapes,” and the differences among triangles, to prepare the ELL students for an upcoming math test. She does this by questioning the students, waiting for a response, and then checking in with them repeatedly to be sure concepts are understood:

Ok . . . next one, number 10 [Gustav] (ELL student] read that for us. (he reads). Circular. So what do you guys think? . . . circular table has a radius of 4 feet, radius of 4 feet, what is the diameter? . . . right, so 8 feet is the diameter . . . it’s easy. Because the radius is the distance from the center of the circle to the outside, and what is the diameter (wait time). Right, the distance all the way across going through the center, so if the radius is four, then the diameter is . . . 8 feet. Right [Helene] (ELL student)? You got that? Yes? Ok. Number 11, [Louise]? . . . ok, do you know what regular means? [Gustav], [Helene], [Jake] . . . who remembers what a regular polygon is?...this is a regular octagon, or a regular hexagon? (shows pictures)...the sides the same length, so is an equilateral triangle, is that a regular polygon? [Luc] (ELL student)? . . . yeah, what did I just say?...what does regular mean again? If a polygon is regular . . . what does regular mean again [Luc]? . . . math burn out is happening! [Helene] say it again for them . . . listen to [Helene] please . . . (she explains) . . . side being the same length, so like a square, is a square a regular polygon? Are the sides all the same? . . . (wait time). Yes . . . all right, is an equilateral triangle? Regular? . . . yes, cause what’s an equilateral triangle? All the sides are the same, so yes . . . that’s correct . . . ok?...so . . . yes . . . why? because that’s what . . . cause that’s what equilateral triangle means, the sides are the same length. All right, uh, 12, [Gustav] . . . Ok . . . exactly, scalene has no sides the same, so you have a triangle like this (draws the triangles on paper) . . . long . . . medium . . . three sides different length, that’s scalene, and isosceles is what? [Luc]? What’s isosceles? What’s isosceles? . . . (wait time)yes, exactly, good, a triangle that has two sides that have the same length . . . and the third side whatever, so these two sides . . . are the same . . . and a right triangle I think you know what that is. What is it again [Helene]? . . . (she answers) . . . yes, exactly, sort of named..it’s named correctly, and use that little square to show right . . . use that little square when you do a right triangle..ok, so practice this for Wednesday.
This is going to be very similar to this piece of paper. Hint, hint, hint . . . very similar . . .

We can see from this example how frequently she is checking in with the ELL students, even in this very small group setting. Kate clearly wants to be sure that the ELL students are comfortable with the concepts in order to succeed on the test. Even at the end of the example, she lets the ELL students know that the test will be “very similar” to what they just reviewed, again ensuring for them that they will be successful.

A final example is from Rose during our second recall session when I asked her about why she sat next to a particular ELL student during a read aloud in class. I noticed that she had done this frequently with her ELL students. She explained that ELL students tended to have difficulty with the read alouds in class but often wanted to participate in them. So, she made sure to be sitting next to them to help if necessary. During this recall session, she gave specifics about her reasoning for doing this:

I do, I do. I sit next to [the ELL students] . . . because I know that’s the hardest thing for ELL students to do is to read out loud. For [Pierre] in particular it’s physically, I think it’s, it’s physically difficult for him, because it’s not comprehension. He has a good head, and . . . a lot of information up there, but when it comes to reading, it’s very difficult for him. Just raising his hand and answering a question is easier. But, actually, when he actually has to read something he needs assistance, he needs the help. So that I’m there to give him the words if he needs them, if he can’t pronounce them, he can’t get them out.

You know, if the ELL students have a problem saying a word, I never, I never say no, that’s, not the word, I’ll just repeat the word, I’ll say . . . what was that word?...And I think what’s nice is that the other kids don’t, they just wait until [the ELL students] go through it.

Occurrences That Happened More in One Context Than Another

In this case, three categories had more occurrences in certain contexts than in others. In the bilingual context, the category of the use of the ELL students’ first
language (L1) had a greater number of occurrences than in the monolingual contexts. In the categories of repetition of key vocabulary and phrases and routines, the number of occurrences was the opposite. That is, the occurrences happened more often in the monolingual contexts than in the bilingual context.

*Use of the ELL students’ first language* (L1). Teachers in the bilingual context used the ELL students’ first language as a means of instruction whereas in the monolingual contexts, there was little to no use of the students’ first language. Teachers in the bilingual context used the ELL students’ native language for support in numerous ways: by giving simple translations of words or phrases to clarify concepts, by comparing structures in the students’ native language to English, by providing ELL students with the opportunity to do their writing in their native language, among others. The teachers in the bilingual context expressed that being able to use the ELL students’ first language gave the ELL students the sense of pride in their language and the understanding that their first language was valued by them and by the school.

In an example from Kate’s class in the third round of observations, she was presenting a social studies lesson in which she was talking with the students about how we learn about history. She was doing this as a way to introduce the idea of primary and secondary sources. In this excerpt, Kate is talking to an ELL student, [Helene], who had arrived about a month before this lesson with limited English. Kate is using Helene’s first language, French, to help her access the concepts Kate wants all of the students to know, again, how we learn about history and the differences between primary and secondary sources. This is an example of using ELL students’ first language vocabulary
to clarify concepts in English, and of allowing ELL students to compose their thoughts
and ideas in their native language. Kate says to [Helene]:

Ok, this one . . . what other ways can you learn about history? How do we learn
about history? How have you learned history? In your life? (to Helene). Dans ta
vie . . . (wait time) . . . (Helene answers) . . . ok? so write “in class” . . . and what
in class in particular do we do that makes you learn about history? . . . where the
facts, where the ideas come from . . . from a book? . . . Or a teacher? Or . . . look
at all the questions and as usual with this you can just skip through the questions
and do the ones that you . . . have things to write about . . . this one maybe you
can’t do, but how about this one, in what ways do we learn about history?
Comment tu apprends l’histoire? D’ou ca vient? (Helene responds in French) .
. . from your ancestors? ok, write that down, do you have a pencil or a pen? . . .
here . . . the question is how do we learn about history . . . where do you learn
about history? . . . And this question . . . do you understand this question? . . . Tu
comprends? . . . Then jot down some ideas if you have any ideas . . . dans cent
ans . . . how could you learn about life in 2007 . . . Comment tu peux apprendre
des choses sur maintenat s’il n’est pas des textes d’histoire? . . . that’s sort of
the idea, c’est l’idée. Ok?

Two more examples of Kate using the ELL students’ L1 come from my first
recall session with her about a family history project that she was having the students
do. The first part of the project was doing the interview and working on asking
questions, and the second part was the write-up of the interview. In the first excerpt
below, Kate talks about her reasoning for letting the ELL students use their first
language for the project. These reasons she gave were her not wanting to limit the ELL
students’ choices of family members to interview because of an English language
restriction, and wanting to affirm the school’s valuing its diversity and internationalism.
Kate begins here by explaining why she was allowing the ELL students to use their
native language, French in this case, for the project:

The reasoning is because of the reality of our school and students. This is a
family history project and many of their families are really from all over the
world, and I didn’t want to limit their choice of who they interviewed to the
English language because maybe some of the most interesting interviews might

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be with their grandmother who doesn’t speak any English. And you know and I think I wanted them to have the freedom of choice to . . . take a person they really would find the most interesting to talk to . . . I mean that’s why the family history project in our school is actually so fascinating is because the kids do have such amazing international blood lines and, I like to really have the family history projects represent them. I had one girl one year whose family history tree went back in the second generation back there were people from all of the continents of the world in her bloodline. So I guess it’s just recognizing that’s the reality and to me my classroom is the English classroom but clearly these students are speaking other languages every other day and at home and I’m very comfortable with that. As long as that eventually comes into me as an English assignment at the end so we can work on their English skills that’s fine with me.

I could help them translate, or a lot of parents in these situations could. And a lot of these French students their grandparents in France don’t speak English and I don’t want them not to be able to talk to their grandparents about their family because the kids really do learn a lot about their families and find it very interesting to talk to the grandmother who lived during world war 2 or you know. I don’t want language to be, there’s no reason why the English language should be a limiting factor on that part of the project.

In the second excerpt, I am asking her about the write-up of the family history project where she was giving the ELL students some of the vocabulary in French that they needed for the assignment. I asked her why she did this with her ELL students, and she said that giving the vocabulary or a quick translation of a phrase provided the ELL students with a “hook” into the lesson, allowed for the pace of the lesson to not be interrupted, and helped keep the ELL students engaged:

[I give the words in French] to give the kids a hook. You know . . . sometimes a quick little hook of just giving the word in French, it’s a time saver sometimes. Trying to go through long emotions of explaining the word in English to them, it just gives them a quick hook, so if time is an issue I’ll be slightly more likely to do that than I would if there were more time, but time is always an issue.

You know, [being able to give the words to the ELL students in French] it makes teaching these students a lot easier because we do have that hook with them. I just picture it as sort of sending down a fish hook in the water to help them, to pull them on board, and . . . you know because the goal is to keep them in the lesson as much as possible and engaged as much as possible, and if you lose them, then, you’re not gonna have any learning going on whether it’s
language acquisition or learning how to do a research project, so it’s just sort of a hook.

And, it also makes you happy that the ELL students feel comfortable asking for a word that they don’t understand. I kind of set that tone so strongly in my class that if you don’t know what I’m saying please ask me, and it’s, questions are good, ask me, ask me for ... you know, that it’s about learning, and that makes me happy that they would ask me instead of sitting there in the dark scratching their heads. That makes me happy.

Rose also used the students’ first language to help them access the English curriculum. This example taken from our third recall session on a math lesson I observed, shows how Rose helps her ELL students realize that what they learn in their L1 can help them with learning in English.

The names of the geometric shapes were words and concepts that they had learned in French. So when we did the work on polygons in English, I specifically said, what is it called in French?...And this is what it’s called in English. So that would give the vocabulary to the ELL children who didn’t know the English word.

And that’s what they’re just beginning to learn, now, in third grade, is that it’s--if you learn it in French, it’s going to help you in English, because sometimes it’s the same. But even the French word would explain to you what it is in English. They’re just beginning to realize that it’s not completely separate, but that you could use--that there’s spillover from both languages.

I think they--I think they know that as they get older I want to help them look at a word--and maybe look at--look at a beginning or an ending and say “Hey, that looks familiar. And so if it means this in French maybe that’s what the word means in English.

*Repetition of key vocabulary and phrases*. Though all of the teachers repeated key vocabulary and phrases during their lessons, the occurrences in this category were higher for the teachers in the monolingual contexts than for those in the bilingual context. Key vocabulary and phrases refers to those that were needed to access the curriculum and/or lesson that the teachers were presenting. Teachers did this kind of
repetition for their ELL students for several reasons. One was to build their ELL students’ vocabulary. Another reason for the repetition was to keep ELL students focused on key concepts within a lesson so that they came away with key ideas and terminology.

The first example from this category comes from an observation of Liz where she was using an example of a play to explain the different vocabulary needed for a play versus an imaginative story. Here she and the students were reading an example of a play from the book they used for writing. She made a point of repeating the words “scene” and “stage directions” to anchor the vocabulary needed to write a play. Liz starts off the dialogue in the example:

Moving on . . . sailing on a paper dream . . . who are the characters? In this play, everyone?...(they say them out loud). Very good. Can you read the setting for us . . . which will become a scene so . . . the setting, [Megan] can you read the setting for us?...(she reads aloud). Very good. And then we have scene one . . . put your finger on scene one . . . This is what Rosa is going to say . . . (she says the dialogue). What’s that in parentheses everyone? . . . (some students respond). The actions very good, so those are the stage directions. Then the mom says, that’s nice honey . . . and what does the mom do everyone? (they answer) . . . good . . . Now we have scene two . . . so Rosa is now going to talk. Can I have a volunteer, [Tomika] (ELL student) what does Rosa say? (she answers). Very good. Then the stage directions . . . go for it [Tomika] . . . excellent, nice work. Keep going with what Rosa says, and I’ll read the stage directions [Tomika] . . . Good. So this, we’ve read this story before when we were looking at imaginative writing, now this was an example of how a child turned a story . . . into a . . . play. Now . . . you are going to get to write your own play . . . a colonial play . . . and I’m going to give you some suggestions . . . In fact, I wrote one . . . for you to look at . . . to get as an example. Ok?

In our recall session about this lesson, I told Liz that I had noticed how often she repeated key words during her lesson. I asked her about why she thought she did this. She talked about how the repetition would help students remember and be able to use the terminology. Below is an excerpt from her answer:
That was--I mean that was definitely the objective . . . just to reiterate [because] the [ELL students] they see it on the chart paper, they see it on my example, they see it in their example, they see it in the book, and then I’m verbalizing it. So, at the end of the lesson they’re walking away with certain key words that I want--I want them to remember and be able to use.

Another example of repeating key words and phrases specifically for ELL students comes from an observation I did in Liz’s classroom of a science lesson on the planets. In this example, she is emphasizing the word “atmosphere” which she explains in several different ways to ensure the ELL students to what she is referring when she uses the word:

Liz: The crust. Okay? So what is your planet made out of? That’s what the composition--that’s what we’re talking about here. Okay? What is it made out of? Then I’d like you to describe your planet’s atmosphere.

ELL student: Oh, I know--

Liz: Now when you were younger you probably thought of the atmosphere as the air. Okay? Not the case because we’ve started to learn many planets don’t have air in their atmosphere. There’s even one of the planets today that doesn’t even have much atmosphere at all. And I’m not talking about air. What’s--what’s surrounding the planet? What surrounds the planet? Think about that. What’s--so when you’re looking in a book or looking in your notebook, look for the word “atmosphere . . . what’s around the planet? Okay?

Jane also did a great deal of repetition of key vocabulary and phrases in her lessons. During our first recall session, I asked her about why she did this, and she said that it helped her ELL students to retain the vocabulary. She also talked about explaining the words “in a different way” to help the ELL students understand. She said:

I repeat all the time, I think I never say anything once (laughs) so I think that that’s . . . I think that’s because I know, I just know the first time I say it it’s like minimally . . . helping the ELL students, and then the next few times, probably . . . it’s going through quicker, you know? I think the more . . . if I say it a few times, and I try . . . sometimes I try to say it in a different way, and change the
wording slightly when I repeat it so that way it’s a little bit different. But I try to say it a few times just so I’m sure that [the ELL students] are getting it.

A specific example of this kind of repetition comes from the third round of observations that I did of Jane where Jane is teaching the students about haiku poetry. They had already learned about various types of poems at this point in the year, and during this lesson, she is explaining, through examples, the specifics of a haiku. She repeats several things in this example: how many lines need to be in a haiku poem, how many syllables there need to be in each line, and the general message of a haiku, which is nature:

Now we’re going to talk about a new kind of poem. We’re going to try writing a different kind of poem.

The kind of poem we’re going to try to write is called haiku. You remember that from what you were talking about this morning? A haiku is a kind of Japanese poetry--and [Juko] might know that, because her dad is from Japan--and this kind of poetry only has three lines each time. It’s not a long poem like “Around and Around.” But each line is very special, and because you only have three lines to write in, you have to get a lot of information, important words, into those three lines of poetry. Now, each line has something very specific about syllables.

Who can remind me what a syllable is? Do you remember we’ve done syllables? Remember we talked about how many syllables were in your name? And we talked about--when we do Word Wall words, we clap the syllables. [Laura]?

Laura: Like, how many parts.

Jane: Yeah, it’s--in a way, it’s how many parts, right? So if we were going to clap--see how many syllables were in “[Laura],” we hear, “Lau. Ra.” How many?

Children: Two.

Jane: Two. So in this poem, there’s a certain number of syllables in each line. The first line has five syllables: One, two, three, four, five. The second has seven, and the last one has five again. So I’m going to read you some examples of some haikus, and then we will talk about the syllables, and we’re going to
talk about what it means. So the first one says, “Gentle raindrops fall. /
Reflected in the puddles, / Thirsty flowers drink. So let’s clap the first sentence.
“Gen. Tle. Rain. Drops. Fall.” How many syllables did you get?

Children: Five.

Jane: Good, and that’s what I said we had to have, right? “Re. Flect. Ed. In. The.
In. The. Pud. Dles.” How many did you get?

Children: Seven.

about? What is the poem about?

Child: April?

Jane: It’s a--maybe it’s about April, because April is a very rainy month. That’s
a good idea.

Child: Flowers.

Jane: Flowers, good. [Thomas]?

Child: Rain and flowers.

Jane: Rain and flowers, good. Those are some good ideas. Let’s read a couple
more and see what we hear about--what we hear from those.

Jane went on to read several more examples where she had the children count
out the syllables with her and discuss what the subject of each haiku was. Then she
continued with the following:

Jane: All right, so how many lines does a haiku poem always have?

Children: Three.

Jane: How many lines? [Alison]?

Alison: Three.

Jane: Three. How many syllables are in the first line? [Jonathan]?
Jonathan: Five.

Jane: How many syllables are in the second line? [Kerry]?

Kerry: Seven.

Jane: And how many are in the last line? [Louis]?

Louis: Five.

Jane: Excellent. So you--we know the really basic parts of a haiku poem.

Now, what do you notice--what do all of these things have in common? Just think for a second. Keep your hands down. Just think. A spring day, ladybugs, summer. Then we had ants. We had a dragonfly showing its colors. We had an old bullfrog. We had gentle raindrops and flowers. What do all those things have that’s similar? Where--where can you find all of these things? Where do you find all of this stuff? [Nathan]?

Nathan: Spring.

Jane: Maybe spring. That’s a good idea. Where else? [Jeff]?

Jeff: Summer.

Jane: Spring and summer, okay, good. [Lisa]?

Lisa: In a rain forest?

Jane: Maybe in the rain forest. We’re getting at the right idea. [Miguel]?

Miguel: Fall

Jane: Sometimes you might find some of this stuff in fall, uh-huh. [Clara]?

Clara: Mother Nature.

Jane: In nature, and all those things you were telling me were part of nature: Spring, summer, fall, winter. Bugs are part of nature, bullfrogs, the rain forest. All of those things are part of nature. So the other about a haiku poem--it does have three lines, and the syllables go five, seven, five, but they’re always about nature

Jane went on to take the students through the examples again, and then the students and Jane wrote one together. In this way, she was able to repeat the vocabulary
and reinforce the concepts. Jane did this repeatedly in her lessons. The Figures 6.8, 6.9, and 6.10 show some of the steps from the lesson.

*Figure 6.8. Jane’s model of haiku poem.*
Figure 6.9. Creating haiku as a class.
Rough Draft Copy

My Haiku

Line 1 -- 5 syllables

Line 2 -- 7 syllables

Line 3 -- 5 syllables

Name ____________________________
Date ____________________________

1. ______________________________

2. ______________________________

3. ______________________________

My Practice Picture

Figure 6.10. Outline for haiku given to Jane’s students.
**Routines.** All of the teachers used routines in their classrooms throughout the day to keep students organized and on task; however, the teachers in the monolingual contexts has more occurrences of routines when I coded the data. The teachers in all cases found using routines to be particularly helpful to their ELL students in the following ways: adjusting to the classroom environment, navigating unfamiliar language, setting clear expectations, and generally making the classroom a manageable and enjoyable place for their ELL students to be.

Commonalities in the teachers’ routines that they felt aided their ELL students included: (a) methods of getting their students’ attention, such as clapping or counting down, (b) ways to keep materials organized so that ELL students could easily find what they needed, such as having student mailboxes, color-coded trays for papers like a red tray for a title page, and a blue tray for dedication page for writing materials, among others, (c) displaying a daily schedule in words and pictures so the ELL students knew what to expect each day, (d) having student jobs in the classroom that rotated on a weekly basis, such as paper passer, sink helper, etc., and (e) using cues to help ELL students know when transitions were occurring, such as playing the same song when it was time to clean up from an activity.

Jane described the effectiveness of using routines for ELL student during two of our recall sessions. Excerpts from those recall sessions are below:

> I just think that . . . in general . . . ELL children work well knowing . . . what’s coming next and . . . what’s . . . going to be the expectation . . . I think if I voice what I expect and what’s going to happen and what will come next then it’s easier for the ELL children to transition into what the next thing will be . . .

> [Routines] are part of my general structure . . . to have a really structured environment for first graders anyway. I also knew from speaking with other
people, when other people who came in about ELL things (training) that they mentioned that that’s really good for ELL students to have that kind of structure and routine, because even if they don’t know the language, they know the prompting of it. So when someone said that to me, that really made sense that that would work. Now that I’m aware of it, it’s great that [routines] work; in two ways, everyone needs the structure, but [routines] are great for the children who have some difficulty with the English part of it.

*Occurrences That Were Higher for a Certain Teacher*

Once again, as in the preparation and planning categories, in certain categories of in-class practices, Liz had a higher number of occurrences than the other teachers. These two categories were prompting and coaching and use of exemplars/models.

*Prompting and coaching.* In this category, all of the teachers had a high number of occurrences; however, Liz’s number was nearly twice that of all the other teachers. This category is defined as helping the ELL students access content and correct grammatical mistakes through questioning and prompting techniques.

The first example of prompting and coaching by Liz comes from my first round of observations. In this excerpt from my notes about the lesson, Liz is working with one of the newer ELL students on writing some directions for a treasure map. She is helping the ELL student with vocabulary, his syntax, and his spelling. Liz questions and prompts him by using techniques such as asking about sounds and letters in words, having the ELL student repeat things back to her, asking him to think about what is missing in a particular sentence, such as an article, among other strategies. The excerpt below demonstrates several of these techniques:

She (Liz) prompts him (one of the ELL students) again: is it on an island? The place that you are trying to do? She gets a book for him to look at, another picture dictionary for him with words in it. He looks at the dictionary and decides on a bridge. She asks him how he would start the word bridge, he says “b” and then she makes the “r” sound. She then helps him to write “go over the
bridge,” go over. She prompts him to put which direction they (the people trying to find the treasure) are going to travel. He answers (inaudible). She then tells him to write “go west over the bridge” and she repeats this for him. Once he writes this, she says to put in “the” for over “bridge” because he wrote west over bridge, and she said he needs to write, west over “the” bridge. Another student in the classroom needs to spell the word bridge, so she asks (the ELL student) to help the other student spell bridge. She asks him to say the letters, she helps him say the letters.

She helps the ELL student spell the word “end.” Helps him write, if you get “your” coin, he left out the word “your.” She has him read it back to her again. She prompts him again to help him think about what would happen next so that he speaks to her. He tries to think . . . She prompts him again and says, so if you get the coin, what happens? He says you can buy something. She has him write, “buy something,” she spells buy for him and then says that she knows that he knows how to spell the word something.

In the next example, Liz is prompting the same student about writing a colonial play. He is going to be working with another student in the class (who at the time was out with a specialist), so Liz is helping him decide on characters and a setting for the play. She uses techniques here such as reminding him about what they have studied in class, providing particular vocabulary they have learned, giving him ideas on how to begin his play, and taking him through the writing process step by step:

(to ELL student) So you can use the books [we have read about colonial times] to help you . . . so you could . . . talk about . . . some of the games that they would play . . . do you . . . do you remember we were talking about some of their medicine, talk about maybe going to the doctor?...what happens if you were sick? . . . how about when the kids were in school? . . . So do you think you have an idea? About which one you would like to write about? . . . which one do you think you’d like to write about? . . . so this one is . . . people working. Or you could . . . you could start it off and then [Jake] could help you if you wanted to write about owning a shop . . . have someone come into your shop and your selling things . . . so can you read this list? First . . . and then tell me which one of these you might like to do or something from the book? Ok?

(comes back a couple of minutes later to speak to ELL student again) wow, ok who else is going to be in your story, good . . . now are you going to have a teacher?...good, so you have a name? Or does she have a name? . . . [Bryan] (her last name)?...hopefully I’ll be nice! A lot of the teachers are pretty strict . . .

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good verb. So do you want to put my name there or do you want it to be another teacher? (he answers) . . . all right . . . (laughs) . . . do you want to look at the sheet? . . . of colonial names from social studies today? Or do you want to just make up your own name? . . . there you go, that’s a good one . . . school master.

(comes back a couple of minutes later again and talks to ELL student) so where’s your scene going to be taking place? . . . where is . . . where does the story happen? . . . so if it’s a day in school . . . probably the setting or the scene will take place where? . . . so it would . . . so start in school or something that you wanted to have . . . the kids walking to school so you pick where does the story start? . . . good . . . who’s going to be talking first? . . . and tell me what they’re going to be doing? . . . good . . . so, share your ideas so far with [Jake] (who came back now from specialist). ok? . . . so tell him what your . . . writing about so far . . .

During my third recall session with Liz, I asked her about the prompting and questioning/coaching techniques she used. She said she used these kinds of techniques to help guide her ELL students through lessons that may be challenging for them. She talked here about the lesson I observed on writing a colonial play:

Yeah (pause) I needed to do a lot of questioning with [Atsuko] to see where--where can I help him. And my questions were--my hope was that they would help guide him into a direction that he could--something would spark his interest that he would want to start to write about. So to give him the choice, to give him the options, I think has been a good technique with him.

*Use of exemplars and models.* This is another category in which the number of occurrences for Liz was much higher than for the other teachers; though again, the three other teachers used models and exemplars frequently in their in-class practices. I will provide two examples of Liz using exemplars in her teaching. These are two of many examples where Liz used models and exemplars to help her ELL students access the content and help them clearly understand what was being asked of them.

The first example comes from a lesson that Liz did on colonial times where she is having the students create a “colonial advertisement” for a shop. She is showing the
students a copy of the advertisement she wrote (see example at end of excerpt), and an example of the sign she constructed for her glassblowing shop:

Now, couple things of what I did to create my advertisement. First thing that I did is you want to talk about the tools that are used. You must talk about at least one tool that is mentioned. You must talk about at least one product that’s being made. So you’re going to look under the tools and the product (she has provided a sheet listing tools and products. They are familiar with these tools and products from previous lessons). I need to see at least one tool, one product in your advertisement. Okay? So things that need to be included. What has to be included? [Johnathan]

Child: The product that you’re selling.

Liz: Certainly the product. Yes?

Child: At least one of the tools.

Liz: At least one of the tools. Very good. The other thing I mentioned in my advertisement, “superb goblets that would be fit for the king.” Now, I started to think about fit for King George the third. That’s up to you if you want to talk about some of that. Okay? . . . You can decide what type of store you’re making.

Liz went on from here to explain exactly what she chose to put on her sign and why. She used a visual demonstration to show how to actually make the sign with the kind of edging she had (Figures 6.11 and 6.12). The students were very engaged in this lesson.

Another example of Liz using exemplars and models comes from a lesson she did with the students on the Constitution and Bill of Rights. She was using the example of the Bill of Rights to have the students write their own suggestions for “rights” to have at school. They had already studied several parts of the Constitution and colonial times at this point, so the students had a good understanding about the concepts. Here she is talking to the students using a list she had of the key words for rights and the constitution (Figure 6.13).
Colonial Advertisement:

Hear ye, hear ye!
Are you in need of superb goblets that would be fit for the king? Then jump on your horse and gallop down to Barth’s Glassblower’s Shop. Not only will you find the finest goblets, but you will also be able to purchase glass bottles at unbeatable prices. Nowhere in the colonies will you be able to locate workmanship of the same quality. Our family uses the finest pontils and glassmakers’ hammers to create the most beautiful work. Barth’s Glassblower Shop is here for you!!

Figure 6.11. Example of colonial advertisement.

Figure 6.12. Model of colonial sign.
Some ideas up here. Some vocabulary that we should know. So some other ideas in the Bill of Rights. The framers. The framers are the people who wrote the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. They’re called the framers. They’re making it. The framers believed people had the rights, the ability, things that they should be allowed to, have the rights to liberty—life, liberty, and property . . . You might hear your parents say, “Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” Now, life, I don’t think I need to explain that one. Just having the ability to live. Okay? Sometimes people will talk—Sometimes people will say that the framers, the people who wrote the Constitution were talking about that had to do with having a military as well. Liberty, we’ll get into that. Being able to be free, and [Josh] said the pursuit of happiness. You’ll hear that, your parents using those phrases, “Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”

But, [Allen], what the framers were talking about, their idea of happiness was being able to own property, and for us happiness might be a little different. You might not care about owning property. It might be being able to go skiing, have a play date. Okay.

Child: To quote good Charlie Brown, “Happiness is anyone and anything that’s loved by you.”

Liz: Absolutely. Ok. There were four people who are known as the framers, the people who wrote the Constitution. And again, looking back at some of those key points from the Bill of Rights, life—liberty is freedom, being able to be free, and having happiness or property, being able to own something. Okay. What you are going to do today is you are going to create your own form of Bill of Rights . . . And it doesn’t have to be ten amendments. I’m going to start us off with three. If you would like to create additional ones, you may go on the back, but I’m going to have you start to think about three rights, three rules or three things that you feel in school that you think you should be allowed to have. Three rights, and you’re going to give reasons for that. Three things that you think you should be allowed to have in school.”

At this point, students discuss in pairs and then Liz asks them for some of their ideas to, again, use as models for the other students. Then, several minutes later, Liz says:

What I’m going to do is as I give you a paper, I’m going to ask you to quietly speak with another partner about what some of your ideas are. Can you use some of your friend’s ideas? I think that’s fair to be able to at least use some of the ideas. You could ask your partner, “Can I use part of that?” or “Can I take off some of that idea and maybe build on your idea?” I think that’s why we’re sharing. We can help out. So should you take three of your friend’s ideas? I
think you should try to come up with some of you own, one or two of your own, but surely you can generate and share some ideas. So I’m going to have right now--(she pairs the ELL students with more proficient English-speakers for this activity).

Figure 6.13. Model of key words for rights and Constitution.

In-class Practices That Were Relatively Equal Among Teachers but Occurred Less Frequently

As mentioned earlier, there were several other in-class practices that all of the teacher had in common. The occurrences of these practices were lower than for the other commonly occurring practices among all of the teachers. The practices were: wait time, gestures, rephrasing, making connections, slow speech, humor, and grouping
students. For each of the practices, I will provide one example that I feel best demonstrates the use of and/or reasoning by the teachers for the practice.

Wait time. All of the teachers used wait time in their teaching. This meant purposely waiting after asking a question to be sure the students had time to process the question and think about an answer. In this way, ELL students were given a chance to come up with answers before other students shouted out ahead of them.

In the example below from my third recall session with Rose, I asked her about why she used wait time. She talked about the benefits for the ELL students not only in giving them a chance to answer, but in allowing them to process other students’ answers so that the next time the ELL students might be able to explain their thinking themselves. She said:

I don’t rush--I don’t rush my students. You know, if it’s something that they really have to think about it, then I give them a few--you know, give them a little time to think about it and come up with an answer.

That’s something I’m conscious of especially in math because in the--in the American way of teaching math, we want to know whether they understood what they did. Not just the answer, but how did you get that answer. And the [ELL students] should be able to articulate that. And if they can then you know that they’ve gotten it, rather than just coming up with the answer, but not really being able to explain how to do it. If they explain it then they’ve gotten what you want them to learn. And especially--and since I was teaching them--showing them a different way to use the knowledge that they already had, then I want to know if the [ELL students] can explain it to me. Because then I understand that they’ve taken what they know, and they’re using it in a different way and they can explain it to me.

I think it benefits the ELL students to hear other students explain the answers too. Because if the [ELL students] hear it from someone else they say “Yeah, that’s what I thought.” Or “Yeah, that’s how I did it, too.” So that they can--they can hear it. When they might not be able to explain it themselves. They might not be able to . . . maybe their vocabulary isn’t there but they can hear another child explain it and they say “Well, yeah that’s how I got it.” And maybe next time they will be able to explain it to me.
Gestures. Though low in occurrences in all cases, the teachers used gestures as a means of communicating ideas to ELL students during lessons. Gestures in this case are defined as kinesthetic techniques used to support teaching. I observed Kate using gestures in several of her lessons. When she used them, I noticed that her ELL students would giggle and laugh, but they were noticeably engaged by her moving around and using gestures to explain certain words or concepts. I asked her if she did this purposely for her ELL students, and she said that she did, though she said she thought it was also just a regular part of her teaching. With regard to the ELL students however, she thought that using these kinds of kinesthetic techniques were a good way to hook them into the lesson and another way in which to help them understand. She explained her reasoning during our second recall session:

I definitely use gestures for the ELL students, but I also think I [use gestures] partly cause that’s the way I . . . think. Bizarrely enough, I’m sort of a . . . I think I am sort of a kinesthetic, not kinesthetic in the type of person who needs experiments and stuff but just . . . you know like I always use hand gestures because . . . to me there’s sort of a . . . even for an intellectual idea there’s kind of a . . . I don’t know how to explain it, but there’s emotion that goes with it in some ways. So a lot of it . . . for me actually, a lot of the gestures are very . . . unconscious. It’s just, it’s just literally the way, I mean when I used to teach high school history when I first started teaching, this was AP U.S. history so you don’t really think there’s much gesturing you need to be doing to talk about the civil war or whatever it is, the students just teased me mercilessly because I was always doing this thing with my hands, and they’d say ok try to teach us and sit on your hands! See if you can still teach us, and they’d laugh. And before long my hands would be back! So it’s not . . . I think it helps ELLs but I think it’s also just something that is . . . is just the way that I am. And I don’t stop doing it because I do think it is very helpful, and it just amuses the [ELL students], you know? It just keeps them kind of laughing at me all the time. It’s good.

Rephrasing. In doing my observations of the teachers, I noticed that they often used rephrasing as a way to help their ELL students understand important vocabulary and/or ideas. The teachers would use rephrasing techniques such as using synonyms for
words, providing examples to show what a particular idea or word meant, giving definitions of words, among others.

Below is an excerpt from Liz of a lesson she was doing on the Bill of Rights. She wanted for the students to come up with certain “rights” that they thought they should have at school. She asked for them to think about the rights they wanted in relation to the motto of the school which was PRIDE--P stood for perseverance, R stood for responsibility, I stood for independence, D stood for dedication, and E stood for empowerment. You will see from this example how Liz uses several of the rephrasing techniques mentioned above to help her ELL students understand these concepts:

Liz: This year we’ve talked about [our school’s motto] PRIDE, our PRIDE ideas. Everyone looking up at me, please. Do you remember what “P” stands for?

Child: Perseverance.

Liz: Perseverance, so making sure you’re still working hard even if something is very challenging. You’re working on a test and you come to a problem that is very, very challenging, “Oh, I can’t remember how to do that fraction,” but if your persevering, you’re continuously working hard, when something is challenging--So perseverance, working harder, continuing to try to do something even when it’s hard. Do you remember what “R” stands for?

Child: Respect.

Liz: Respect.

Child: And responsibility.

Liz: And responsibility. I think they go along together. So having respect for one another, and we talk a lot about that during open circle, having respect for other kids in the class, in the hallway, other teachers, having respect--do you remember “I”?

Child: Independence.
Liz: Independence, trying things out on your own, bringing in projects when they are due. Yes, thank you. So working on your own. At times I have you working with partners, sometimes with a group, but from time to time, I want to see what you can do on your own. “D”?

We’re just getting into “D.” Dedication, which means, really, kind of, sticking with something, working hard to make it your best work. You’re really following through, that if you say you’re going to do a project, you’re dedicated, you’re continuously working on it and that you’re not going to let other people down.

And “E” we have not done yet. Empowerment, you’ve probably seen things around. We’ve talked a little bit about it. Empowerment, being able to almost take a leadership role, to help others. Eyes up here, please. So empowerment is being able to help others to be able to take leadership roles, almost like you see someone in trouble. You see a younger child who can’t get their coat on, you go over and you help. So being--having power, being able to take a leadership role, being able to follow through what you need to do or what’s expected of you. [These are] the PRIDE ideas.

*Making connections.* The teachers in this study all used the practice of making connections to previous lessons and new concepts to work the students had already done as in the preparation and planning category. For the in-class practices, there was the addition of teachers making more spontaneous, “thinking on their feet”-type connections for ELL students to based on an understanding of their students’ backgrounds, experiences, cultures, and/or first languages.

Below is one example from Kate where she is using the connection of comparing her ELL students’ first language, French, to English in terms of mechanics. This came about because one of her ELL students said that she didn’t understand the corrections in some of her writing. Kate asked if she could use it as an example for the class, and the ELL student agreed since it was a common mistake for many of the students, not just the ELL students. She pointed out here the differences in English and French between how commas are used:
and then we put a comma . . . because the rule in English, we studied this with commas, is you have an independent clause here. Is this a complete sentence? . . . could that be a sentence by itself? . . . could this be a sentence by itself? . . . yes, the rule in English if you want to put these in the same sentence, you have to separate them with a . . . comma . . . and a conjunction, remember this when we did this in writer’s express and I kept saying to you this is a hard rule, this is the one I’m going to have to keep saying over and over again all year. Remember I said that? Guess what? Here I go again, explaining the same rule. It’s a hard rule. In French, you wouldn’t need to do that. So, that’s why some of the kids in this school have trouble with this rule especially, because in French, this would be ok, wouldn’t it? . . . it would be ok, you don’t need to use a conjunction in French to separate independent clause.

Slow speech. In observing the teachers, I noted time and time again that they articulated well and spoke slowly. I wasn’t sure when I began whether or not this was intentional for the ELL students, but once I was able to have the first recall sessions with the teachers, it was clear that this was a strategy specifically designed for their ELL students. The teachers used the slowed speech intentionally for the main reason of ensuring that the ELL students would be able to follow what they were saying. From their experience, the teachers knew that this was an effective strategy at helping the ELL students stay focused on the lesson and get the information they needed. Rose said it best in very simple terms in our second recall session:

I definitely speak slowly for [the ELL students]. I try to make sure that they understand me . . . If you speak too quickly, they don’t. They miss a lot I think if it’s too fast. So . . . that’s why I do it.

Humor. All of the teachers in the study demonstrated a good sense of humor with their ELL students, and with all of their students, while they were teaching. For the most part the teachers felt that using humor helped keep the ELL students interested in the lesson. Below, Kate described using humor as a “magnet” for her ELL students; that is, that it made them drawn into the lesson more, even if they were not understanding
everything because it motivated them to do so since the other students in the class were laughing and enjoying themselves. This excerpt is from our first recall session:

Yeah, I . . . I’m a big believer in . . . being a personality in the class I guess, I think that . . . it helps you connect with kids . . . not all kids, not all kids have the same sense of humor you do, but most kids really enjoy that. It makes them enjoy your class, it makes them understand that learning is fun, and that . . . you know . . . that the ambiance of the class should be positive and fun, and I like to learn and I think laughing is part of learning. I think humor is actually very intellectual . . . I do joke around, but I try to sort of draw the line so that the joking around stays within the context of the lesson. That [the humor] sort of makes us look at what we’re doing, look at it from a slightly different perspective. You know, so like you have a diamond and you want to look at all the facets of it, and I think humor is a way of looking at one of the facets of it. And I think [humor] keeps the ELL kids paying attention. Because I think if they think I might say something funny they’re a lot more likely to listen to me, and I think ESL kids, or ELL, I keep saying ESL because I’m used to it, you know I think it attracts them to try to listen to my class more. You know, if the [ELL students] sense that there’s something funny going on, they’re gonna be more likely to try to want to join into that stream than if I’m just sort of a teacher sitting up there in a very serious dry way. I don’t think there’s going to be much of a magnet for them to be attracted to trying to follow along [if I’m too serious] . . . you know, that if it’s something that might be funny or amusing, they’re going to listen more. It’s pretty simple.

Grouping. The teachers in the study demonstrated a variety of in-class grouping practices. Students worked in the following ways: (a) in small groups, where ELL students were mixed with native-English students, (b) in small groups with just ELL students, (c) in pairs, most often with a more proficient English-speaker, (d) one-on-one with the teacher, and (e) in whole-class groups.

In Jane’s classroom, I observed that she used all of these types of groupings. For example, she had groups for math stations, different groups for “workboard” (this is where various language stations/centers, among others, were set up during the time she worked with reading groups or met with students one-on-one), different combinations of students for her reading groups, and also met one-on-one with her ELL students.
The following excerpt comes from our third recall sessions where I am asking her about these different groupings that I had seen during her lessons. She talked about the following reasons for her groupings: sometimes to level the students in terms of abilities in content areas, such as math, where ELL students could participate as equal to English-speaking students, sometimes to have “mixed” groupings of ELL students to be able to work with a variety of students to develop their English-language skills and get to know the other students better, and when she meets one-on-one with the ELL students, to be able to “talk them through what they are doing academically.” She said:

The grouping [for math stations] is really--we try to somewhat level it. There’s a group of a few children, [Ricardo] (an ELL student) is in that group that are my really, really strong, strong math kids. And there’s a group of my kids who are struggling a little bit more in math, and that helps because I can talk to the higher kids and say, “Why don’t you try it this way a little bit differently,” you know to kind of up the ante on it, but with my more kids [who are struggling a bit more], I can sit with them and really talk them through what we’re doing.

[My workboard groups], those are just mixed. In fact I try to put some kids that I feel are really high with other students so that way they can work in different levels. [For my new ELL students], I have them really--someone work sitting next to them. And a lot of times they might just copy what the other person’s doing. It’s kind of--[workboard is] kind of a good place to have models for ELL kids is because they’re being independent and at the same time, they’re working with someone else and getting to know them.

I definitely think working with the other students helps the [ELL students’] academic language development. Because sometimes I’m saying it and I can say it one way but the children are talking about it and when the children talk about it, it really helps to reinforce the idea and to show the [ELL students] what they should do. [Having workboard groups] gives me time to work one on one with the ELL students, and talk them through what they’re doing academically in a smaller setting.

Observable Attitudes

The final major category concerning inside the teachers’ classrooms was observable attitudes. These are the attitudes that I observed in watching the teachers in
their classrooms with their ELL students and in speaking with them in recall sessions about their lessons. The attitudes include: sensitivity, kindness, encouragement, positive attitude towards their ELL students (and all students in general), and humor about themselves in relation to their teaching.

For observable attitudes, again there was one category with a high number of occurrences for all teachers, ones in which all of the teachers had a high number of occurrences, but where, again, Liz had the highest number of occurrences overall, and categories for which there were lower occurrences for all teachers. The category with a high number of occurrences for all teachers will be presented first, the categories where the number of occurrences were higher for Liz will be presented second, and the categories with a lower number of occurrences for all teachers will be presented last.

Table 6.3
Number of Occurrences: Observable Attitudes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Kate bilingual context</th>
<th>Rose bilingual context</th>
<th>Liz monolingual context</th>
<th>Jane monolingual context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C. Observable Attitudes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Sensitivity(^a)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Kindness(^b)</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>79</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Encouragement(^b)</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Positive attitude(^c)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Humor(^c)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\)Occurrences that were high for all teachers
\(^b\)Occurrences that were higher for Liz
\(^c\)Occurrences that were low for all teachers

Category With High Number of Occurrences for All Teachers

Sensitivity. In all cases, the teachers in this study demonstrated tremendous sensitivity towards their ELL students. Sensitivity in this case is defined as the teachers’
insight into the social and academic needs of their ELL students. This sensitivity was present in their demonstrated awareness of their ELL students’ needs and emotions.

I observed Kate being very sensitive to her students during lessons. She would check-in with her ELL students frequently to be sure that they understood what was being asked of them and to try to relate to their past experiences. Here is an example from my first round of observations in her class where she is speaking with a new ELL student during a lesson for a family history project. She is reviewing the students’ questions with him that he will ask his mother during an interview. This example shows Kate being sensitive to this ELL student by relating her experiences to his mother’s:

Kate: How, capital, did you stay in Africa? . . . Your mom lived in Africa? . . . Which country did she live in again? . . . Where did you live in Africa would be a good question. I (Kate) lived in Cote d’Ivoire. Did she live in Cote d’Ivoire? . . . You’re not sure? . . . That would be a good question. Why don’t you write that as your fourth question? . . . Where did you live in Africa, ok? . . . how . . . your grandpa was, so you want to say how was your grandpa, ok? (emphasizing question order here) . . . So why don’t you write that as your fourth question . . . Where did you live in Africa?

I could observe how the ELL’s student’s face “lit up” when Kate related her experiences living in Africa to his mother’s.

Another example from Kate comes from our first recall session. I asked her how she would define an ELL student. She talked about the fact that all of her students were language learners, and the importance of not having an “imaginary line” which all of her students needed to reach, but rather, taking the students where they are and moving them forward. In this way, she expressed her sensitivity to all of her students in addition to the specific needs of her ELL students, both academically and emotionally. This was her response to my question:
Kate: I think practically every student in my class is an ELL student to some extent . . . I guess I don’t really differentiate that much in my head. To me the entire class I just think of them all as if they’re in different stages of English acquisition, even and I think especially in our school, even an American child who has American parents, who has been speaking English, it’s their native language, they’re still spending half their time in French class studying in French and they therefore still may have some sort of confusions that take place because they think there’s an e on the end of apartment or an e in apartment, because they’re having, they have two decoding systems that they’re working on and they’re reading books in two different languages and they have two different teachers with two different sets of expectations.

So to me it’s sort of more a spectrum and you could put some arbitrary line and draw a magic line and say that these kids are the ones that are ELL and these kids aren’t . . . So I guess my basic answer is I don’t . . . you know you can draw some arbitrary line and categorize kids as you want, and to me it doesn’t make any difference, like a learning disability, the name of it doesn’t really matter . . . You know if you have some magic line in your head that you’re trying to have all kids being above, then you just feel this stress of just trying to get all the kids over this imaginary line you created of what they should look like in fifth grade. And, I think if you just get rid of that idea and you just take each student where they are and just try to address their needs as best you can as you see them, you’ll just come much more relaxed and the atmosphere in the classroom [for ELL students] so that they can be much more relaxed and positive rather than seeking this imaginary bar.

A final example from Kate in terms of her demonstrating sensitivity towards her ELL students’ academic needs comes from our third recall session where I asked her why she was using some French words during her lesson. She talked about the importance of using some French to keep her ELL students engaged in the lesson

It’s just helping them (the ELL students) get a hook to keep them on board. It’s just a few words, but if you lose them you lose them. If they get lost in the lesson and don’t know what you’re talking about, you can see it in their eyes. You know what I mean because you teach too. You see the eyes kind of fade away and then you’ve lost them for the rest of the lesson, and that happens, sometimes. You can’t be too hard on yourself, that every lesson’s going to be able to engage them. At this point with those [ELL] boys, I certainly hope that’s not happening very often. With [Karine] (ELL student), it still happens and I’m not surprised it still happens. But if I can throw out a couple French words so that she can continue to follow the train of thought, then that’s worth doing. So
it’s just kind of looking at their eyes and seeing if they’re still there. That sort of check.

Other examples of the teachers’ sensitivity to the ELL students come from Jane and Rose. Below is an excerpt from my second recall session with Jane where I asked her about how she worked on errors in ELL students’ writing, as I observed her working on errors numerous times with her ELL students. She demonstrated her sensitivity of her ELL students’ needs by having learned that ELL students can become frustrated and discouraged if you correct too many errors at once. She said:

I try to focus on just one or two things in the story and not the whole thing because when I talked to the ELL teacher before, she told me it’s really really overwhelming if you say fix this and change this sentence. That it’s too much on them ... that it’s like too much at once. So I try to focus on one or two things in each story, and then see you know when they improve that, add another thing on, so it’s gradual, as opposed to here are 25 things. It’s too much on anybody, even as adults, we wouldn’t be able to do it ... it’s more like working up to it in small steps...A few years ago I had a child from Japan who was just really learning the language and like he had a lot of things to correct, and the story had some vocabulary words, so I would work on that. Then I would work on sentence order as opposed to tense and spelling ... The only spelling words we really focus on with ELL students first are word wall words and words that rhyme with word wall words ... to build words obviously.

A final example of the teachers’ sensitivity towards their ELL students’ needs comes from Rose. In this example from our third recall session, I am asking her about what she thought was particularly challenging for the ELL students during a lesson I observed. Her response shows her sensitivity to the academic needs of her ELL students in ensuring that no matter what, she communicates the goals of the lesson effectively:

Well, I think, in general, the ELL students during any lesson make you focus more when you’re teaching a lesson. To make sure that whatever it is that you’re trying to teach them, or, you know, get across to them, that you do it, that you do it ... Because there’s those who might not, you know, understand if you do it superficially ... That you have to make sure that you’re, you hit all the corners.
Because there are a few children who don’t understand everything you’re saying, so you have to . . . make sure that you . . . cover all, all the points.

*Categories With High Number of Occurrences for Liz*

As mentioned earlier, there were two categories in observable attitudes where the number of occurrences for Liz was much higher than for the other three teachers. These categories were kindness and encouragement. Again, though the other three teachers in the study had high numbers of occurrences in these categories as well, Liz’s number of occurrences greatly surpassed those of the other teachers.

*Kindness.* I defined this category as one in which the teachers were particularly warmhearted and considerate of their ELL students. Their kindness was demonstrated during lessons through their words and actions. The first example from Liz is a brief one from the second round of lessons I observed where she was teaching the students about how to write a play. Here she is commenting on something that [Asuko], an ELL student in her class, noticed about the example of a play they were reading. This example shows Liz not just being kind to [Asuko] in telling him he did a good job reading carefully, but her kindness comes through in her highlighting this observation to the other students. Here she allowed [Asuko] space to communicate his understanding in a way that focuses on what he knows, versus what he still needs to learn:

> And the seagull, the seagull is a bird, and Shelley is a girl’s name . . . very interesting, you know that is a good point . . . [Asuko] is . . . he’s looking back at the play . . . and there was a character named Shelley, and then the seagull . . . it’s interesting, I don’t think those were introduced, in this . . . so . . . Shelley . . . we have mom, Rosa...mentioned her . . . ok . . . but not Shelley, and not the seagull, good point [Asuko]. Good reading.

Another brief example of Liz’s kindness towards her ELL students comes from my first round of observations of Liz where she is doing a lesson with the students.
about “leads.” She has a list of examples of different leads, and she is asking the
students for their opinions on which lead they prefer for the story and why. Here she
calls on one of her ELL students to ask her what she thinks. This example demonstrates
Liz’s kindness and consideration of her ELL students’ feelings in two ways. The first is
in not criticizing one of her ELL students, [Tomika], for saying “more longer,” but
rather, rephrasing what [Tomika] said in another way. It also shows Liz’s kindness
when she says “good for you” at the end, which is something Liz did consistently
throughout her lessons indicated by the number of occurrences:

Liz: What do you think about that one? Somebody we haven’t heard from.
[Tomika] (ELL student)? (she answers). She says she likes it because it’s “more
longer.” It’s more descriptive, I definitely agree it’s adding some dialogue too,
telling us, um, what size the pigs are, so adding some detail, adding some
description, good for you.

A final example from Liz comes from my first recall session with her where I
asked her why she never said “no” when her ELL students did not come up with the
correct answer. Rather, Liz demonstrated kindness towards them by helping the ELL
students figure out what she was looking for in the lesson. This is an excerpt from that
session:

I do struggle with [not saying no] because you want the kids, especially some of
the ELL kids that were participating, you want to have them engaged and want
them to participate without feeling . . . bad about themselves. But at the same
time, I think the children do need to understand when they’re wrong, so it is
difficult, but I want the [ELL] boys and girls to feel comfortable sharing their
ideas.

Encouragement. Liz’s number of occurrences in the category of encouragement
was much higher than those of the other three teachers. This category is defined as the
ability of the teachers to actively encourage their ELL students in the classroom through
expressions of support. The teachers would urge the ELL students on by using words to motivate them, such as “great,” “wow,” “keep it going,” “nice job,” among others. Liz used these words and actions repeatedly in her teaching. The examples I have chosen come from notes, observations and recall sessions. I will begin with an example from some of the notes I took while observing her. This example comes from the first round of observations where she is working with one of her ELL students where I noted her use of encouraging words with her ELL students:

Good job keeping track of where students are using encouraging words.

She stays close to [Asuko] to help him with his sharing. She leans over to listen to him while he is sharing his ideas with the class. She helps [Asuko] read what he wrote. He has a bit of a hard time reading it, but she encourages him by saying “good” when he reads.

(Later she is working on Asuko’s writing). She is helping him with his syntax with writing. She has him read what he wrote back to her again. She prompts him to help him think about what would happen next so that he speaks to her. He tries to think, he keeps saying “um.” She said, so if you get the coin, what happens? He says you can buy something. She says “great, great idea.” She has him write, “buy something,” she spells buy for him and then says that she knows that he knows how to spell the word something. He spells it for her, and she says “you see, I told you you knew how!”

Another example of her encouraging her ELL students comes from the observations I did. This excerpt comes from my first round of observations. She is having students read their examples of transitional words and phrases, and she is highlighting her ELL students’ work and encouraging them with words:

[Tomika], you started yours off nicely. Do you want to share it? Great, go ahead. (Tomiko reads her the beginning of her story). Good word choice (she continues reading). Love it!! Love it, and I like [Tomika] did something a little different, she almost told the story from an outside point of view, so very interesting.

(Here Liz asks Atsuko to read his example). [Atsuko] can you start off? What are some transitional words that we can use . . . (he reads them slowly) . . .
afterward, good . . . (wait time) . . . first syllable . . . good . . . (he is still reading) . . . later . . . now . . . (she’s repeating what he tries to say), right now . . . right now . . . so happening right now . . . (he reads again) . . . very good, and now we have some phrases . . . (he reads again) . . . excellent. Nice work [Atsuko].

The final two examples come from my recall sessions with Liz. In the first example, I am asking Liz why she specifically chose to highlight for the class the ideas of one of the ELL student’s. She talked about how she felt doing this helped motivate her ELL students:

Certain times like just . . . you want to encourage the [ELL] students and just . . . I actually thought [Atsuko] (one of the ELL students) might even struggle with . . . I thought this was going to be harder for him so just definitely to encourage, to engage . . . so, he was coming up with some great ideas and I think just to definitely get the rest of the group motivated. And . . . I think when you’re highlighting a certain student’s work . . . it . . . encourages them, it motivates them and makes them feel good. And it helps them to want to succeed. So . . . and I thought [Atsuko] had a lot of great ideas, so to be able to . . . to demonstrate that to the group because . . . I think as soon as you start highlighting a particular student’s work . . . again, it makes them feel good, but it gets the other kids motivated too. Like oh I want to come up with some cool ideas like that.

The second example comes from my final recall session with Liz where I am showing her the number of times I had coded her using encouragement with her students. She was really surprised, in a positive way, but how many times I had noted that she encouraged her ELL students. She said:

Oh, my gosh. I . . . I think it’s kind of cool . . . it’s really, really interesting . . . It is interesting that you’re bringing this up. I was reading, it was an opinion article in [the town] newspaper, I think it was this past week, and the writer was talking about encouraging children, and the article was saying don’t just say, like don’t just say good job, but say something like, I like how you did a . . . an entertaining topic sentence. So I think, I’m just even hoping to even gear . . . my positive statements to [the ELL students], even so they’re more specific.
I told her that I had observed and noted that she was specific in her encouragement of her ELL students in addition to the general words of encouragement. I provided some of the examples for her of the specific encouraging things she had said to her [ELL] students about their work, and this was her reaction: “Wow this is wild. I think it’s just, saying these things to [the ELL students] is hopefully motivational to the them and affirming to them that they’re going in . . . in the right direction.”

Categories With the Lowest Number of Occurrences for All Teachers

All of the teachers demonstrated a positive attitude towards working with ELL students, and they all used humor with their students while teaching.

*Positive attitude.* The teachers in this study never considered the ELL students to be a burden. They saw having ELL students as an opportunity to improve their own teaching by trying out different techniques, using flexibility within their lessons such as not strictly sticking to a lesson plan if their ELL students were having trouble understanding the concepts, and constantly rethinking units and lessons with ELL students’ needs in mind.

In the first example from Kate, she talked about how ELL students had positively affected her own growth in terms of always wanting to improve her teaching, and, in addition, how she believed that teaching needs to be an interactive experience for ELL students to really engage and learn, rather than just standing in the front of the room lecturing to students. She said:

Every year I’ll think of something that I think I can do a little bit better for [the ELL students], and I’ll make a change to make it a little bit better . . . That’s how I want it to be for the [ELL students]. I want them to take [their learning] as ok these are things I can do better, and let’s just try to do them better. It’s that
same idea as here I am and let’s just kind of make this about success and improvement and not about what you’re doing wrong.

Because I’m trying to teach the students how to think. And . . . I don’t teach them how to think by . . . talking at them. I teach them how to think by . . . modeling what a good, what a thought process is, and leading them down those roads of thought processes of like so if this is true then what, and what do you think this means, or what . . . you know, how would that look and . . . and just . . . you know, I’m trying to teach them how to think so you have to give the [ELL students] the chance to think, I guess is what it really is. And it fits . . . what I believe is a good way to teach. Actually, I should say effective way to teach. I think that that kind of interactive way of teaching . . . keeps the ELL kids interested because they’re watching their classmates talk and not just me. And so . . . it’s a more dynamic environment that’s more . . . I think more attractive for them to try to . . . be a part of? You know? Just trying to make the connections for the ELLs.

In this second example from Kate, she demonstrated a positive attitude towards her ELL students when she talked about how she had developed an island unit over the course of a few years due to her ELL students’ positive reaction to an initial lesson she did on topographic maps. She said that the ELL students’ enthusiasm made her more enthusiastic about doing more lessons on islands and creating a totally integrated unit about islands:

Actually island unit evolved from one lesson into this whole huge project, which I was just totally psyched about . . . I guess it was sparked because I had, started with me just . . . we were doing topographic maps last year, and . . . in November or so I think it was . . . and I just had the idea well let’s have them create an island, you know, and I just, I might have seen the idea in a book or something and then when I did it, it was just, I could just feel . . . like this huge . . . sort of . . . energy from the ELL students in particular, this like, you know, this positive energy flying out of these maps, like oh and we could make a pirate cove, and just . . . and it just made me start thinking about islands, you know, and . . . we were going to be reading Island of the Blue Dolphins in January and February and that’s islands too and it just sort of made this whole thing evolve.

I mean I think a lot of it was just generated by just feeling the ELL kids, the enthusiasm that they had for . . . you know, for this sort of . . . debutante little lesson that I just sort of planned, oh let’s make an island a topographic map of an island, and then it’s like this flood of I could just feel this sort of whole thing
... You know I think even when they did the topographic map of the island the first year ... I didn’t even have plans necessarily for them to make ... the models of the islands. I mean actually it was just a lesson let’s create, let’s do a topographic map of an imaginary island, and it was just sort of this isolated lesson ... and then it was only when I saw that well spring of energy [from the ELL students] that then ... the island project came into my head and then in January, I said ok, remember we did topographic maps, well now you’re going to make an island, you’re going to actually make it. The whole thing sort of bloomed, blew up like a nuclear bomb. And it keeps on blowing up. It’s just unbelievable, I mean they’re going to do a travel brochure with in computer class and then we have field trip to the harbor islands.

Humor. The teachers all had senses of humor about themselves which was an endearing quality. I could see that although they were extremely thoughtful and planned when it came to effectively working with ELL students, they also found humor in their failures and successes with their ELL students. They also demonstrated the importance of using humor, even at the expense of looking pretty silly, to help their ELL students feel more relaxed in the classroom.

In the examples below from Jane from our first recall session, I was talking to her about how I noticed that she used different strategies for calling students to come and wash their hands at the sink, such as, if you are wearing the color blue, come to the sink. I asked her why she did this, and she showed humor in her answer in that this strategy didn’t always work the way she hoped it would for the ELL students, and also, showed her belief that humor was important for ELL students when teaching. When I said I liked the way she called up the students to the sink, she said:

Oh goodness! Well, I think it’s a great way to just expand the [ELL students’] vocabulary if you’re saying, like, ok, if you have stripes on your shirt, then come to the sink ... but not all the ELL kids realized [they did], the other kids had to say, yes you have a stripe on your shirt (laughs). I try to give like different things, but sometimes ... the students are just trying to get to the sink first no matter what, so I don’t care what I have on my shirt, I’ll just come up! (laughs).
Later she continued to comment about the importance of humor:

I think it makes school enjoyable just to laugh, to have a little fun at school and just enjoy doing things and having fun with your friends . . . the activities we do where teachers are involved, the [ELL students] like that . . . they enjoy, like the other kids too, having the teachers do the things . . . kind of just to do the work they’re doing, It just makes [ELL students] enjoy it more. And I think that as a teacher, too, you should enjoy doing that.

**Writing Samples**

In all cases, the ELL students in the teachers’ classes made progress in their writing. The rubrics for assessing the students’ writing are located in the appendices (Appendix Q and Appendix R). The following tables show the ELL students’ progress from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.

As indicated in the rubrics (Appendix Q), scores go from 1 (low) to 5 (high) in five categories: composing, style, sentence formation, usage, and mechanics; though, in first grade, “style” is not scored. An example of a score of “1” for the category of “composing” for grade three is “writes some related sentences only, without clear central idea,” whereas a score of “5” would be “fully develops story/topic with appropriate use of paragraphs and supporting details.” An example from the category of “usage” is “uses correct verb forms (present, past, and future) with the sub-categories of “consistently,” “usually,” “sometimes,” and “seldom.” An overall score of 1 to 5 is created for each category and subcategory in “usage.”

As mentioned in the methodology section, these writing samples were used as evidence of the teachers’ status as exemplary in teaching their ELL students (see Appendix S for samples).
Table 6.4
Students in Liz’s Class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composing</th>
<th>Style</th>
<th>Sentence formation</th>
<th>Usage</th>
<th>Mechanics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atsuko</td>
<td>2 → 3+</td>
<td>2 → 4</td>
<td>1 → 3</td>
<td>1 → 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomiko</td>
<td>3 → 4</td>
<td>3 → 4</td>
<td>2 → 4</td>
<td>2 → 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rodrigo</td>
<td>1 → 3</td>
<td>1 → 4</td>
<td>1 → 3</td>
<td>1 → 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Atsuko had come to the United States in the middle of his second grade year. The score 3+ indicates that the score is in between 3 and a 4. Tomiko had been at the school since first grade. Rodrigo had come to the school in second grade.

The students in Liz’s class were also given the district’s writing prompt at the beginning and end of third grade (see Appendix T). Atsuko’s score went from 8-9 out of a possible 30 points to a score of 18 out of 30. Tomiko’s score went from a 17 out of 30 to 24 out of 30. Rodrigo’s score went from 12 out of 30 to 17 out of 30. From these scores, we can also see the development in the ELL students’ writing.

Table 6.5
Students in Jane’s Class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composing</th>
<th>Style</th>
<th>Sentence formation</th>
<th>Usage</th>
<th>Mechanics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jae</td>
<td>1 → 3</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1 → 3</td>
<td>1 → 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna</td>
<td>3 → 4</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>4 → 5</td>
<td>4 → 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Jae had come to the school from Korea in kindergarten without knowing any English. Anna also started at the school in kindergarten. Though only speaking Swedish at home, she had been in the United States since she was 3 years old.

Jane’s students were also given the district writing prompt at the beginning and end of first grade (see Appendix T). Jae went from a score of 9 out of 30 points at the beginning of the year to a score of 22 out of 30 by the end of the year. Anna went from a score of 22 out of 30 at the beginning of the year to a score of 30 out of 30 by the end
of the year. Again, these scores demonstrate the progress in writing of Jane’s ELL students.

Table 6.6  
*Students in Rose’s Class*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Composing</th>
<th>Style</th>
<th>Sentence formation</th>
<th>Usage</th>
<th>Mechanics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jean</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2+</td>
<td>2+</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virgile</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2+</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathilde</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* Jean had arrived that year from France. He had been in a French/American school in first grade, but had returned to France for second grade. This was Virgile’s first year in the United States. He came to the school not knowing any English. Mathilde had been at the school since the middle of first grade. She also came not knowing any English. The scores for Virgile start at “0” because he was being scored in English. He was able to compose sentences in French at grade-level.

Table 6.7  
*Students in Kate’s Class*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Composing</th>
<th>Style</th>
<th>Sentence formation</th>
<th>Usage</th>
<th>Mechanics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paul</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1+</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptiste</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guillaume</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2+</td>
<td>2+</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucas</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margot</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3+</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* Paul, Baptiste, and Guillaume had all arrived at the school at the beginning of that year without speaking any English. Anne, Lucas, and Margot had arrived at the school at the beginning of fourth grade without speaking any English. The scores for Paul, Baptiste, and Guillaume start at “0” because they were being scored in English. They were all able to write at grade-level in French.

Overall, the students in each teacher’s classroom made very good progress in writing. Of note, the first year ELL students in each teacher’s classroom made gains on average of two points in each category. Though I was not doing statistical analysis in...
the area of scoring the writing, the students’ overall progress seems to indeed support the teachers’ status as exemplary.
CHAPTER 7
WHAT DOES IT TAKE?

For this research, I set out to answer the following main research question: How do exemplary teachers teach English Language Learners in both monolingual English immersion and bilingual settings? I was focused on learning about these teachers’ backgrounds, knowledge of ELL students, practices in the classroom, and how they taught academic language specifically to their ELL students. I was interested in building a theory about what it takes to be an exemplary teacher of English Language Learners, and how this theory may be different with regard to teaching contexts--bilingual or monolingual English immersion. Using a grounded theory approach, the teachers in the study and I constructed the theory together with me, as the researcher, doing the final analysis. Based on the teachers’ input and my final analysis, I made conclusions about what it takes to effectively work with ELL students, and whether or not this theory looked different depending on context. What I discovered was that what it takes to be an exemplary teacher of ELL students has areas that are common across contexts and areas that differ depending on context.

Bransford et al. (2005) developed a framework which codified a knowledge base for teaching (Figure 7.1). Their framework included three intersecting areas of knowledge: knowledge of learners and their development within social contexts, knowledge of subject matter and curriculum goals, and knowledge of teaching light in the content and learners to be taught. The theory I have developed for being an effective teacher of ELL students (Figure 7.2) includes two additional areas; specific background
experiences and certain key dispositions. Moreover, the three areas in common with the Bransford et al. framework differ in some important areas.

*Figure 7.1. A framework for understanding teaching and learning.*
Figure 7.2. What it takes to be an effective teacher of ELL students across contexts.
Knowledge of ELL Students

In the Bransford et al. (2005) framework for teaching and learning, they speak more generally about teachers having knowledge of learners, such as theories of learning and development and the effects of social context on learning. However, knowledge of learners in relation to my theory speaks specifically to the kinds of background knowledge of ELL students necessary for teachers to be effective in teaching these students.

The teachers in this study stressed the importance of knowing their ELL students’ backgrounds. This background knowledge included several important elements: being very diligent about finding information about their ELL students’ previous schooling, what language(s) they spoke at home, the best way to communicate with their students’ families, finding out specific cultural details such as family expectations, and anticipating the kinds of supports, both academic and social, their ELL students would need inside the classroom.

Across all cases, the teachers stressed the importance of this background knowledge in being able to work effectively with their ELL students. Having this knowledge enabled them to work successfully with their students in several ways: being able to connect ELL students’ previous background experiences with what they were learning in class, understanding where to “begin” with their ELL students based on their previous schooling, how to help their ELL students become socially connected with the rest of the class, being able to communicate more effectively with families, and how to scaffold their ELL students’ learning.
The importance of knowing ELL students’ background information can be linked to what Moll et al. (1992) described as funds of knowledge. A main goal of creating these funds of knowledge about students is for the teacher to be able to see the whole student, not just the person in the classroom. Moll et al. (1992) set out to learn how knowledge of, and experiences in a student’s home and community could make teachers able to work more effectively with these culturally and linguistically diverse students. They found that in gathering information from the students’ households, the teachers could see their students in contexts outside of school and were then able to make better connections for the culturally and linguistically diverse students in their classrooms.

As Brisk (2006) described about the importance of knowing of ELL students’ background knowledge:

Students’ background knowledge is acquired through home experiences. Even humble homes are rich in social and intellectual resources. This knowledge engendered by the home should serve as the foundation for learning. . . . Culture encompasses all of the students’ experiences. These are not found in books about a particular culture but in the lives of the students and their families. (p. 108)

When teachers do not make attempts to find out about their ELL students’ cultures, this can negatively impact teachers’ perceptions of their ELL students and potentially negatively impact their ELL student’s learning (Echevarria et al., 2000; Huss-Keeler, 1997; Rueda, August, & Goldenberg, 2006).

As Echevarria et al. (2000) pointed out, teachers can mistakenly perceive ELL students not succeeding academically as the students’ personal failures, rather than
teachers not providing the background knowledge that the ELL students need in order to be able to access academic content:

Children from culturally diverse backgrounds may struggle with comprehending a text or concept presented in class because their schemata do not match those of the culture for which the text was written. In the United States, most school reading material, such as content area texts, relies on the assumption that students’ prior knowledge is knowledge that is common to all children. . . . Teachers of English Language Learners need to be aware that what may appear to be poor comprehension and memory skills, may in fact be a lack of, or failure to activate, the background knowledge that was assumed by a message or text. (p. 42-43)

Rueda et al. (2006) further stressed the importance of teachers searching for this background information since without it, teachers can often make negative assumptions about their ELL students’ abilities resulting in negative consequences for their students. The studies they reviewed on the influence of parents and community on literacy documented the “considerable misunderstanding that exists among teachers about the home and community literacy experiences of their [ELL] students, as well as about parental and community expectations for achievement” (p. 334).

The authors (Rueda et al., 2006) went on to discuss how this misunderstanding negatively affected the ELL students in such ways as teachers placing their ELL students in the lowest reading group despite the fact that there were considerable literacy experiences happening at home (none of which the teachers were aware of since they had not found out any background information about their ELL students).

The importance of learning about students’ background knowledge was very important to the exemplary teachers in this study. One way in which this information was important was for teachers being able to provide scaffolding for the ELL students who were not familiar with a particular subject area. For example, Liz needed to
provide multiple ways of presenting information about colonial times for one of her students who was from Japan. Most of her other students had grown up in the area learning about the American Revolution, whereas this student had no such background knowledge. In understanding this about her student, Liz was able to effectively provide enough background information for her student to be able to successfully participate in the unit and lessons.

Jane stated the importance of knowing ELL students’ backgrounds in terms of understanding their cultural experiences and family expectations. As an example, Jane pointed out that she learned to mostly communicate with a Chinese student’s father since that is traditionally the expectation within that culture.

When I asked the participating teachers in this study about what other background knowledge they thought teachers of ELLs should have, Jane stressed the importance of teachers being open-minded towards other cultures: “I definitely think just open mindedness towards new cultures and understanding that families that come from different countries may not have the same ways we have here is critical” (focus group, June, 2007).

With regard to finding out the necessary background knowledge about their ELL students, teachers can easily be informed through using guides such as the one provided by Brisk and Harrington (2007) called “Protocol to gather information about learners” (p. 211). Their guide provides teachers with a tool of the kinds of questions to ask of families and students to get information about their ELL students’ schooling backgrounds, attitudes about learning English and being in this country, and other
personality traits. Again, however, teachers must be persistent about finding out this kind of information and using it to guide their instruction of their ELL students.

**Knowledge of Content and Language**

The second category of my theory states that effective teachers of ELL students need knowledge of content and the specific language demands of that content. This differs from the Bransford et al. (2005) model in that in their model, they emphasized teachers having subject matter knowledge, but they did not discuss the importance of teachers understanding the language demands of the content. This is an essential area in my theory which suggests that in order to be effective with ELL students, subject matter knowledge is not sufficient. Teachers must have knowledge of the kinds of language demands posed by the subject matter.

The importance of all teachers having solid knowledge of subject matter has been well-established in the research. For example, in a report by Wilson et al. (2001) examining the research on teacher preparation, one of the five major questions they examined was what kinds of subject matter preparation, and how much of it, do prospective teachers need? What they found was that preparation in subject matter was a critical component to teachers being successful with their students. They stated that “research shows a positive connection between teachers’ preparation in their subject matter and their performance and impact in the classroom” (p. i).

My research suggests that not only do teachers need a solid understanding of content, but they also need to have a full grasp on the kinds of language demands of the content. My findings also suggest that teachers need to know how to plan for the challenges their ELL students are likely to have with these language demands. In all
cases, the teachers in this study knew the challenges their ELL students would face in terms of the language within content areas, and they prepared for these challenges accordingly. For example, they consistently had both content objectives and language objectives when preparing their units and lessons, based on what they knew about their ELL students’ needs.

In our focus group at the end of the school year, Jane reiterated the point of knowing the language demands of content when she discussed how she focused on developing her ELL students’ academic language. She talked specifically about linking words in various content areas to help her ELL students relate new concepts to those with which they were already familiar. In this case, she was talking about a lesson she did on estimation in math. She used terms the students already knew from other subject areas to help with understanding the concept of estimation. Since she knew the language of “estimation” for math could be difficult for her ELL students, she started her lesson by comparing estimation to a related concept they had learned in reading, “prediction,” and to a term that had used in science, “hypothesis.”

Current research suggests that teachers must be able to understand the language-specific demands of content in order to anticipate what language might be problematic for their ELL students (Brisk, 2006; Fillmore & Snow, 2000; National Board of Professional Teaching Standards [NBPTS], 2002b; Schleppegrell, 2004; Tellez & Waxman, 2005; Valdes, Bunch, Snow, Lee, & Matos, 2005). The importance of having a thorough understanding of the challenges ELL students will face in terms of academic language demands and the importance of teachers understanding these challenges is emphasized by Fillmore and Snow. They maintained that with the increasing numbers
of ELL students in our classrooms, “today’s teachers need a thorough understanding of how language figures in education,” and that, “Too few teachers . . . understand the challenges inherent in learning to speak and read Standard English” (pp. 1-2).

Gersten and Baker (2000) also emphasized the importance of teachers being able to teach discrete language skills in addition to content so that ELL students could be successful. In reviewing the literature on teaching strategies used for ELL students and in doing interviews with professional educators and researchers, they found that:

The teachers [in the studies] assumed that in teaching content, their [ELL] students would learn the necessary language. They did not balance the needs of their ELL students in both content and skills, but instead, relied on content to teach ELL students the language they needed. (p. 463).

In essence, teaching content includes teaching the language required to understand that content. According to my findings, it appears that teachers need to understand the language demands of their subject matter in order for their ELL students’ to successfully access that content.

**Knowledge of Effective Practices**

The third category of my theory suggests the need for teachers to know effective practices for ELL students. Knowledge of effective practices for ELL students can be seen as falling under the category of knowledge of teaching in Bransford et al.’s (2005) framework. However, my theory suggests that it is knowledge of specific kinds of teaching that is required for teachers to be effective with ELL students. My theory states that it is knowledge of effective practices for ELL students specifically that is necessary to be effective with these students, not just knowledge of general effective teaching practices.
Through this research, I was able to identify numerous practices that were common among these effective teachers of ELL students. These practices fell into two major categories—preparation and planning and in-class practices (during lessons). Of the practices I identified, some are consistent with theories of second language acquisition, some are consistent with learning theory, and others are consistent with the research on effective practices for ELL students.

Learning Theory and Theories of Second Language Acquisition

With regard to my findings on preparation and planning and in-class practices, those related to learning theory seem to be based in constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky developed his theory of constructivism by emphasizing the important role that interaction plays in learning. He spoke about a Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) in learning as the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers. He explained that “what children can do with the assistance of others is even more indicative of their mental development than what they can do alone” (p. 85).

In addition, some of the practices I identified as effective for ELL students used by the teachers in this study are related to theories of second language acquisition. The theories that these practices are related to specifically are: Krashen’s monitor model (Krashen, 1982), Fillmore’s (1991) interactionist model, and Swain’s (2005) output hypothesis model. The relationships between these theories of second language acquisition to the effective practices I identified will be discussed below with regard to both preparation and planning and in-class practices.
Common practices teachers used during lessons which reflect learning theory were: making connections, repetition of key vocabulary and phrases, and use of exemplars and models, though repetition of key vocabulary and phrases and use of exemplars and models are also consistent with research on second language acquisition. Other in-class practices I identified teachers using are supported by the literature on second language acquisition. These were: wait time, rephrasing, slow speech, explicitness, prompting and coaching, grouping, and being selective about corrections in writing.

Those practices the effective teachers in this study used that reflect both second language acquisition theory and effective practices for ELL students were: slow speech, frequent check-ins with ELL students, gesture and using visuals. Finally, one practice teachers used which was not mentioned in any of the literature I could locate on effective practices for ELL students was humor.

**Preparation and Planning**

*Practices That Reflect the Research on Effective Teaching of ELL Students*

The practices I identified that reflect the research on effective practices for teaching ELL students were: a focus on academic language, having language objectives and organization. The importance of having language objectives for ELL students and focusing on academic language development in addition to content has already been discussed in terms of the importance of teachers having knowledge of content and of language (Brisk, 2006; Fillmore & Snow, 2000; NBPTS, 2002a; Schleppegrell, 2004; Tellez & Waxman, 2005; Valdes et al., 2005).
The importance of organization can be found in some the research on effective teachers overall (Porter & Brophy, 1988; Taylor et al., 2000), of effective bilingual teachers (Garcia, 1991; Tikunoff, 1983), and of effective practices for ELL students (Brisk, 2006; Reyes, 1992; Tabors, 1998).

**Practices That Reflect Both Learning Theory and Research on Effective Teaching of ELL Students**

Practices that the teachers in this study used that are consistent with both learning theory and the research on effective teaching of ELL students combined were: use of themes/units, making connections among concepts, and using models and exemplars. The use of models and exemplars will be discussed when looking at the in-class practices the teachers in this study used.

All of the teachers in the study used themes and units in their planning of instruction. I defined a theme as an overall exploration of a particular topic, and I defined a unit as a specific element of study. Teaching in this way seemed to enable the teachers in the study to make connections among concepts for the ELL students in a more seamless manner. The teachers could use the background experiences of the ELL students and connect them to the theme and/or unit they were teaching. The teachers felt that in doing so, their ELL students could successfully access the main ideas of the units as well as develop the specific skills the ELL students needed to succeed.

The teachers’ use of themes and units as ways to make connections for students and scaffold their learning is grounded in constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978), in the research on effective teaching (Kunzman, 2002), and in the research on effective practices for ELL students (Garcia, 1991).
In terms of the research on using themes and units as a part of effective teaching, Kunzman (2002) examined the impact of a graduate-level teacher education program on teachers who had already been in the classroom for several years. He found that one of the most important results of the program on these experienced teachers’ instruction was that they learned the “complex skills of thematic planning around a central question with extensive scaffolding involved in getting students to a performance goal” (p. 102).

Garcia’s (1991) research on effective bilingual teachers also found that they used thematic instruction with their students. When commenting on the teachers’ instruction, he said that “they had long abandoned a strictly skills-oriented approach to instruction, using thematic curriculum [instead]” (p. 136).

Practices That Reflect Learning Theory, Theories of Second Language Acquisition, and Research on Effective Teaching of ELL Students

Practices teachers used in this study that are related to all three categories combined were: grouping and pairing students and adjusting expectations.

The importance of pairing and grouping for instruction is supported by the research on effective teaching (Ruddell, 1997; Taylor et al., 2000), research on exemplary teachers of ELL students (Garcia, 1991; Tikunoff, 1983), and on effective practices for ELL students (Gersten & Baker, 2000; Tabors, 1998). The use of grouping and pairing for instruction is also rooted in constructivist learning theory (Vygotsky, 1978) where students are interacting with their more capable peers. For ELL students, those more capable peers would be students who were more proficient in English.

Varying grouping for lessons is also consistent with second language acquisition theory, particularly theories developed by Fillmore (1991) and Swain (2005). Fillmore
stressed the importance of language learners having frequent contact with “target speakers” of the language--so, in this case, it would mean not only the teacher, but English-speaking peers as well. In her theory of second language acquisition, Swain emphasized the notion of the importance of “collaborative dialogue” in which learners talk about the language they are trying to produce, and she discussed the critical role of “modified output” in language learning. This part of her theory states that second language speakers are “more likely to modify their output and do so successfully when they are pushed to do so” (p. 477).

Another practice that teachers in this study used as part of their preparation and planning was that they adjusted expectations for their ELL students. Again, these exemplary teachers did not water down curriculum for their ELL students, but rather, they anticipated what might be particularly challenging for their ELL students and planned their instruction to support their needs.

Consistent with constructivist learning theory (Vygotsky, 1978), the teachers used scaffolding techniques with their ELL students, such as providing learning guides and picture dictionaries, and clarified directions in any way possible so that their ELL students knew what was expected of them. The teachers met the students where they were and provided instruction that helped them move to the next level of understanding with an awareness that it would likely take time for the ELL students to understand a new idea or skill in this new language.

With regard to learning a second language, Fillmore (1991) stated that the ability of students to acquire another language depended, in part, on the kind of language used in the classroom. In other words, the level of language used.
The importance of not watering down curriculum for ELL students is consistent with the findings of Gersten (1996) and Lucas et al. (1990) when studying effective practices for ELL students. In Gersten’s findings about classrooms where ELL students were successful, he was able to define two major constructs that were essential to ELL students’ achievement. The first construct he emphasized was what he called challenge, success, and involvement”for ELL students. Here he talked about successful classrooms for ELL students as being those in which teachers asked higher-order thinking questions and did not water down curriculum for their ELL students. Similarly, when Lucas et al. did an exploratory study of effective practices for ELLs on a school-wide level, one of the features they identified as being critical to ELL students’ success in school was that all remedial classes, those in which most ELL students were placed, had been eliminated so that ELL students would not receive “watered-down versions of content” (p. 328).

Brisk (2006) also spook of the importance of providing engaging, challenging and supportive instruction for ELL students. As she stated in her book, “High dropout rates for too many bilingual students may be attributed to low expectations in designing curriculum” (p. 174).

*In-class Practices (During Lessons)*

In general, my findings about the teachers’ in-class practices (during lessons) in this study are consistent with the limited literature on effective practices for ELL students. Some of the in-class practices I identified as effective for ELL students are also identified as being important in the existing research on effective practices for ELL students: rephrasing ELL students’ responses, using gestures and visuals, repetition of...
key vocabulary, use of models and varying grouping for instruction and frequent check-ins with ELL students during lessons (August & Hakuta, 1998; Facella et al., 2005; Gersten, 1996; Gersten & Baker, 2000; Graves et al., 2004; Tabors, 1998; Zwiers, 2008). Some of these practices are also consistent with some of the theories of second language acquisition (Fillmore, 1991; Krashen, 1982; Swain, 2005), and with constructivist learning theory (Vygotsky, 1978). However, some of the practices that I identified among teachers which are less frequently if ever mentioned in the limited existing literature on effective practices for ELL students were: having routines, wait time, explicitness, being selective about corrections in writing, prompting and coaching, and using humor in the classroom.

Less Frequently Mentioned Practices in the Research on Effective Teaching of ELL Students

One practice I identified among these teachers is that they all used routines. This is a practice that was rarely mentioned in the literature on effective practices and teachers for ELL students. In fact, only the piece by Tabors (1998) emphasized the importance of routines for ELL students.

However, in my research with these effective teachers of ELL students, having routines in their classrooms seemed to be critical for ELL students. In our focus group, the teachers all reiterated the importance of routines when I asked them what they would recommend to other teachers who have brand new ELL students in their classrooms without any English. As Kate indicated, “I think routines are extremely, extremely important. Because then [the ELL students] can see what the pattern is of

Those in-class practices I identified that appear to be consistent with both second language acquisition theories and research on effective teaching and/or effective practices for ELL students were: wait time, explicitness, being selective about corrections in writing, and prompting and coaching.

A practice the teachers in this study used that seemed important for their ELL students was wait time, as this gave ELL students a chance to compose their thoughts. Often teachers can be impatient with their ELL students when pressed for time in the classroom, but it is critical for ELL students to have opportunities to use the language if they are to be successful (Gersten & Baker, 2000; Swain, 2005).

Jane discussed the importance of wait time during our focus group when I asked the teachers what they would recommend to other teachers in order to work effectively with ELL students. She said, “I think wait time is so important. Just patience for the [ELL] child who’s trying to get a point across . . . there’s value behind it and [so] just be patient” (focus group, June, 2007).

The practice of explicitness meant being clear about objectives and goals for lessons so that ELL students knew exactly what was being asked of them. In addition, explicitness with ELL students in this study meant being explicit with them on what needed to be corrected in their work. In this way, the teachers felt that the ELL students would better understand the rules of the language and better monitor their own work.
Of the eleven factors developed by Porter and Brophy (1988) in their studies about effective teachers in general, three of the factors they found about effective teachers were that they were: (a) clear about their instructional goals, (b) could communicate to their students what was expected of them and why, and that they (c) could monitor students’ understanding by offering regular appropriate feedback. The first two findings relate to the explicitness and selectivity of corrections in students’ work that I found in the teachers’ practices, and the third point relates to the teachers in my study frequently checking in with their ELL students’ to monitor understanding so that the teachers could provide immediate feedback.

The importance of being explicit about corrections in ELL students’ language and/or written work is also emphasized by second language theorists (Krashen, 1982; Swain, 2005). In Krashen’s second language acquisition theory, he talks about the acquisition-learning hypothesis. Teachers being explicit with ELL students about what needs to be corrected can be linked with the “learning” part of this hypothesis which states that we learn a language “via a conscious process of study and attention to form and rule learning” (Lightbown & Spada, 1999, p. 37).

In addition, one of the components of Swain’s (2005) output hypothesis of second language learning is the “hypothesis-testing function.” This function states that learners of a second language will produce language in the form of a trial run which is then corrected and modified by a target language speaker so that the learner can modify his or her speech and thereby learn the correct form and structure of the language.

Another practice that I found to be important to the teachers in this study was the use of prompting and coaching with their ELL students. My findings indicate that
these effective teachers felt that prompting and coaching ELL students was an important aspect of their successful teaching.

The closest description in terms of the current research on effective practices for ELLs comes from an empirical study by Gersten (1996) where he looked at successful classrooms for ELLs. One of the constructs he developed was that classrooms that were successful for ELL students had teachers who provided “scaffolding, mediation, and feedback.” In relation to my study, the teachers scaffolded learning for their ELL students by prompting them about what they had already studied or by the teachers’ using background knowledge about their ELL students to help them access content. In scaffolding learning by building upon their ELL students’ background knowledge, they mediated learning for their students.

This type of scaffolding and feedback is consistent with constructivist learning theory (Vygotsky, 1978), and with theories of second language acquisition (Fillmore, 1991; Krashen, 1982; Swain, 2005). For example, Krashen coined the term “comprehensible input” to describe what second language learners needed in order to understand work in another language. In other words, if ELL students cannot understand the language and therefore the concepts which teachers are trying to instruct, they will not be successful in school. Therefore, teachers need to scaffold understanding for their ELL students so that they can access important content.

Practices Not Mentioned in the Research on Effective Teaching of ELL Students but Reflecting Theories of Second Language Acquisition

Another finding from my study that has not been mentioned in the current research on effective teaching of ELL students, but that relates to theories of second
language acquisition, was that the teachers often used humor with their ELL students. It seemed that they used humor as a way of making their ELL students feel excited about learning; and, in that sense, make the experience of learning English less stressful for their ELL students.

As Kate described in the focus group when I asked her about what the teachers would recommend for other teachers to know and be able to do to be successful with their ELL students, she reiterated her point about the importance of using humor: “I think being kind of lively and funny, it makes those ELL kids want to understand what the [other] kids are all laughing about” (focus group, June, 2007).

It is important here to emphasize that Kate was talking about how the use of humor created a comfortable environment for the ELL students and helped them better focus on what was happening during a lesson. Kate made sure that the ELL students did not feel left out when using humor, but rather, that humor was used to bring them in to the lesson.

The use of humor as a potentially effective practice for ELL students can be seen as reflected in Krashen’s (1982) theory of second language acquisition. He posited the notion of second language learners having an affective filter. In essence, Krashen’s theory of an affective filter suggests that if ELL students are anxious about learning English, then they may be less likely to acquire the language successfully. As Gass and Selinker (2001) explained about the affective filter:

Affect here is intended to include factors such as motivation, attitude, self-confidence and anxiety . . . If the [affective] filter is up, input is prevented from passing through; if input is prevented from passing through, there can be no acquisition. If, on the other hand, the Filter is down, or low, and if the input is comprehensible . . . acquisition will take place. (p. 201)
Specific Teacher Background Experiences

The fourth category in the theory I developed suggests that the teachers in the study were effective in teaching their ELL students due to certain background experiences. This is an area that is not mentioned at all in the framework for teaching developed by Bransford et al. (2005). The experiences I found to be influential across teachers in this study were: (a) learning a second language, (b) being immersed in a culture other than their own, and (c) years of teaching.

All of the teachers in the study expressed that through the experience of learning a second language, they were better able to relate to their ELL students’ challenges in learning English. As Kate reiterated in the focus group, “I think having the experience learning another language yourself [is very important] . . . I’m [now] extremely well aware of how hard it is” (focus group, June, 2006).

The importance of learning a second language in terms of being able to better access the experiences of ELL students is consistent with some of the research on the kinds of experiences that can influence teachers’ attitudes towards ELL students. A study by Shin and Krashen (1996) focused on teachers’ perceptions of bilingual education. They surveyed 794 K-12 public school teachers, and they found one of the five major variables influencing teachers’ perceptions of bilingual education was teachers’ knowledge of a second language which positively affected their behavior towards and practices with their ELL students.

Garcia-Nevarez, Stafford, and Arias (2005) reported on a study by Lemberger (1996) which found that “bilingual education teachers who . . . went through the process
of learning English as children were able to relate to the experiences their students [were] going through when learning a second language” (p. 310).

Another background experience that seemed important to the teachers being effective with ELL students related to the fact that the teachers had all, in one way or another, had the experience of being immersed in a culture other than their own. They felt that this experience had positively impacted their ability to work with ELL students in several ways: that they welcomed diversity in their lives and classrooms, which they had experienced what it is like to be the other, and/or had learned to value differences in people and particularly in their students.

This kind of cultural experience and its positive impact on the teachers in this study can be seen as similar to what Villegas and Lucas (2002b) described as “sociocultural consciousness.” In order to be a culturally responsive teacher of ELL students, Villegas & Lucas (2002b) argued that one of the characteristics a teacher must have is this sociocultural consciousness whereby teachers “recognize that there are multiple ways of perceiving reality and that these ways are influenced by one’s location in the social order” (p. 21). In their book on the topic of educating culturally responsive teachers, Villegas and Lucas (2002a) believed that prospective teachers need to be educated to be culturally responsive so that their diverse student populations, including ELL students, can be as successful as possible. One of the major tenets of their definition of a culturally responsive teacher is that they “have affirming views of students from diverse backgrounds, seeing them as learning resources, not as problems to be fixed” (p. 95).
Reyes (1992) also spoke of the importance of valuing ELL students’ cultures as an important aspect of successful classrooms for ELL students. She said that more important perhaps than teachers knowing their ELL students first language was teachers’ “conviction about the value of diversity--namely, that differences in language and culture are not deficits” (p. 443). The teachers participating in my study had had experiences surrounded by various cultures that had made them feel positive towards the cultures of their ELL students.

The final important piece of the specific background experiences that seemed to influence the teachers’ in this study being effective with ELL students was their years of teaching experience. From the data gathered for this study, it appears that the number of years of teaching can be linked with these teachers’ success with their ELL students. What is important to stress here, however, is it was not just the years of teaching that positively affected these teachers’ ability to be effective with the ELL students, but it seemed to be their capacity to reflect on their working with ELL students over the years that seemed to be critical to their ability to be effective. The teachers talked about reflecting on such things as what worked in their lessons and what did not in relation to the ELL students, among others.

All of the teachers in the study had over 7 years of experience teaching in classrooms with ELL students. These years of teaching experience had influenced their work with ELL students in a variety of ways: (a) understanding ELL students’ general language development, (b) developing a comfort level in terms of not having a fear or lack of confidence in working with ELL students, and (c) developing a “repertoire” of effective strategies for working with ELL students.
The importance of having years of experience in order for teachers to be effective is supported by the limited research on effective teachers of ELL students (Garcia, 1991), by some of the research on expertise in teaching (Berliner, 1994), and by some of the research on teacher quality (Darling-Hammond & Youngs, 2002; King-Rice, 2003).

In his research on effective teachers of ELL students, Garcia (1991) found that the teachers all had an average of 7.1 years of experience as bilingual teachers, so they were not novices. This finding is consistent with what Berliner (1994) discovered when he examined the nature of expertise in teaching. He claimed that:

what is learned by the expert appears to be linked better to other knowledge that the expert possesses. It also appears that such knowledge is more easily retrievable in appropriate situations and more transferable to new situations than are most other kinds of knowledge that they acquire or that is possessed by other individuals without the commitment that the expert has to excel in a particular domain. In the domain in which they have acquired their unique skills, experts usually perform appropriately and effortlessly. (p. 162).

In fact, from his research, Berliner (1994) suggested that novice teachers should not be given full classrooms with many students when they begin to teach. Rather, they should have smaller classes with an experienced teacher as a mentor to help them gain the knowledge and skills they need. To reinforce this point, he stated:

It is part of the continuing devaluation of pedagogical knowledge that leads some individuals to think that new teachers are more likely to be better at their jobs than experienced teachers. Would those individuals choose a surgeon in that way? (p. 179)

Berliner’s (1994) suggestion that pedagogical knowledge is a critical part of being considered an expert teacher links to the conceptual and empirical work of several scholars in the field of teacher knowledge (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995; Cochran-Smith...
& Lytle, 1999; Fenstermacher, 1994; Grimmett & MacKinnon, 1992; Noffke, 1997; Schon, 1983; Shulman, 1987). Berliner’s use of the term “pedagogical knowledge” refers specifically to what Shulman called “pedagogical content knowledge.” Shulman defined this kind of knowledge as “represent[ing] the blending of content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular topics, problems, or issues are organized, represented, and adapted to the diverse interests and abilities of learners, and presented for instruction” (pp. 15-16).

Grimmett and MacKinnon (1992) emphasized that this kind of pedagogical knowledge, or what they referred to as “craft knowledge,” could only be learned by teachers through years of experience working with students in classrooms. They said

As a form of professional expertise, craft knowledge is neither a technical skill, the application of theory or general principles to practice, nor critical analysis; rather, it represents the construction of situated, learner-focused, procedural and content-related pedagogical knowledge through deliberate action. (p. 393)

Some of the research on the importance of teacher quality (Darling-Hammond & Youngs, 2002; King-Rice, 2003) has also found that teaching experience can have a positive impact on student achievement. Looking across empirical studies of the link between teacher quality and student achievement, Darling-Hammond and Youngs found years of teaching experience to be one of the five aspects of teacher qualifications that related to student achievement. In King-Rice’s analysis of a wide range of empirical studies on characteristics of teacher effectiveness, she found five broad categories of measurable characteristics assumed to reflect teacher quality. One of the five categories was teacher experience. Several studies she reviewed found a positive effect of years of experience on teacher effectiveness.
Key Dispositions

The area of key dispositions is another area that was not addressed in the framework of the knowledge base developed by Bransford et al. (2005). My theory suggests that in order to be effective with ELL students, certain key dispositions seem to be essential.

All 4 teachers in this study had commonalities in dispositions. These commonalities were: sensitivity, kindness, encouragement, positive attitude toward teaching ELL students, and humor about themselves. Dispositions in this case are defined as tendencies “to exhibit frequently, consciously, and voluntarily a pattern of behavior that is directed to a broad goal” (Katz, 1993, p. 1). Dispositions contrast with attitudes as attitudes can be thought of as “predispositions to act positively or negatively with respect to a particular phenomenon” (Kats & Raths, 1985, p. 302), but not necessarily acting on these predispositions. Eberly, Rand, and O’Connor (2007) provided another definition to clarify the difference between dispositions and attitudes. They claim that dispositions are “in their essence, manifested in behaviors that we can see. They are seen in the actions that we take and the language that we speak. Underneath those behaviors is the meaning-making system that results in attitudes, values and beliefs” (p. 34).

It appears from my findings that the teachers in this study had common dispositions which may have played a role in their effectiveness with their ELL students. One of the dispositions I identified was that teachers displayed a certain kind of sensitivity towards their ELL students. In this case, I defined sensitivity as the teachers’ insight into the social and academic needs of their ELL students. The teachers
showed this sensitivity in multiple ways, including overt actions while teaching and in their thoughts given during interviews and recall sessions.

The role of sensitivity in teaching has been discussed in some of the empirical research on effective teachers (Ruddell, 1997), but only to a limited degree. In Ruddell’s study of effective teachers across numerous settings, one of the personal characteristics shared by all of the teachers was that they were “sensitive to individual student needs” (p. 40).

Another common disposition of all of the teachers in the study was kindness—a genuine warmheartedness and caring towards their ELL students demonstrated in numerous ways, such as using kind and caring words, and interacting with their students in considerate ways. The role and importance of kindness and caring in being an effective teacher has been discussed somewhat in the literature about exemplary teachers generally (McDermott & Rothenberg, 1999; Ruddell, 1997), and in the limited research on effective teachers of ELL students (Garcia, 1991).

In their study of 36 highly-effective teachers from low-income schools, McDermott and Rothenberg (1999) found that that these effective teachers all viewed teaching as a caring and nurturing activity. Ruddell’s (1997) findings about influential teachers across multiple sites included showing a concern for students as people and teachers’ being attentive to personal problems.

Garcia (1991) also found the important role of caring in his findings about effective teachers of ELL students. One of the four domains he reported as being critical to the teachers’ ability to be effective with their students was what he called affect. Within this domain, he found that the teachers’ affinity towards their students was most
significant. They made comments like, “these students are like my very own children. . . . I love these children like my own” (p. 139). Furthermore, “each teacher spoke of the importance of strong and caring relationships among class members and particularly between the teacher and students. The [teachers] felt that this [caring relationship] provided students with a safe environment that was conducive to learning” (p. 139).

Another kind of disposition the effective teachers of ELL students in this study displayed was being very encouraging of their ELL students. They demonstrated their encouragement using words, in particular, which demonstrated outward expressions of support, such as great job, keep it going, etc. Use of these words in each teacher’s classroom seemed to translate into the ELL students being motivated to continue with difficult work that would ultimately enable them to progress in English.

As suggested in much of the research on second language acquisition, motivation can be a critical element in successfully acquiring a second language (Gass & Selinker, 2001; Krashen, 1982; Lightbown & Spada, 1999; Skehan, 1989). According to Skehan, there have been numerous studies on second language learning that have provided statistical evidence that indicates motivation being a predictor of success in language learning. In fact, it appears to be the second strongest predictor of success behind aptitude.

The reason that it is so important for teachers to motivate their ELL students is due to this role of motivation in language learning. If ELL students are motivated to learn English, they will likely have a greater chance of doing so; however, if they are not motivated, they may be less likely to learn the language.
In their book on how languages are learned, Lightbown and Spada (1999) discussed some of the influences on motivation in language learning. They said that there can be both positive and negative influences on motivation. A positive influence on language learning can be a supportive and non-threatening atmosphere in the classroom, among others:

If learners need to speak the second language in a wide range of social situations or to fulfill professional ambitions, they will perceive the communicative value of the second language and will therefore be motivated to acquire proficiency in it. Likewise, if learners have favourable attitudes towards the speakers of the language, they will desire more contact with them . . . On the other hand, we should keep in mind that an individual’s identity is closely linked with the way he or she speaks . . . If the speaker’s only motivation for learning the second language is pressure, internal motivation may be minimal and general attitudes towards learning may be negative . . . If we can make our classrooms places where student enjoy coming . . . and where the atmosphere is supportive and non-threatening, we can make a positive contribution to students’ motivation to learn. (pp. 56-57)

The fourth key disposition that seemed to be important to these teachers’ success with ELL students was the teachers’ positive attitude towards their ELL students and towards the students’ various cultures. One aspect of this positive attitude was that the teachers in this study felt that having ELL students in their classrooms was an opportunity for the teachers to grow and learn, and therefore, they did not feel that the ELL students were a burden.

Part of the teachers’ positive attitude in this study was displayed through their commitment to their ELL students’ success. They felt that the ELL students were their responsibility, and they were not to be passed off to anyone else. Brisk (2006) provided another term for this kind of commitment towards working with ELL students as the “will to educate.” Brisk (2006) stated that:
Educating and caring for bilingual students requires strong commitment and energy . . . Personnel with the will to educate students monitor quality of instruction, embrace innovation, and persist in their commitment to students and to improving education. They do not despair in the presence of difficult situations and find ways to change them. (p. 123)

Some of the research on exemplary teachers (Collinson, 1996; Haberman, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1994), on effective practices for ELL students (Lucas et al., 1990; Tobin & Fraser, 1990), and on effective teachers of ELL students (Garcia, 1991) mentions the influence of teachers’ having a positive attitude towards, or will to educate, culturally and linguistically diverse students as important to students’ success in school.

For example, in examining interviews conducted with “star” urban teachers, one aspect Haberman (1995) found important to the teachers’ and students’ success was the teachers’ positive attitudes towards their students. He found that the teachers felt it was their responsibility to engage all learners and generate enthusiasm for learning, and that the teachers held genuine respect for all of their students.

Finally, the teachers in this study all demonstrated humor about themselves. They knew that at times, they would do something silly in class to make fun of themselves if it helped an ELL student feel more comfortable. It seemed that although they took their work very seriously, they had the ability to step away and not take themselves too seriously. I found this to be a very appealing quality about them. Their ELL students seemed to respond positively to the teachers’ humor. I would often observe the ELL students, and other students in the class, laughing with the teachers.

Though the research on effective teachers of ELL students does not speak of this disposition, nor does any of the other research I could locate on effective teachers.
generally, it seemed that the teachers felt that using humor helped the ELL students feel more at ease in the teachers’ classrooms which promoted the students’ learning English.

_How Contexts Made Practices and Experiences Teaching ELL Students Different for Teachers_

The second part of my theory states that teaching in bilingual versus English monolingual immersion contexts can make certain experiences teaching ELLs different for teachers and how they work with their ELL students (see Figure 7.3). It is important to note that I believe that it was the fact that it was a dual-language model in terms of the bilingual context which seemed to be more important than the difference between the contexts being private and public.

* Perception of less pressure for ELL students
* ELL students encouraged to use L1 for learning
* Definition of comfortable environment

* More stressful for teachers
* No use of L1 for instruction and assessment nor allowing students to use their L1 for work
* Definition of comfortable environment

*Figure 7.3. How contexts make experiences teaching ELLs different for teachers.*
As shown in Figure 7.3, depending on the contexts in which they were teaching, there were differences for the teachers in terms of their experiences teaching ELL students, and in some of the practices they used in their classrooms.

**Teachers in the Bilingual Context**

In terms of teachers’ experiences in the bilingual context, there was the perception by the teachers that the ELL students in their school did not feel as much pressure as they would if they had to learn English in a monolingual-immersion setting. The teachers in the bilingual context, Rose and Kate, talked about this “lack of pressure” for the ELL students during our focus group at the end of the year. When I asked the teachers about how they thought the context they taught in (bilingual or monolingual English immersion) affected their teaching and the students, Kate said, “I think that . . . the acculturation process is almost nonexistent [at our school] because the [ELL students] are coming in to basically a half French environment so the transition is easy, they’re not shocked by a new culture” (focus group, June, 2007).

Teachers in the bilingual context used ELL students’ first language for instruction, and, perhaps more importantly, both allowed and encouraged their ELL students to use their native language for academic purposes, such as writing. This links with the teachers’ definition of a comfortable environment in the bilingual context in terms of the ELL students being able to use and learn through their native language.

The importance of using ELL students’ native language in learning has been emphasized in the research literature on effective practices for ELLs (August & Hakuta, 1998; Gersten, 1996; Gersten & Baker, 2000; Reyes, 1992), the research on effective teachers of ELL students (Garcia, 1991; Tikunoff, 1983), some of the research on
bilingual writing development (Gort, 2002; Moll et al., 2001), and in research on the positive influences of literacy skills in ELL students’ native language on their development of English (August et al., 2006; Goldenberg, Rueda, & August, 2006; Proctor, Carlo, August, & Snow, 2006; Shanahan & Beck, 2006).

In looking at effective practices and programs for ELL students, August and Hakuta (1998) and Gersten and Baker (2000) both found that using the native language in instructing ELL students was an important factor to educating them successfully. Gersten and Baker stressed that the objective of using native language instruction to learn English is “to use levels of English at which students are very fluent, while simultaneously using more extensive native language to introduce complex concepts and provide opportunities to concentrate on understanding challenging content” (p. 469).

Again, the teachers in the bilingual context in this study not only allowed and encouraged their ELL students to use their native language for writing, reading and speaking, but they felt that in doing so, it provided a more comfortable environment for the students.

*Teachers in the Monolingual English Immersion Contexts*

Teachers in the monolingual English immersion contexts seemed to have certain experiences that were different from the teachers in the bilingual context as well as certain practices that were in stark contrast with the teachers in the bilingual context. With regard to experiences, my findings suggest that the successful teachers in the monolingual English immersion contexts experienced more stress in teaching their ELL students. They expressed this stress in the form of testing pressures, needing more ELL
support in the schools, and in trying to determine whether or not an ELL student had a
language issue or a learning issue.

My interpretation from the interviews, observations, recall sessions, and focus
group is that the issue of the impact of context on the teachers seemed to be not so much
that the contexts were independent, or private, versus public, but that it was the model
that was important in terms of its effects on teachers. The fact that the bilingual context
was a dual-language model enabled the ELL students in the bilingual context to spend
half of their academic time learning in their native language. In this way, the effective
teachers in the bilingual context did not have to be as concerned about their ELL
students learning the necessary academic content as the teachers did in the monolingual
context. In addition, the teachers in the bilingual context seemed to experience less
stress because they could speak their ELL students’ native language. Therefore,
communication among teachers, students, and parents was much smoother and therefore
less stressful than in the English monolingual immersion contexts.

In terms of differences in practices, one of the main differences between the
exemplary teachers in the bilingual context and those in the English monolingual
immersion contexts, was that the teachers in the monolingual contexts did not allow
their ELL students to use, nor encouraged them to use, their native languages for
academic purposes. I never observed the ELL students writing in their native languages,
reading in their native languages, or speaking in their native languages, nor did I ever
hear the teachers encouraging them to do so. The reason for not using students’ native
languages in the classroom could have been a result of the legislation passed in the state
which said that teachers could not use students’ native languages in the classroom for
teaching, though the teachers in the study never indicated this directly. Furthermore, the teachers in the monolingual English immersion settings had to be more concerned about high-stakes testing and therefore may have felt that it was critical for the ELL students to use as much English as possible.

In addition, Jane specifically encouraged parents of ELL students to try and use English at home rather than using their native language. This goes counter to second language research that indicates a family should maintain use of the first language at home in order to facilitate second language acquisition (Cummins, 1981; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Wong Fillmore, 1991). Furthermore, this idea of not using the native language at home suggests that Jane was not familiar with the nature of bilingualism—that people who are bilingual are not two monolinguals in one (Grosjean, 1989), but rather operative from a total language system.

Though the teachers were still deemed exemplary at teaching ELL students, one has to question whether or not a definition of an exemplary teacher of ELL students needs to include one in which ELL students are encouraged to use their native languages for academic purposes given the research on the important role of native language development in academic achievement in English (August & Hakuta, 1998; August et al., 2006; Gersten, 1996; Gersten & Baker, 2000; Goldenberg et al., 2006; Proctor et al., 2006; Reyes, 1992; Shanahan & Beck, 2006).

**Implications**

The findings from this study suggest that effective teachers of ELL students, regardless of the context in which teachers are working, need to have knowledge of their ELL students, knowledge of content and the language demands of that content,
knowledge of effective practices for ELL students, certain background experiences, and key dispositions. The findings also suggest that teachers have different experiences in teaching ELL students depending on whether they work in bilingual contexts or English monolingual immersion contexts. Several implications for teacher preparation, including preparation depending on the nature of the program in which ELL students are taught, for research, and for policy are the result of these findings.

**Implications for Teacher Preparation**

*Knowledge of ELL students, content, and practices.* Preservice and inservice teachers need to understand how important it is to know about their ELL students’ backgrounds. They need to know what kind of background information is important, and how to find it. This background knowledge is critical for teachers to know since research suggests that without it, their ELL students’ learning could be negatively impacted (Huss-Keeler, 1997; Rueda et al., 2006). In addition, my findings suggest that preservice and inservice teachers may benefit from courses in second language acquisition, courses and/or training in understanding and then being able to teach the language demands of their subject matter, and in knowing and then learning how to use effective practices for ELL students.

Tellez and Waxman (2005) spoke about the importance of all three of these points when discussing effective professional development for teachers of English Language Learners. They stated that:

Teachers of ELLs must have a strong understanding of language acquisition and of the concept of communicative competence and know how language forms the basis for ELL instruction. They must be content area experts as well as language teachers, able to restate questions, paraphrase concepts, and summarize key ideas in English. (p. 1)
However, it seems important for both preservice and inservice teachers to have mentored experiences learning and using effective strategies over time so that they feel successful and perhaps more confident in working with their ELL students.

As Milk, Mercado, and Sapiens (1992) stated, in order to prepare preservice teachers to work effectively with ELL students, teacher education programs “need to provide sufficient modeling through direct experience” (Developing Reflective Teachers for Changing Schools section, para. 2) of what is involved in teaching ELL students. This is equally important for inservice teachers who may not feel confident in working with their ELL students as they often experience one-shot workshops, which rarely affect their teaching over the long-term (Goldenberg & Gallimore, 1991).

One critical practice that teachers in monolingual English immersion contexts appear to need to know and learn how to use is ELL students’ native language for instructional purposes (August & Hakuta, 1998; Gersten, 1996; Gersten & Baker, 2000; Proctor et al., 2006; Reyes, 1992; Shanahan & Beck, 2006). Mentored experiences in how to do so could enable teachers to feel more confident in allowing students to use their native languages in the classroom.

For example, Laman and Van Sluys (2008) documented how monolingual teachers in English-immersion classrooms successfully incorporated their ELL students’ native language use into writers’ workshop. Results of their study indicated that the use of the ELL students’ native languages provided opportunities for all of the students to “investigate” language where “all students were positioned as language learners” (p. 273). Reading articles such as these and then demonstrating and mentoring teachers in
the use of these kinds of strategies could be an effective means to help teachers become aware of the value of native language use in the monolingual classroom.

*Providing experiences learning a second language and being in a culture different from one’s own.* Findings from this research suggest that the teachers’ experiences learning a second language and being immersed in cultures different from their own positively influenced their working with ELL students.

To date, there appears to be no longitudinal data on how learning a second language and being immersed in a culture other than one’s own influences teacher practices. However, research on experiential learning suggests that learning through experience can be a valuable element in teacher preparation.

Conrad and Hedin (1995) defined experiential educational programs as those that are “offered as an integral part of the . . . curriculum [which] tak[e] place outside of the conventional classroom where students are in new roles . . . emphasis is on learning by doing with associated reflection” (p. 383).

The critical element of this description is the essential role of guided reflection. Some of the research on teacher preparation programs requiring field experiences for teachers where they are placed in educational settings much different from their own cultural models, have found that some sort of systematic inquiry into the nature of beliefs towards ELL students is imperative for prospective teachers to develop more positive attitudes towards working with ELL students and reduce stereotypes (Cabello & Burnstein, 1995; Friedman, 2002). Florio-Ruane (2001) suggested that using ethnic literature and autobiography can be an effective means for preservice teachers to study and reflect on their own lives, and to be able to see themselves as cultural beings.
Furthermore, teachers do not necessarily have to travel abroad to be immersed in a culture other than their own. There are many local communities which could provide this kind of immersion, both culturally and linguistically. Again, however, the important element in this immersion is guided reflection.

Dispositions. Dispositions that appear to contribute to the teachers in this study being effective with ELL students are: sensitivity, kindness, encouragement, positive attitude toward teaching ELL students, and humor about themselves. What is more difficult to determine is whether or not these could be developed in other teachers, nor whether or not they need to be in order for other teachers to work effectively with ELL students.

The importance of teachers having certain types of dispositions has been placed in the forefront of teacher education by organizations such as NCATE (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education), as well as NBPTS (National Board of Professional Teaching Standards). The types of dispositions these institutions define as important for teachers to have are in line with the kinds of dispositions I found of the effective teachers in this study. For example, NCATE’s (2007) Standard 1 requires that:

Candidates preparing to work in schools as teachers or other school professionals know and demonstrate the content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and skills, pedagogical and professional knowledge and skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn.

In order to meet the target for professional dispositions, teacher candidates must “demonstrate classroom behaviors that create caring and supportive learning environments and encourage self-directed learning by all students” (NCATE, 2007).
Furthermore, NBPTS (2002b) standards also clarified the kinds of dispositions board-certified teachers should exemplify. These dispositions are: “curiosity, tolerance, honesty, fairness, respect for diversity and appreciation of cultural differences” (p. 4).

**Implications for Research**

The results of this study can add to the knowledge base of effective practices for ELL students. The findings also suggest the kind of background knowledge that is important to find out about ELL students, and that effective teachers of ELL students need to have knowledge of both subject matter and the language demands of that content.

The importance of background experiences and dispositions to effective teaching of ELL students are ones in which more research would be necessary. It would be useful to determine if other effective teachers of ELL students have had the kinds of experiences and dispositions of the teachers in this study. In this way, it may be possible to determine if there should be certain requirements of teachers who are going to work with ELL students, such a learning a second language and knowing how to be encouraging and caring towards ELL students.

Furthermore, it would be important to do research with effective teachers in monolingual English immersion contexts in particular to help determine how to lessen some of the stress they experience as a result of that context. Some of the areas of study may include: (a) examining the ELL support services that are in place, (b) how to help teachers in monolingual contexts determine if ELL students have special education needs, (c) the effects of high-stakes testing on teachers who have ELL students in their
classrooms, and (d) the ways in which to utilize ELL students’ native languages for teaching and learning.

**Implications for Policy**

In the state in which the teachers in this study taught, a law was passed in 2002 which eliminated bilingual education programs in public schools that serviced ELL students specifically. Whereas, many ELL students were able to learn through their native languages prior to the passing of this legislation, they were now being placed into what was termed “sheltered English immersion” programs, which often times meant into mainstream classrooms.

The findings from this study suggest that teachers who taught in monolingual English immersion classrooms experienced more stress and needed to use more strategies in their teaching in order to be effective with ELL students. However, teachers in the dual-language program experienced less stress since they were able to rely on ELL students learning academic content through their native language. This suggests that the state in which this research took place, and other states that have repealed dual-language models, should consider offering dual-language program models in public schools where ELL students can learn half of their time in their native languages.

**Conclusion**

My theory of what it takes to be an exemplary teacher of ELL students across contexts includes five overlapping categories: knowledge of ELL students, knowledge of content and language, knowledge of effective practices, specific background experiences, and key dispositions. In order to be an effective teacher of ELL students,
my theory suggests that if teachers are missing one of these important elements, they will not be effective with their ELL students. There is a synergy among these categories which cannot be broken.
REFERENCES


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Appendix A: Superintendent Letter

Dear Superintendent

I am contacting you regarding the potential of doing research at your district. For my proposed dissertation research, I am interested in working with teachers who are particularly effective at teaching English language learners. The major goal of the study is to understand from a holistic viewpoint the successful teacher of ELLs--their background, knowledge, and practices and how these may be mediated by the contexts of English monolingual immersion classrooms and bilingual classrooms. This study will document the strategies and practices these successful teachers use in their classrooms, particularly around issues of teaching language to ELLs. It will also explore teachers’ backgrounds and training. A further goal of this study will be to examine ELL students’ writing to assess progress in the area of language development for these students for the period in which I collect my data.

Below you will find an outline of the research project. After reading it, if you would like to move to have a meeting, I would be available at your convenience to discuss the project in further detail.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Courtney Clayton

Principal Investigator: Courtney Clayton
Contact number: (617) 899-9203
Email: stanleco@bc.edu
Supervising Faculty Member: Dr. Maria Brisk
Contact Number: (617) 552-4216
Email: brisk@bc.edu
Research Outline

Main Question: How do exemplary teachers of English language learners (ELLs) teach ELLs in both monolingual English immersion and bilingual settings?

I specifically want to address the following: What challenges do teachers face in both settings, and do they differ by setting?; What are the strategies exemplary teachers use to teach language to English language learners and how do these strategies compare across the two different settings?; and finally, How does students’ progress over time in writing support the teachers’ status as exemplary?

Significance: The number of English Language Learners is continuing to rise in K-12 schools. The increasing numbers of ELLs in classrooms presents numerous challenges to preparing teachers to work effectively with these students. I am proposing research to examine the kinds of practices exemplary teachers use to effectively teach English Language Learners across settings. The purpose of this research is to help other teachers become more effective in working with ELLs, particularly around issues of language.

Benefits of the research: Findings will be disseminated to the faculty members at both sites in order to potentially help to improve practices. The teachers participating in the study will have the opportunity to co-author journal article submissions if so desired and present papers together at conferences, such as the American Educational Research Association. Participating teachers would also hopefully benefit from their reflections on practice, and in having the opportunity to discuss their practices with other exemplary teachers.

Timeline: The research would begin in September 2006 at each site. Three sets of cluster visits would be done through April 2007. Interviews, observations and focus groups would be scheduled at convenient times for the teachers participating. Below is a table for data collection:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Interview 1</th>
<th>Observation 1</th>
<th>Stimulated Recall Session 1, Oct 2006</th>
<th>Observation 2</th>
<th>Stimulated Recall Session 2, Jan 2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principals fill out Qualities of Exemplary Teaching data collection form</td>
<td>Exploration of background of participants</td>
<td>First cluster visits in each teacher’s classroom</td>
<td>Recounting one observed lesson</td>
<td>Second set of cluster visits in each teacher’s classroom</td>
<td>Recounting one observed lesson from second set of cluster visits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 2</td>
<td>Feb 2007</td>
<td>Observation 3</td>
<td>Stimulated Recall Session 3, Apr 2007</td>
<td>Focus Group</td>
<td>Writing Samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recounting of one observed lesson from third set of cluster visits</td>
<td>Third set of cluster visits in each teacher’s classroom</td>
<td>Recounting of one observed lesson from third set of cluster visits</td>
<td>Member check of emerging theory and exploration of what it means to be an exemplary teacher</td>
<td>One writing sample from each student collected each month</td>
<td>Done consistently, particularly after each interview, observation, stimulated recall session and focus group.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B: Principal Letter

Dear Principal,

My name is Courtney Clayton. I am a doctoral candidate in the Curriculum and Instruction program at the Lynch School of Education at Boston College. I am writing with regard to my dissertation study on exemplary mainstream teachers of English Language Learners (ELLs).

The major goal of the study is to understand from a holistic viewpoint the successful teacher of ELLs—their background, knowledge, and practices and how these may be mediated by the contexts of English monolingual immersion classrooms and bilingual classrooms. This study will document the strategies and practices these successful teachers use in their classrooms, particularly around issues of teaching language to ELLs. It will also explore teachers’ backgrounds and training. A further goal of this study will be to examine ELL students’ writing to assess progress in the area of language development for these students for the period in which I collect my data.

This study is influenced by my work as an elementary school teacher, an ESL teacher and a bilingual teacher as well as by my work in my doctoral program on issues related to ELL students. For my 10 years as a teacher, I have been interested in how to best teach students for whom English is a second language. I have experienced programs that have pull-out ESL as well as bilingual programs that promote development of students’ first languages in addition to English. In both cases, it has been a continual challenge to help ELL students acquire the English needed to succeed academically.

In my work at Boston College, I have encountered numerous preservice and inservice teachers who feel overwhelmed by the presence of ELL students in their classrooms. They have often said that they do not feel effective in teaching these students. In addition, these teachers are encountering more and more ELL students in their classrooms as are the majority of public school teachers across the country. Though we are beginning to understand in the research the kinds of practices that are effective for ELLs, it is less clear what teachers who are successful with these students actually do in their classrooms.

For this study, I am interested in working with successful teachers of ELLs. I plan to collect data from September through April of the 2006-2007 academic school year. Teachers who elect to participate will be asked to complete two interviews, twelve classroom observations, three stimulated recall sessions, and participate one focus group. In addition, students who receive parent permission will be asked to have their writing samples collected. These samples are to assess language development only and not to be used as a form of teacher assessment. As compensation for participation, teachers will receive a $500 stipend.
If you have questions about the described study, I can be contacted at 617-899-9203. Questions can also be directed to Dr. Maria Brisk, my Dissertation Chair at 617-552-4216. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Courtney Clayton
Appendix C: Teacher Letter

Dear Teacher,

My name is Courtney Clayton. I am a doctoral candidate in the Curriculum and Instruction program at the Lynch School of Education at Boston College. I am writing with regard to my dissertation study on exemplary mainstream teachers of English Language Learners (ELLs).

The major goal of the study is to understand from a holistic viewpoint the successful teacher of ELLs–their background, knowledge, and practices and how these may be mediated by the contexts of English monolingual immersion classrooms and bilingual classrooms. This study will document the strategies and practices successful teachers use in their classrooms, particularly around issues of teaching language to ELLs. It will also explore teachers’ backgrounds and training. A further goal of this study will be to examine ELL students’ writing to assess progress in the area of language development for these students for the period in which I collect my data.

This study is influenced by my work as an elementary school teacher, an ESL teacher and a bilingual teacher as well as by my work in my doctoral program on issues related to ELL students. For my ten years as a teacher, I have been interested in how to best teach students for whom English is a second language. I have experienced programs that have pull-out ESL as well as bilingual programs that promote development of students’ first languages in addition to English. In both cases, it has been a continual challenge to help ELL students acquire the English needed to succeed academically. In my work at Boston College, I have encountered numerous preservice and inservice teachers who feel overwhelmed by the presence of ELL students in their classrooms. They have often said that they do not feel effective in teaching these students. In addition, these teachers are encountering more and more ELL students in their classrooms as are the majority of public school teachers across the country. Though we are beginning to understand in the research the kinds of practices that are effective for ELLs, it is less clear what teachers who are successful with these students actually do in their classrooms.

For this study, I am interested in working with successful teachers of ELLs. You have been nominated by your principal/administrator as a particularly effective teacher of ELLs. If you agree to participate in this study, I would plan to collect data from September through April of the 2006-2007 academic school year. Teachers who elect to participate will be asked to complete two interviews, eight classroom observations, three stimulated recall sessions, and participate in one focus group. In addition, ELL students in your classroom who receive parent permission will be asked to have their writing samples collected. These samples are to assess language development only and would not to be used as a form of teacher assessment. As compensation for participation, you would receive a $500 stipend.
Should you agree to participate, you can email me directly at stanleco@bc.edu, or call me at (617) 899-9203. Once you have agreed, I will provide you with a consent form to sign and return to me.

If you have questions about the described study, I can be contacted at 617-899-9203. Questions can also be directed to Dr. Maria Brisk, my Dissertation Chair at 617-552-4216.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Courtney Clayton
You are invited to participate in a research project that is being directed by Courtney Clayton, a doctoral candidate, in the Lynch School of Education (LSOE) at Boston College. The study intends to examine the teaching practices of effective teachers of English Language Learners across two different settings. You have been identified as a teacher who is particularly effective in working with these students. This is why you are being asked to participate.

You will be asked to participate in two interviews, each 60 minutes in length, where you will be asked to discuss your background, preparation for teaching, knowledge of teaching practices, and any special training you have had. During the interviews, I will take written notes, and, with your permission, I will tape record the interviews. You will also be asked to participate in eight 60 to 90 minute observations which will be scheduled at your convenience. During the observations, I will also take written notes and audiotape. I will then ask you to participate in three 60 minute stimulated recall sessions of three of the observed lessons. Finally, you will be asked to participate in one focus group, which will be videotaped, with your permission. In the focus group, you will be discussing your opinions of what makes an effective teacher of English Language Learners with other participants in the study. Writing samples from the English language learner participants in our classroom will be collected. These samples are to only assess progress in language development for these students. They will not be used as tools to critique your teaching nor be given to administrators without your permission.

As this report will be shared with others from the LSOE and from the participating schools, it is possible that statements you make or ideas you present will be attributable to you and this might engender some measure of professional concern for you. As explained below, however, a number of precautions will be taken to protect your identity, including allowing you to see ongoing data analysis to remove any sections of analysis that may seem potentially harmful to you.

The project is designed to protect your individual privacy in all published reports or papers resulting from this study. For instance, I will assign all participants a code number so that even if someone were to gain access to any research data, they would be unable to identify anyone by name.

If you would like a copy of the final report, you can request one by providing the researcher with an address to which to send a draft of the report. If after reading the report, you wish to discuss any concerns that may arise for you, I will be glad to do so. Also, with your permission, I would like to save a copy of your interviews/observations for future work I hope to do in this area.

You will be paid a $500 stipend for your participation. The stipend will be paid to you based upon the allocation from the grant for the stipend. That is, 45% at the beginning
of the study, in September 2006, an additional 45% by June 2007, and the additional 10% by August 2007. This stipend is payable based upon ten observations, two interviews, one focus group and three stimulated recall sessions. Should you decide to withdraw from the study before all data has been collected, you will still collect the stipend. The stipend will still be paid to you in the order indicated.

If you choose to participate in this project, please understand that your participation is voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time. You are also welcome to ask questions at any time during the interviews and observations. Further, should I pose a question that you would rather not answer, for whatever reason, you have no obligation to answer.

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, any concerns regarding this project, or dissatisfaction with any aspect of this study, you may report them to Courtney Clayton, (617) 899-9203, Dr. Maria Brisk, my Dissertation Chair at 617-552-4216, or please contact the Boston College Office for Human Research Participant Protection, (617) 552-4778.

Certification

I have read and I believe I understand this Informed Consent document. I believe I understand the purpose of the research project and what I will be asked to do. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and they have been answered satisfactorily.

I understand the above information and voluntarily consent to participate in this research.

Signatures:

____________________________
Date

Consent Signature of Participant

____________________________
Printed Name of Participant

____________________________
Person Providing Information and Witness to Consent
Appendix E: Parent Informed Consent Form: English, Spanish, French, and Japanese

English

Introduction
You child is being invited to participate in a research project that is being directed by Courtney Clayton, a Ph.D. candidate in the Lynch School of Education (LSOE) at Boston College. The study intends to examine the teaching practices of effective teachers of English Language Learners across two different settings. Your child’s teacher has been identified as an effective teacher of English Language Learners, and your child has been identified as an English language learner her classroom. This is why your child is being asked to participate.

Procedure
As the principal investigator, I will be collecting writing samples from your child over a period of six months. The purpose is to examine the impact the teacher in the study is having upon your child’s language development in English. I will specifically be looking at language progress and using writing as a measurement of this. Your child will in no way be evaluated in the study. Should you agree to the study, the purpose will be explained to your child by your child’s teacher, and by you as well, of course. Your child’s writing will be photocopied and kept by the principal investigator for analysis. Some of the writing samples may be included in the final report.

Confidentiality
Your child’s name will not appear on any of the samples used in the final report, and a pseudonym would only be used to identify the samples. With your permission, I would like to save copies of the writing samples for future work I hope to do further work in this area, but again, no sample would include your child’s name. If you choose not to have me save the samples, all samples will be shredded at the end of the study.

Withdrawal from the study
If you choose to allow your child to participate in this project, please understand that participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw your consent or have your child discontinue participation at any time. You are also welcome to ask questions at any time throughout the study.

Compensation
There is no cost to participate in the study, nor will you receive any compensation for your child’s participating in this research.

Questions
If you have any questions regarding your rights as a parent of a research participant, any concerns regarding this project, or dissatisfaction with any aspect of this study, you may report them to Courtney Clayton at (617) 899-9203, email: stanleco@bc.edu, Dr. Maria Brisk at (617) 552-4216, email: brisk@bc.edu, or please
contact the Boston College Office for Human Research Participant Protection, (617) 552-4778.

Certification

I have read and I believe I understand this Informed Consent document. I believe I understand the purpose of the research project and what my child will be asked to do.

I understand the above information and voluntarily consent to have my child participate in this research.

Signatures:

__________________
Date

__________________
Consent Signature of Parent/Guardian

__________________
Printed Name of Parent/Guardian and Relationship

__________________
Printed Name of Child Participant

Please return this signed permission to your child’s teacher, or mail it directly to
Ms. Courtney Clayton
Boston College
c/o 294 Chestnut Avenue #3
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130
Introducción

Su hijo ha sido invitado a participar en un proyecto de investigación dirigido por Courtney Clayton, una candidata de Doctorado en el Departamento de Educación del “Lynch School” (LSOE) en la Universidad “Boston College.” El estudio intenta examinar el estilo de enseñanza más eficaz entre los profesores de inglés idioma extranjero y puesto que su hijo/a ha sido identificado como un estudiante de inglés en una de estas clases, se le ha pedido su participación.

Procedimiento

Como investigadora principal escogeré muestras de trabajos escritos hechos por su hijo/a durante un periodo de seis meses. El propósito es examinar el impacto que la profesora que participa en el estudio ha tenido sobre su hijo/a en el desarrollo del aprendizaje del idioma inglés. Estudiaré muy específicamente el progreso del desarrollo del lenguaje y utilizaré muestras escritas como unidad de medición. Si aceptara la participación de su hijo/a en este estudio, el propósito del mismo le será explicado a su hijo/a tanto por su profesora como por Ud. mismo supuesto. Los trabajos escritos de su hijo/a serán fotocopiados y guardados por la investigadora principal para posteriormente ser analizados. Algunas de las muestras serán incluidas en el informe final.

Confidencialidad

El nombre de su hijo/a no aparecerá en ninguna de las muestras utilizadas para el informe final y se utilizará un pseudónimo solamente con el propósito de identificar las muestras. Con su autorización conservaría ciertas muestras para utilizarlas en un trabajo posterior que llevaré acabo en el futuro pero nuevamente ninguna de estas muestras incluiría el nombre de su hijo/a. Sin embargo, si Ud. no está de acuerdo con que se guarden copias de las muestras efectuadas por su hijo/a, todas las muestras serán destruídas al final de la investigación.

Posibilidad de retirarse de la investigación

Si Ud acepta la participación de su hijo/a en este proyecto quisiera aclarar que al ser una participación voluntaria Ud. tiene derecho a retirar su consentimiento en todo momento. Asimismo invitamos a los padres a hacer toda las preguntas que consideren necesarias en cualquier momento del proyecto de investigación.

Compensación

La investigación no acarreará ni costos ni compensaciones para los participantes.

Preguntas

Si tiene alguna pregunta sobre sus derechos como padre de un participante, alguna inquietud sobre el proyecto o está en descuerdo con algún aspecto de este estudio, sírvase contactar a Courtney Clayton (por teléfono al 617 899-9203 o correo
electrónico stanleco@bc.edu), a la Dra. Maria Brisk (por teléfono al 617 552-4216 o correo electrónico brisk@bc.edu) o al Boston College “Office for Human Research Participant Protection” (617 552-4778).

Certificación
He leído y creo entender este Documento de Consentimiento. Creo haber comprendido el propósito de este proyecto de investigación y lo que se le pedirá a mi hijo/a.

He comprendido la información presentada más arriba y doy mi consentimiento voluntario para que mi hijo/a participe en este estudio.

Firmas:
_____________________________________________________
Fecha Firma de Consentimiento de los padres o tutores

_____________________________________________________
Nombre y Apellido de los padres o tutores en letra de imprenta

_____________________________________________________
Nombre del niño/a participante en letra de imprenta

Sírvase entregar este formulario firmado a la maestra de su hijo/a o enviarlo directamente a:

Ms. Courtney Clayton
Boston College
c/o 294 Chestnut Avenue #3
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130
Introduction

Votre enfant est invité à participer à un projet de recherche dirigé par Courtney Clayton, candidate au doctorat de l’école Lynch School of Education (LSOE) à l’université Boston College. L’étude s’efforce d’examiner les méthodes d’enseignement efficaces, employées par des professeurs enseignant l’anglais. L’enseignant de votre enfant a été identifié comme étant un enseignant approprié pour cette recherche et votre enfant est en cours d’apprentissage de la langue anglaise; C’est pour cette raison que sa participation est sollicitée.

Procédure

En tant que principale investigatrice, je collecterai des échantillons de productions d’écrit de votre enfant pour une durée de 6 mois. L’objectif de cette étude est d’examiner l’impact que l’enseignant a sur le développement du langage de votre enfant. Je me concentrerai spécialement sur les progrès réalisés dans la langue. Afin d’analyser et mesurer les progrès accomplis, j’utilisera les productions d’écrit.

Dans le cas où vous accepteriez que votre enfant participe à cette étude, la procédure à suivre vous sera expliquée par l’enseignant de votre enfant. Les productions d’écrit de votre enfant seront photocopiées et conservées pour analyse par la principale investigatrice. Certains exemplaires des productions d’écrit figureront peut-être dans le rapport final.

Confidentialité

Le nom de votre enfant n’apparaîtra sur aucun échantillon utilisé pour le rapport final. Un pseudonyme sera utilisé à seule fin d’identifier les différents échantillons de productions d’écrit. Avec votre permission, je souhaiterais conserver des copies des productions d’écrit pour de futures recherches. J’espère continuer ma recherche dans ce domaine, mais encore une fois j’insiste sur le fait qu’aucun n’échantillon ne portera le nom de votre enfant. Dans le cas où vous ne souhaiteriez pas que je conserve les travaux de votre enfant, tous les échantillons seront détruits à la fin de cette étude.

Retractation/ Retrait de l’étude

Si vous choisissez d’accepter que votre enfant participe à ce projet, vous reconnaissez, que cette participation est volontaire; Comprenez également qu’a tout moment vous avez le droit de vous retractor ou faire en sorte que la participation de votre enfant cesse. Je reste à votre disposition tout au long de l’étude si vous avez des questions.

Compensation

L’étude ne coûte rien et il n’y aura pas non plus de compensation pour la participation de votre enfant.
Questions

Si vous avez des questions concernant vos droits en tant que parent d’un membre de votre famille participant à une étude, ou des questions concernant ce projet, ou des déconvenues avec quelque aspect que ce soit, vous avez la possibilité de les communiquer à Courtney Clayton au (617) 899-9203, email: stanleco@bc.edu, ou à Dr. Maria Brisk at (617) 552-4216, email: brisk@bc.edu, ou vous pouvez également contacter le bureau de recherche des sciences humaines chargé de la protection des participants au (617) 552-4778.

Confirmation

J’ai lu et approuve le formulaire ci-dessus. J’ai pris connaissance de l’objectif de la recherche et ai compris ce que l’étude exigera de la part de mon enfant.

Je comprends les informations ci-dessus et consens volontairement à ce que mon enfant participe à cette recherche.

Signatures:

__________________
Date

Signature d’accord du parent en charge de l’enfant

__________________
Nom du parent et lien de parenté avec l’enfant

__________________
Nom de l’enfant participant

Veuillez retourner cette permission signée à l’enseignant de votre enfant ou envoyez-la directement à:

Ms. Courtney Clayton
Boston College
c/o 294 Chestnut Avenue #3
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130

331
子供が「模範的な英語教師」研究調査に参加することに対する保護者同意書

どうして私の子供がこの調査に参加するよう依頼されたのですか？
○ お子様が模範教師に英語を教えてもらっているからです。

まずどうすればいいのですか？
○ 同意する前に、このプリントを読んでください。
○ 質問があれば、聞いてください。

この調査はどういうものですか？
○ 優れた英語教師の教え方に関する調査です。お子様の先生が模範英語教師として選ばれたためです。

この調査に参加するのは誰ですか？
○ 模範英語教師4名と英語を学んでいる生徒20名ほどです。

私の子供が参加すると、何をするのでしょうか？
○ 英語上達度を調べるために6ヶ月にかけてお子様の文章サンプルを集めさせていただきます。
○ このサンプルは学校や先生が評価するものではありません。
○ 上達度を測るために研究者のみ拝見させていただきます。
○ 調査目的はお子様の先生からそしてお父様・お母様からご説明願います。

私の子供が参加する上でのリスクは何でしょうか？
○ お子様が自分の文章を見てほしくないと思うかもしれません。

この調査に参加する利点は何でしょうか？
○ 余分に注意を払ってもらうことが嬉しいかもしれません。
○ お子様の英語発達度がよりわかりやすいかもしれません。

プライバシーはどのように守るのですか？
○ 文章サンプルは学校管理者には見せられません。
○ 調査記録は内密にされます。
○ 報告書にはお子様の文章サンプルを使っても、お子様の名前は伏せられます。
○ 最終報告書に含まれる文章サンプルは匿名です。サンプルを特定するためには、仮名を用います。
○ 調査記録は錠をかけたファイルキャビネットに保管されます。
○ 研究資料には研究者しか目を通すことはできません。
○ 時にはUniversity IRB (Institutional Review Board)が研究記録に目を通すことがあるかもしれません。

私の子供を参加させなかったり、参加しても途中で抜けたらどうしましょう？
○ 調査参加は自由です。
お子様が参加しないからといって、何か悪い結果になることは決してないです。

お子様が途中からいかなる理由により抜けることは自由です。

調査期間中、何なりとご質問ください。

調査に参加することで何か報酬はあるのでしょうか。

調査に参加する費用も報酬もありません。

質問があったら、どこに問い合わせればいいのですか。

調査責任者のコートニー・クレイトンにお願いします。電話番号は(617)899-9203、メールアドレスはstanleco@bc.eduです。コートニーの博士号論文担当教授マリア・ブリスク博士の電話番号は(617)552-4216、メールアドレスはbrisk@bc.eduです。

この調査に参加するお子様の権利についてご質問があれば、ボストン・カレッジの人類研究参加者保護局長(617)552-4778あるいはirb@bc.eduまでお問い合わせください。

この同意書のコピーをいただけますか？

記録として、また将来参考のためコピーをとってください。

同意宣言

この同意書を読みました(読んでもらいました)。

質問をするように励まされました。

質問に対する回答を得ました。

この調査に参加することに同意します。

この同意書のコピーをいただきました(いただきました)。

署名・今日の日付

子供の氏名__________________________

保護者氏名__________________________

保護者署名__________________________

今日の日付__________________________
Appendix F: Child Assent Form: English, Spanish, French, and Japanese

ASSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

This letter is to ask if you want to be part of a research study looking at how teachers work with English Language Learners. Both your parent/guardian and school have agreed to the study and said that you can participate. You have the final decision. If you agree, you will be among other students learning English who are part of the study.

My name is Courtney Clayton, and I am a graduate student in Education at Boston College.

You do not have to be part of the study. If you decide not to be part of the study, nothing bad will happen. If you start the study, but then you decide you do not want to be part of it anymore, that will be fine. Nothing bad will happen to you.

If you decide to be part of the study, I will collect samples of your writing. I will collect samples from September through March. You will not need to write your name on the writing that I collect. The writing will not be graded by me or by your teacher.

When I write about this study, your name will not be used. I will write about students learning English but not about you in particular.

If you want to be part of the study, then please write your name and the date at the bottom of the page.

Signatures

_______________________________________________
Signature of Child

_______________________________________________
Printed Name of Child

_______________________________________________
Date

_______________________________________________
Signature of Person Providing Information/Witness

_______________________________________________
Printed Name of Person Providing Information/Witness

_______________________________________________
Date
CONSENTIMIENTO DE PARTICIPACION EN UN PROYECTO DE INVESTIGACION

Esta carta es para pedirte que participes en un proyecto de investigación que estudiará como trabajan los profesores con niños que están aprendiendo inglés. Tanto tus padres/tutores como el colegio están de acuerdo con el estudio y han dado su consentimiento para que tú puedas participar en él. Pero, la decisión final es tuya. Si estás de acuerdo serás uno de los estudiantes de inglés que participan en este estudio.

Me llamo Courtney Clayton y soy la responsable del proyecto. Soy una estudiante de post grado en Educación en la Universidad “Boston College.”

No tienes que participar en el proyecto si no lo deseas. Si decides no participar nada malo te va a pasar.

Si decides participar voy a recoger muestras de tus trabajos escritos. Recogeré estas muestras desde septiembre hasta marzo y no necesitarás poner tu nombre en ninguno de los trabajos que recogeré.

Cuando presente este proyecto tu nombre no aparecerá en ninguna parte. Escribiré sobre los estudiantes de inglés en general y no sobre tí en particular.

Si quieres participar en este estudio, escribe tu nombre y la fecha al final de esta hoja.

Firmas:

________________________________________________________________
Firma del niño

________________________________________________________________
Nombre del niño en letra de imprenta

________________________________________________________________
Fecha

________________________________________________________________
Firma de la persona que provee la información/testigo

________________________________________________________________
Nombre de la persona que provee la información/testigo en letra de imprenta

________________________________________________________________
Fecha
ACCORD DE PARTICIPATION POUR UNE ETUDE DE RECHERCHE

Cette lettre est à signer si vous souhaitez faire partie d’une étude de recherche ayant pour but d’étudier comment les enseignants travaillent avec les enfants en cours d’apprentissage d’anglais. L’école ainsi que vos parents ont donné leurs accords pour que vous participiez à cette recherche. C’est vous qui choisissez si vous voulez faire partie de cette étude. C’est à vous que revient la décision finale. Si vous acceptez de participer à cette étude, vous ferez partie d’un ensemble d’autres étudiants qui eux aussi apprennent l’anglais.

Mon nom est Courtney Clayton. Je suis une élève à l’université de Boston College.

Vous n’êtes pas obligé de participer à cette étude. Si vous décidez de ne pas faire partie de cette étude, rien de grave ne vous arrivera.

Si vous décidez de participer à cette étude, je collecterai des échantillons de vos productions d’écrit du mois de Septembre au mois de Mars. Vous n’aurez pas besoin d’écrire votre nom sur vos productions.

Quand j’écrirai au sujet de cette recherche, votre nom ne sera pas utilisé. Mes écrits auront pour thème les étudiants en cours d’apprentissage d’anglais, mais je ne parlerai pas de vous en particulier dans mon étude.

Si vous souhaitez faire partie de cette recherche, veuillez si vous plait écrire votre nom au bas de cette page.

Signatures

________________________________________________________________
Signature de l’enfant

________________________________________________________________
Nom de l’enfant en lettres capitales

________________________________________________________________
Date

________________________________________________________________
Signature de la personne témoin lors de la signature

________________________________________________________________
Signature de la personne témoin lors de la signature

________________________________________________________________
Date
研究調査に参加する同意書

この同意書は先生があなたにどのように英語を教えるかの研究調査に参加していただくためのものです。あなたのご両親と学校はこの調査にあなたが参加することを許可しました。参加するかどうかはあなた次第です。参加すれば、他の英語を勉強しているお友達と一緒に参加することになります。

私はコートニー・クレイトンと申します。私がこの調査の責任者です。ボストン・カレッジ教育科の大学院生です。

参加しなくても結構です。参加しなければ、何か悪い結果になるということはありません。

もし参加していただけるのであれば、あなたの文章のサンプルをいただきたいと思います。9月から3月の間にこれを集めます。匿名で構いません。

この調査にあなたの名前が出ることはありません。私は英語を勉強している生徒について書きます。あなたの文章を特定して触れることはありません。

この調査に参加していただけるのであれば、下にお名前と今日の日付を書いていただけますか。

どうぞよろしくお願い致します。

署名

生徒署名

生徒氏名

今日の日付

情報提供者・証人署名

情報提供者・証人氏名

今日の日付
Appendix G: Qualities of Exemplary Teaching, Data Collection Form

Directions: The purpose of this study is to identify the qualities possessed and regularly exhibited by exemplary teachers of English Language Learners. You have been selected because of your expertise as a supervisor of these teachers. The information of the first page will remain confidential. The answers that you provide will be analyzed anonymously by the researcher. When all data have been tallied, the researcher will ask you to confirm the accuracy of the data and to change findings that were interpreted inaccurately.

Part 1

Name _________________________________________________________________
Title _________________________________________________________________
School District _________________________________________________________
Address _______________________________________________________________
City, State, Zip Code ___________________________________________________
Phone number _________________________________________________________
Email _______________________________________________________________
Fax __________________________________________________________________
Number of years of supervisory experience __________________________________
Number of years at current position _________________________________________
Grade levels that you supervise ___________________________________________
Name and grade level of the teacher you are nominating _________________________
Part II

Reflect on who you have identified as an exemplary teacher of English Language Learners. Select the two most important behaviors that distinguish this exemplary teacher in his or her abilities to teach English Language Learners. State two characteristics that make this teacher effective at teaching English Language Learners at his/her particular grade level. These characteristics are the one that you most credit this teacher’s success in teaching English Language Learners. Your descriptions can be written in a global, all-inclusive format or can be written in a more specific manner.

Take as long as you need to write your answers below:
### Appendix H: First Interview Protocol

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Designed to find out…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where are you from?</td>
<td>Teacher background; put teacher at ease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How long have you been teaching?</td>
<td>Teacher background; specific information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What was your first teaching job?</td>
<td>Teacher background; reflect on past experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why did you go into teaching?</td>
<td>Teacher background; motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you know how to speak another language? If so, how did you learn it?</td>
<td>Teacher background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What has been your training in working with English language learners?</td>
<td>Teacher background; specific information on studied population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many ELLs have you had in your classes over the years?</td>
<td>Teacher background; specific information on studied population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What kinds of strategies do you use with the ELLs in your classroom?</td>
<td>Teaching methods; specific information on studied population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can you give me some examples of what strategies you use to teach language specifically?</td>
<td>Teaching methods; specific information on language teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you been trained to teach language specifically?</td>
<td>Teaching methods; specific information on language teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you think ELL students acquire English? Do you have a theory of second language acquisition?</td>
<td>Teacher knowledge; reflection on language theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you feel about have ELLs in your classroom?</td>
<td>Teacher understanding; reflection on specific population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have your feelings changed about these students over the years?</td>
<td>Teacher understanding; reflection/inquiry on specific population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are some of the biggest challenges you have faced in teaching ELLs?</td>
<td>Challenges teachers face in each setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you received additional support in teaching ELLs? Have these challenges changed over the years?</td>
<td>Challenges teachers face; kind of support that is in place in each setting; teacher training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there any kinds of services you feel the ELL students in your classroom should be getting that they are not getting?</td>
<td>Teacher support/challenges; information on studied population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are some of the biggest successes you have had in teaching ELLs?</td>
<td>Teacher background; successes teachers have had with studied population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What would you say teachers need to know in order to teach ELLs successfully?</td>
<td>Specific information on teaching studied population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you say your setting of a bilingual/monolingual English immersion environment influences how you teach ELLs?</td>
<td>Contextual influences on teaching ELLs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you feel about bilingual education?</td>
<td>Teacher attitudes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you feel it is better for ELL students to be educated in English only immersion or have a bilingual education? Why?</td>
<td>Teacher attitudes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you know how to speak another language? If so, how did you learn it?</td>
<td>Teacher background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you feel it might be for the ELL students in your class to be learning English?</td>
<td>Teacher attitudes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you think makes you so effective in working with ELLs?</td>
<td>Teacher beliefs; teacher inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there other teachers in the school who you think are effective at working with ELLs? Why do you think they are effective?</td>
<td>Teacher beliefs; teacher inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your relationship with the parents of the ELL students in your classroom? Do you communicate with them? If so, how?</td>
<td>Teacher attitudes; information on studied population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you feel that the ELL parents are involved in their students’ education? How or how are they not?</td>
<td>Teacher attitudes; information on studied population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are some of the biggest challenges the ELL students in your classrooms face?</td>
<td>Challenges in each setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you help them with these challenges?</td>
<td>Challenges in each setting; teacher training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What else do you feel is important to know about your working with ELLs?</td>
<td>Additional information; teacher reflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there other things you would like to talk about with regard to your teaching ELLs that we haven’t addressed yet?</td>
<td>Additional information; teacher reflection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix I: Observation Protocol

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Name:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lesson to be observed:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Location:</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Observed</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
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</table>
Appendix J: Stimulated Recall Session Protocol

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Name:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson Recalled:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Lesson:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Today’s Date:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Notes were typed in as the teacher recalled the lesson. Recall session followed this general outline.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What was your objective for the lesson?</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Why did you use this particular strategy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What aspect of language were you hoping to teach in this lesson?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What was the target for the ELL students during this lesson?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can you tell me what you were thinking when you began the lesson?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What was the procedure that you were going through in your mind?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why did you have your students work in this way? (group or individual work)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you feel that the students understood the lesson?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What tools did you use for assessment?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What challenges do you feel the ELL students had during this lesson?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you feel that the lesson went well? Why or why not?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix K: Sample of Second Recall Session Protocol

| Teacher Name: Liz | The objective was for the students to write something that they’re an expert at – how to, working on asking questions and responding in complete sentences. Got the idea from another third grade teacher. Not necessarily an Arlington curriculum. Spin off of “how to”. Some kids could have done a variety of steps. One of the comprehension questions was how to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. The sandwich was taken from a test ready type of writing – for MCAS prep sort of. If needed, she has ready how-to essay part of “write source”. Type, genre of writing. |
| School: Parker School | Why did you use this particular strategy? One to review writing questions and using a variety of punctuation. What to accomplish with ELL students was to work on being specific. Had to differentiate for some students – for ELLs, very specific. Struggling writers needed differentiation, general questions, like how to boat. Knew he could write something specific, ELL student for basketball. Some students given more leeway. |
| Lesson Recalled: Writing-I am an expert at… | What aspect of language were you hoping to teach in this lesson? Some of the vocabulary, her exemplar, used ingredients. Put directions up there in case their writing went that way. More creative than steps 1, 2, 3. incorporating vocabulary words, felt that students could use this type of assignment to lead to something that was comfortable for them. Students could relate to what they were comfortable with. |
| Date of Lesson: 1-17-07 | What was the target for the ELL students during this lesson? Really looking for, the goal was a question and the goal to write at least a one sentence explanation. [Rodrigo] came up with idea and she helped him go on with it. To design what they are an expert at, to be as specific as possible in their directions and explanations, to write a question and then to answer the question. Expected one sentence but if more great. |
| Today’s Date: January 31, 2007 | Time: 2:30pm |
| Can you tell me what you were thinking when you began the lesson? | One thing was to make sure that for the students who needed a little extra support, examples were kids who needed her to jog their memory to help them get prepared. Thought about students and those people were ones who needed help, and she mentioned those examples.

She tries to reinforce what they have done before. They had done a quick brainstorming lesson before. They had started to jot down ideas as part of a prewriting. Day before was white paper. [Rodrigo] wrote white paper by himself. (see example). She asked him to come up with a particular skill when he played basketball.

Specifics being able to focus in on your writing. Age appropriate to be more specific in third grade. Lucy Calkins stretching the moment even in second grade. But it’s a challenge.

Really knows students’ needs.

Stayed on them more with some of their behaviors because it was in the afternoon. She feels she needs to be on top of everything.

Prompting them to stay focused and get ready. Some students who need warnings. One student who needs her to do that. Especially with writing, they need to know that they will need to take a break. Feels they need to mentally prepare themselves. She thinks it’s age appropriate. Can gauge when they don’t need to be interrupted. Sometimes switching gears is necessary.

One thing she changed gears about, some of the more advanced writers needed to meet into groups. She noticed that she had sports students, etc, and other skills, she hadn’t had that planned, and then decided in the middle of it to group based on their topics. |
<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What was the procedure that you were going through in your mind?</td>
<td>The night before, pulled out write source. Looked through to see what was expected when doing how to, she thought she could use it as an example. Topic wasn’t something they were looking at. Wanted to model expectation so they could see what they needed to do. to see end product. Did ice cream sundae.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Wanted to show them a final copy of what their product should look like. Did some vocab words that thought might need as well, made sure that passed out expert sheets. Rough draft and final copy paper for picture. Decided to let them do illustrations before the writing. This time wanted them to draw first to help them jog their memory. Afternoon lesson, felt needed to do that as well. Pictures first to generate their ideas. She drew her pictures first when she did hers. When did picture knew needed to include something else. She thinks about visuals when working with ELLs. She had a picture of an octopus and a picture of a giraffe for lesson for [Asuko] (ELL).

Showing pictures in dictionary. Visuals as much as possible.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why did you have your students work in this way? (group or individual work)</th>
<th>Partners – when teaching second grade, using Lucy Calkins writing program. The philosophy is to have the students talk about their writing before they do, as much as possible to talk about it. The more they’re able to talk about it before they’re writing, the more they are able to do it. Go back and talk about it, if they get stuck, to have other students to help them out. For the students themselves be able to think out loud, the better they’re able to do their writing. In Arlington, it’s used in K,1 and 2. Arlington curriculum based on DOE frameworks.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A lot of prompting and giving of ideas to students to help them – thoughts about this? (group or individual work) (17:30) (23:43) (32:29) (33:49) (39:14) (51:18)</td>
<td>She does this on purpose, especially when it came to the sports. She knew that if it was something that with [Joe] who was doing the hockey, knew that would help other students. You’re helping one, but knew other kids could hear it. Help generate ideas, keep juices flowing. Has two kids doing football, relates to it. She said that they would have to teach her too. Make sure they’re specific enough to show her the way too. They need to show her and be specific.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using different vocabulary to get idea across (5:56) (7:43) (11:32) (11:50). Synonyms. Thoughts? - repeats vocab a lot: (22:37, 22:51) (23:20) (23:43)</td>
<td>Have been working on word choice, one of six traits in writing, lesson was using interesting verbs. The other reason was trying to be as specific as possible, goes along with word choice. Teachers are human thesauruses. Even differentiating to the class, but the more you introduce different ways of looking at it, the more specific they become. A lot of lessons recently on using better word choice. Has used cluster list, graphic organizer, etc., school has</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
talked about using a variety of prewriting mechanisms, using cluster lists, using different outlines. Prewriting steps, and it’s one thing that the third grade and entire school is showing students variety of ways of doing prewriting, so by time get to fifth grade have had a variety of ways to begin writing. Students then figure out what is best for them. Sequences, outlines, etc. Third grade job to introduce to them as much as possible.

ELL students to have organized way to develop their ideas – specific plan for them to organize their writing. Step by step process. She would say that it can be on an individual level – can’t group ELL children together. When first started, always did spider cluster. This can be really disorganized for certain kids. This can be worst possible way to go for certain students. Sometimes specific outline can be too specific for children – can be too detailed.

The more teachers can give them a variety of ways to show how to do prewriting, the students can figure out what works for them.

She thinks to do a picture first helps for ELL students who are newer to English, more relaxing, can focus their mind. Can see their ideas on paper. That was another reason she said for them to label their pictures to give them some prewriting. If label, now written down what they’re going to do. and to set a time limit, because the kids can go on and on with drawings. Let them do more drawing than originally planned, so she let them go on more than planned, felt needed that.

<p>| Very encouraging with the students (13:16). (45:51) | Keeps them motivated. |
| (16:01-16:40) back to [Rodrigo] here to talk about his ideas with the class. Why? Conscious of this? | Certain times you want to encourage the students. Thought it would be harder for him, to encourage, to engage. Just to get the rest of the group motivated. When highlighting certain student’s work, it motivates them, helps them to want to succeed. And thought he had a lot of good ideas and to demonstrate that to the group. Gets other kids motivated too. Relates struggles for all kids, not just ELLs. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Question / Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16:01</td>
<td>(16:01) cluster list – have they done these before?</td>
<td>They have done a variety in different lessons. She thought they would need to do a lot more of this. She was ready to stop and have the students make a list. Had planned as a prestep, but they didn’t need it. Naturally jumped into the writing. She adjusted this as they did the lesson. The pictures really helped them out with this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21:05</td>
<td>(21:05) she relates it to what she did: how she thought this through.</td>
<td>She always shows a model with writing. It’s metacognition to think about how she was thinking. How she went through the process. This will help them think about their own writing. They have met with the middle school as well. They talk about the goal –these are the steps that they went through. They go into each other’s classroom all the time. They will model for each other. She took it upon herself to do the supplies. She wanted them to zone in on the supplies. Prestep was to look at the ingredients, where other classes more concerned about the steps. She though it was another way to jump right in. Had ELL writers in mind and thought easy way to get into the writing. With ELL teacher, it’s difficult at times because ELL teachers have curriculum they need to follow, but she wants [Asuko] (ELL student) to be involved and do writing assignments they’re doing. She’ll show them what she is working on and what she’d like them to accomplish. Show her the modeling, and she’ll have a quick meeting with her. It depends on the assignment in terms of what he can do, ahead with content in math, if story problem, she wants him here to see how she models it. If vocab, she wants him to see how she does it.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>How does she organize materials for the classroom- i.e. black writing folder, etc.</td>
<td>Start off with the mini thesaurus. To have this set up. Sometimes as the year goes on, it gets more filled depending on what they’ve found to be useful. For writing folder, they set it up in the summer. They have Quick Word, Writer’s Checklist, describing people sheet, she went through the writing folder. Star student, every student has to write a letter to the star student. Have to work on word choice. She has a board for their pictures, etc. using visuals to help them with their writing. Can do the letters from Monday till Friday. Can draw picture of the person, friendly writing skills, word choice, students bring in items too. Certain kids write same letter every week. She tries to correct</td>
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<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Answer</td>
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<tr>
<td>How do they focus on mechanics? (25:05)</td>
<td>It varies. Beginning, did lessons on nouns, common nouns, proper nouns, breaking down even more, using proper nouns, needs to be capitalized. All the different ways to use capital letters. Do specific lessons on conventions, but hasn’t done them yet. Has poster with editing and proofreading marks. Wants to jump ahead and do conventions of six trait lessons.</td>
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<tr>
<td>25:50- helping [Rodrigo] with difference between a and an – just him? The whole class? See this again with whole class at (70:13)</td>
<td>When doing nouns, it was part of a lesson. She talked about when see a and an, but also has shown them that if you see a, an, or the that clue you have noun coming up. Then you get to talk about more advanced writing or reading, it might not be next word that’s a noun, might see an adjective. Talk about part of speech. Broke down language piece. Fun to look at different pieces of language. She has noticed that some of the kids in this class, [Tomiko]’s expert letter, she didn’t use an, she used a, so it’s something that this group has been struggling with. Thid grade team meets, and some of those skills are mentioned in reading program, but included language piece. She knows that what you need to beef up on, and what is coming ahead. What students struggle with. It’s interesting that when has had Japanese children, have left out articles, so when teaching Japanese students, beefs up on this. She knows that they can leave those out. Worked on this a lot with Eigo. Using plural nouns, adding s, es, or ies. She takes him aside, or conferencing. He doesn’t have a lot of support with writing at home. She needs to meet with him. Sometimes asks ELL teacher to help her with this. He doesn’t have support because parents have difficult with writing in English. Doesn’t have support to do English part of it. Has met with mother, and has asked if someone at home, they try the best that they can. There is an ELL teacher. She came to a meeting and got point across to mom about what was going on with him in terms of behavior.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Moves students along, good pacing – thoughts about this? Planned?</td>
<td>See above.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<p>| (57:34-57:57) prompts them about what they have learned so far, like transitional words, etc. reasons for this? | On recording |
| (66:09) mentions [Rodrigo]’s idea of perfect amount of air for ball – encouraging – thoughts? Conscious for ELLs? | On recording |
| When have ELL 1s, how does she get them involved? How much support does she receive for them? | To get them involved, pair them up with a couple of students. Asks kids who could help be a partner. She picks who she thinks would be a good role model. She starts there. She has found this to be extremely successful. Has been proud of students here. The kids want to help them. Support has varied through the years. Stratton’s commitment recently to help out students with ELL. Sometimes it’s also the teacher’s job to fight too. One thing she spoke to principal about. Comprehension isn’t good with [Tomika], would like her to get some reading support. Having meeting about what can do for her – to be advocate for students. She went out and bought English japanese dictionary. She asked for resources and asked other teachers what they had done. Meet with parents. It can vary from family to family. Can be tough when have no English. She would be one on one with him. She would create own papers for him. Starting story starters, what would do for a beginning writer. Start with I like… It’s really survival vocab before content, but teaching content words after conversational English. She taught frogs and mangled Japanese. Good for him to see that it’s tough with the language. |
| Does she feel that doing things in units/themes helps ELL students? | 100%. The training that she got from ELL workshop. When things are in content themes, more meaning behind it. You’re able to start at a more basic knowledge and then building on a foundation. Usually a purpose behind what you’re doing and a focus, and |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does she ever use their first language with them? Does she know any of their first language?</td>
<td>No particular situation. There are particular words – doing one of the moons today. She was saying one of moons of Jupiter is halo, said how wouldn’t say “h” in Spanish. Just bringing something up like that. Unit on celebrating traditions. The students were bringing up certain traditions. Certain pronunciations at times. Can’t think of specific things about language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has she done any traveling abroad? Her attitudes about this?</td>
<td>Went to Ireland. Has been to Amsterdam and to Paris. Germany to visit brother. Some of the greatest experiences to go to another country to have to learn a language to put yourself in ELL students’ shoes. She had to learn some German to get herself from the airport to the train station. By herself in Germany. This was an eye opener. To see what children go through, especially on a day to day basis. Was greatest education for her. Understood how it can be frightening. To learn social skills and customs as well that you may not have. She correlates her experiences to the classroom, the food and lunchboxes are different from what other kids have. Sometimes she’ll jumpstart when kids bring in different things for lunch, etc. She helps make them feel that this is something special and good. Not single them out. To make them feel different. Remember thinking about how ELL children feel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testing for ELL students? What is the program for them in the district?</td>
<td>The ELL students have common assessments at grade level. They’re expected to do three writing samples a year. Do math assessments after each unit. Variety of science and social studies. In ELA if children have been here for three years, don’t have to take ELA. But had to take the math. Not graded any differently. The rules have changed, now it’s different. On websites. ELL teacher has assessments as well. One student whether ELL issue or reading issue.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Make sure to cover other questions/observations from lessons from notes.</td>
<td>Work in groups from beginning of the year. A lot with science and writing and reading. Everything. They’re always doing groups –constantly mixing them. Different groups together. Varies it. Behavioral reasons, etc. planet groups based on differentiated. Had done a lot on Mercury so would be good for ELL students. Mars group were ones who excel in science, so gave them Mars because new planet. Earth needed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
to be right on earth. Personality study on what planet
gave them. Puts them sometimes with students who are
more fluent readers. [Asuko] with those who struggle
in math so he can shine.

Wordly wise – typically start with Rebecca Sitton
spelling which are high frequency, and include vocab
words from content. The wordly wise book has words
that are grouped together sometimes on themes, like
tools, space words. Introduce words on Monday. Eigo
gets the same words. They are introduced during ELA
block, and then homework to do with words each
night. Pretty advanced work that they’re expected to
do. can be pretty challenging. Wednesdays have story
that they need to read. Comprehension questions from
this. Models the homework with them.

Three, four and five does wordly wise. Have been
doing it for years.
Appendix L: Initial Data Display

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category:</th>
<th>Jane</th>
<th>Liz</th>
<th>Kate</th>
<th>Rose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitude:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>INT1;</td>
<td>INT1; RC1; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; RC2</td>
<td>INT1;</td>
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<td>Sensitivity</td>
<td>INT1; O2R2-trans;</td>
<td>INT1; RC1; RC2; O2R1-trans; O1R2-trans; O2R2-notes</td>
<td>INT1; RC1; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; O2R1-notes; O2R1-trans; RC1; RC2</td>
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<td>Advocacy</td>
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<td>INT1; RC1; RC2</td>
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<td>INT1; RC2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>INT1;</td>
<td>INT1; RC1; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; RC1; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; RC1; RC2</td>
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<td>Kindness</td>
<td>O1R2-trans; O2R2-trans;</td>
<td>INT1; O1R1-notes; O2R1-trans; O3R1-notes; O3R1-trans; RC1; O1R2-notes; O1R2-trans; RC2; O2R2-notes</td>
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<td>INT1; O1R1-notes; O1R2-trans; O2R1-trans; O2R2-trans;</td>
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<td>Encouragement</td>
<td>O1R2-trans; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; O1R1-notes; O2R1-trans; O1R2-trans; O3R1-notes; O3R1-trans; O1R2-notes; O1R2-trans; RC2; O2R2-notes</td>
<td>INT1; O1R2-trans; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; O1R1-trans; O1R2-trans; O2R1-trans; O2R2-trans;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>INT1; O2R2-trans;</td>
<td>O1R1-notes; O2R1-trans; O3R1-notes; O3R1-trans; RC1; O1R2-notes; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; O3R1; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; RC1;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background experience:</td>
<td>INT1; RC2</td>
<td>INT1;</td>
<td>RC2</td>
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<td>Traveling abroad</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning another language</td>
<td>RC2</td>
<td>INT1;</td>
<td>RC2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Influence of growing up</td>
<td>Memo-12/6; INT1; RC2;</td>
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<td>Knowledge of L1</td>
<td>INT1; RC1; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; O2R1; O3R1; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; RC1; RC2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Language awareness (including acquisition)</td>
<td>Memo-11/29</td>
<td>INT1; Memo-11/29; RC1; RC2</td>
<td>Memo-11/29; INT1; RC1; RC2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Years of teaching experience</td>
<td>RC2; INT1; RC1; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; O1R2-trans; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; RC1; RC2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal ELL training</td>
<td>INT1; INT1; RC1; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; RC2</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practices:</th>
<th>O1R1; RC2;</th>
<th>O2R1-trans; O3R1-trans; O1R2-notes; O1R2-trans;</th>
<th>O2R1; RC1; O1R1-trans; O1R1-notes; O2R1-notes; O2R1-trans; O2R2-trans;</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wait time</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Repetition of key vocab and phrases</td>
<td>O1R1; O1R2-trans; O2R2-trans; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; O1R1-notes; O2R1-trans; O3R1-notes; O3R1-trans; RC1; O1R2-trans; O1R2-notes; RC2;</td>
<td>INT1; O3R1; O1R2-trans; RC2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gestures</td>
<td>O1R2-trans; O2R2-trans;</td>
<td>INT1; O2R1-notes; O2R2-notes</td>
<td>INT1; O1R2-trans; RC2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rephrasing/corrective feedback</td>
<td>O1R2-trans; O2R2-trans;</td>
<td>O1R2-trans; O2R1-notes; O3R1-notes; O3R1-trans; RC1; O1R2-notes; O1R2-trans;</td>
<td>INT1; O3R1; O1R2-trans;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clear goals and objectives</td>
<td>O1R2-trans; RC2;</td>
<td>RC1; O1R1-notes; O2R1;</td>
<td>INT1; O1R2-trans; RC2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear language goals for ELLs</td>
<td>O2R2-trans; RC2</td>
<td>O2R1-notes; O3R1-notes; O3R1-trans; O1R2-notes; O1R2-trans; O2R2-notes; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; RC1; RC2; O3R1-notes; O1R2-notes; O2R2-notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>O1R2-trans; RC2;</td>
<td>O1R1; O2R1-trans; O3R1-notes; O3R1-trans; RC1; O1R2-trans; O1R2-notes; O2R2-notes; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; O3R1; RC2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visually</td>
<td>O1R1; O1R2-trans; O2R2-trans; RC2;</td>
<td>O1R1-notes; O2R1-notes; O2R1-trans; O3R1-notes; O3R1-trans; O1R2-notes; O1R2-trans; RC1; O2R2-notes; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; O3R1; O1R2-trans; RC2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Making connections</td>
<td>O1R2-trans;</td>
<td>O1R1-notes; O1R1-trans; O2R1-notes; O2R1-trans; O3R1-notes; O3R1-trans; O1R2-notes; O1R2-trans; RC1; O2R2-notes; RC2</td>
<td>O1R2-trans; RC2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Word rich environments</td>
<td>O1R1; O1R2-trans; O2R2-trans; RC2;</td>
<td>INT1; O1R1-notes; O2R1-notes; O3R1-notes; O3R1-trans; O1R2-notes; O2R2-notes; RC2;</td>
<td>INT1; O1R2-trans; RC2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Transcriptions</td>
<td>INT1</td>
<td>RC1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slow speech</td>
<td>O1R2-trans; O2R2-trans; RC2; O1R1-trans; O1R1-notes; O2R1-trans; O2R1-notes; O3R1-notes; O3R1-trans; O1R2-trans; O1R2-notes; O2R2-notes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pairing new students</td>
<td>INT1; RC2; O3R1; RC2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of exemplars/modeling</td>
<td>O1R2-trans; O2R2-trans; INT1; O1R1-notes; O1R1-trans; O2R1-trans; O2R1-notes; O3R1-notes; O3R1-trans; O1R2-trans; O1R2-notes; O2R2-notes</td>
<td>INT1; O1R2-trans; RC2</td>
<td>RC1; O1R1-trans; O1R1-notes; O2R1-trans; O2R1-notes; O2R1-trans; O1R2-trans; O2R2-trans; RC2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Explicitness</td>
<td>O1R1-trans; O2R1-trans; O2R1-notes; O2R1-trans; O3R1-notes; O3R1-trans; O1R2-trans; O1R2-notes; O2R2-notes; RC1; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; O1R1-notes; O2R1; O1R2-trans;</td>
<td>RC1; O1R1-trans; O1R1-notes; O2R1-notes; O2R1-notes; O2R1-trans; O1R2-trans; O2R2-trans; RC1; O1R2-trans;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prompting, questioning, and coaching</td>
<td>O1R2-trans; O2R2-trans; O1R1-notes; O2R1-trans; O2R1-notes; O2R1-trans; O3R1-notes; O3R1-trans; RC1; O1R2-trans; O1R2-notes; O2R2-notes;</td>
<td>INT1; O1R1-notes; O2R1; O3R1; O1R2-trans;</td>
<td>RC1; O1R1-trans; O1R1-notes; O2R1-notes; O2R1-notes; O2R1-trans; O1R2-trans; O2R2-trans; RC2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Issue</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>Interval 1</td>
<td>RC Interval 1</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication with parents</td>
<td></td>
<td>INT1; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; O2R1-notes;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Humor</td>
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<td>INT1; O1R2-notes; O2R2-notes; RC2;</td>
<td>O1R2-notes; INT1; RC2</td>
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<td>Thoughtful grouping</td>
<td>O1R1;</td>
<td>RC1; RC2; O3R1-notes; O2R2-notes;</td>
<td>RC2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use of themes and units</td>
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<td>RC1; RC2; O3R1-notes; O2R2-notes;</td>
<td>RC2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Selective about correcting in writing</td>
<td>O1R2-trans; RC2</td>
<td>O1R2-notes; O2R1-trans; RC2; O2R2-notes; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; O1R1-notes; O2R1-notes; O2R1-notes; O1R2-notes; RC2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emphasis on making comfortable environment</td>
<td></td>
<td>INT1; RC1; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; RC1; RC2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of students</td>
<td>O2R2-trans; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; O1R2-notes; RC1; O2R2-notes; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; O1R2-notes; RC2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusting expectations</td>
<td>RC2;</td>
<td>INT1; O1R1-notes; RC1; O2R1-notes; O3R1-notes; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; RC2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on language: mechanics, syntax, etc.</td>
<td>O1R2-trans; O2R2-trans; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; O1R1-notes; O1R2-notes; O2R1-notes; O3R1-notes; O3R1-notes; O3R1-notes; RC1; O1R2-notes; O1R2-notes; RC2</td>
<td>RC2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context:</td>
<td>RC2; O2R2-notes</td>
<td>O1R2-trans; RC2</td>
<td>O1R1-notes; O2R1-notes; O3R1-notes; O3R1-trans; RC1; O1R2-notes; O1R2-trans; RC2; O2R2-notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bilingual setting:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of L1 by teachers</td>
<td>INT1; O2R1; O1R2-trans; RC1; RC2</td>
<td>RC1;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of L1 by students</td>
<td>INT1; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; O1R1-notes; O2R1-notes; RC1; RC2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive attitude and support of bilingual education</td>
<td>INT1;</td>
<td></td>
<td>INT1; RC1;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More explicit about language differences</td>
<td>INT1; O3R1;</td>
<td>INT1;</td>
<td>INT1;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student used to kids coming from other countries constantly</td>
<td>INT1; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; RC1;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value placed on L1</td>
<td>INT1; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; RC2</td>
<td>INT1;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults using multiple languages at all times</td>
<td>INT1; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; RC2</td>
<td>INT1;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monolingual setting:</td>
<td>RC2;</td>
<td>RC2-some here</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>No use of L1 by teachers of students</td>
<td>INT1; RC2;</td>
<td>RC1; RC2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>More negative attitude or lack of awareness of use of L1</td>
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<tr>
<td>L1 in aiding learning</td>
<td>INT1;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mention of parental rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>Both settings:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive attitude of school towards ELL students and their cultures</td>
<td>INT1; RC2</td>
<td>INT1; RC2; O2R2-notes;</td>
<td>INT1; RC1;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting students mid-year can be disruptive and also make it easier for new student at times</td>
<td>INT1; RC2</td>
<td>INT1</td>
<td>RC2</td>
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</table>

**KEY:**

- **O** = observation (i.e. O1R2 = observation 1, round 2)
- **R** = round
- **INT** = interview
- **RC** = recall session
- **trans** = transcription
- **notes** = notes taken during observation
Appendix M: Second Interview Protocol

The following script was read to the participants:

To date, I have done some initial analysis of the data I have gathered from the observations, interviews and recall sessions I have done with you. I am going to ask you questions related to the findings. The idea is to try to generate a theory of exemplary teaching of ELL students across settings, recognizing that each setting poses its own set of limitations as well as advantages. My specific research questions are the following, which I am sharing with you now to help you with deciding which aspects of the current findings you feel are most relevant to the questions. The questions are:

How do exemplary teachers of English Language Learners (ELLs) teach ELLs in both monolingual English immersion and bilingual settings? In particular, the study poses four related questions:

1. What are the knowledge, skills and dispositions these exemplary teachers possess?
2. What challenges do these teachers face in both settings, and do they differ by setting?
3. What are the strategies these teachers use to teach language to ELLs and how do these strategies compare across the two different settings?
4. How does students’ progress over time in writing support the teachers’ status as exemplary?

So, I will show you now some of the initial findings and ask you to elaborate upon them and discuss your feelings about them. Please take as much time as you need and ask any follow-up or clarification questions you feel are necessary. It is very important to me to have your feedback as you are as important participant in this research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do you think about the emerging theory? Does it ring true to you?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What about the elements in teacher attitude? Do you think these are things that can be taught to other teachers? How?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What about the role of advocacy specifically? Why in your school do you think it would come up more/less?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What about the role of a positive attitude towards ELLs? How important do you think that is? How do you think that could be developed? Why do you think you have that feeling towards ELLs? What caused this do you think?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How do you think a teacher can develop empathy towards ELL students? What are some ways you would see doing that?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Response</td>
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<tr>
<td>What about the idea of background experience? Could you address each point noted in terms of how you think it has affected your working with ELLs and its potential importance for other teachers in working with these students?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What about teacher knowledge of an ELL’s first language? Do you think this is or would be helpful, why or why not?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What about the teachers’ advantage at the bilingual setting of knowing the students’ L1? How important do you think that is since all of you qualify as exemplary?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Findings suggest that teachers in the bilingual setting see using L1 as essential in developing L2 – how do you feel about this?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What about your formal training in working with ELLs? What was most valuable? What do you think other teachers should know?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How important do you feel your years of experience are in terms of working with ELLs? What kinds of experiences have been most critical to this do you think?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you think that teachers with less experience should have fewer ELLs in their classrooms? Why or why not?</td>
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<tr>
<td>You will notice that I found many common practices among all of you. What do you think about these practices? Which would you rank as most important? Why? Do you think most of these can be taught?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>One conclusion I have made is that adults and people in positions of power in bilingual setting use multiple languages which shows the value of language for ELLs in that context. How do you feel about this? Do you think this is important? Why or why not?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What do you think is the most effective way of working with ELLs? Small groups, one on one? Why?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Question</td>
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<tr>
<td>How important do you feel it is to develop ELL students’ oral language? In what ways do you try to do this in your own class?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How effective do you find the ELL support that you have? What kind do you have? What would be more effective for you?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How important do you think it is to know ELL students’ background information? What exactly helps you in terms of teaching them effectively?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What do you think can be challenging for ELL students in terms of their cultural differences? How do you account for these in your teaching? Does the school account for them as well? How?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Other questions related to study:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have your feelings changed in any way about teaching ELLs during this study?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are there other challenges you have reflected on that your ELL students face that you would like to discuss?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What kind of advice would you give to a teacher who is just starting out teaching ELLs?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What do you feel have been the biggest challenges in teaching language to ELL students?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What do you think about all of the writing samples that have been collected? Do you think that was an effective way to measure the ELL students’ progress? Would you recommend another way?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What are some of the developments in language that you have seen over the course of the study with your ELL students? What specific teaching strategies or lessons do you feel impacted this development?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tell me about the observations? How were they for you? Was there anything you feel that I could have done differently?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tell me about the stimulated recall sessions of the observations?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Answer</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>What would you say to other teachers currently teaching ELLs that you think they should know?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research shows that the presence of a researcher can impact participants in various ways. How would you say my presence in the classroom affected your teaching? Including planning, implementation and reflection.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there anything else you would like to say regarding the teaching of ELLs that we have not covered?</td>
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</table>
Emerging Theory of Exemplary Teaching of ELLs

**Teacher Attitude**
- empathy
- sensitivity
- advocacy
- responsibility
- kindness
- encouragement
- positive

**Background Experience**
- traveling abroad
- learning another language
- Influences growing up: community, etc.
- Years of teaching experience
- knowledge of L1
- language awareness
- formal ELL training

**Classroom Practices**
- wait time
- repetition of key vocab and phrases
- gestures
- rephrasing
- clear objectives
- organization
- visuals
- making connections
- adjusting expectations
- word rich environments
- slow speech
- use of exemplars/modeling
- explicitness
- prompting/questioning/coaching
- humor
- grouping
- comfortable
Appendix O: Initial Venn Diagram

**Bilingual Setting Influences:**
- Use of L1 by teachers and students
- Positive attitude towards and support of bilingual education by teachers
- Teachers able to be more explicit about language differences/similarities
- Value placed on L1 explicit
- Adults/people in positions of authority and power using multiple languages consistently throughout the day
- Students can “shine” for part of the time using their L1 for academic purposes
- Teachers’ knowledge of their ELL students’ cultural intracacies

**Monolingual Settings Influences:**
- Little to no use of L1 by teachers and students
- Not clear expression of use of L1 in aiding learning
- More mention of concern for parental rights
- Exclusive use of English as language of teaching
- Concern about ELL students’ parents not understanding expectations and assignments
- More stress expressed by teachers in trying to effectively teach ELL students

**All Settings:**
- Positive attitude of school towards ELLs and their cultures
Appendix P: Focus Group Protocol

Date: 
Time: 
Participant 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus group questions</th>
<th>Focus group responses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If you had to prepare a teacher to work with ELL students, what would be the key things you would say you need to know?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Subquestions:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- What are some of the different practices you use for beginner ELL students versus students who have more English coming in?</td>
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<tr>
<td>- How do you think teachers should be prepared to teach ELLs?</td>
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<tr>
<td>- How important do you think it is to have empathy for what ELL students have to go through? What would you say could help build this kind of empathy?</td>
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<tr>
<td>- How important is it for you to know the background information about your ELL students and what kind of information do you look for?</td>
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<tr>
<td>- How important do you think thematic learning is for ELL students?</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Do you think older children acquire the language more easily? Why or why not?</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Do you feel that teachers should take courses in English grammar as well as learn another language? Related to this question is how do you think it is best to teach academic language to ELL students?</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Notice all of you preview what will happen with lessons or whatever they will be doing – how important do you think this is for ELL students?</td>
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<tr>
<td>- How important do you think vocabulary development is for ELL students? What do you think is the best</td>
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</table>
way to teach it?
- What are the best ways to help ELL students with writing?
- What about role of using books on tape for ELL students?
- Does speech rate consciously change over course of year?

You teach in different settings – a bilingual setting and an English monolingual immersion setting. Would you talk about the impact of these settings on your own teaching of ELLs and on the students themselves?

**Subquestions:**
- Do you feel like your school understands the needs of ELLs?
- What do you think about the bilingual environment in that the language is valued explicitly there? What difference do you think this makes for ELL students?
- What are the parents’ general attitudes at your school about the maintenance of the students’ first language?
- How important is principal attitude (or head of school attitude) in terms of ELL students?
- In bilingual school, have two classes of students – harder to manage? Why or why not?

What do you think about teachers’ knowledge of students’ first language in relation to teaching English to them?

**Subquestions:**
- What about teachers who don’t know students’ L1, what can they do?

What about the support services in place at your schools for the ELL students? Which are helpful for you and for them?

**Subquestions:**
- What about the psychological needs of ELL students and cultural adaptations for these students? Are these addressed in your settings? How?
- All of you feel some conflict about
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>having ELL students out of class due to missing content--wat do you think is best for them?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Could each of you provide your definition of an ELL learner?</td>
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<td>Fully develops a story/topic with supporting or descriptive details</td>
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<td>Develops an organized story/topic that follows a logical sequence</td>
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<td>Writes some related sentences only, without a clear central idea</td>
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<td>Writes unrelated sentences only</td>
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<td>Enhances writing by experimenting with details</td>
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<td>Writes basic objective information with no elements of style evident</td>
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<td>Varies length and structure; uses some transitions</td>
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<td>Writes simple sentences expressing complete thoughts</td>
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<td>Demonstrates awareness of time, gender, and number agreement</td>
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<td>Uses correct spelling</td>
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<td>Uses correct final punctuation</td>
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<td>Uses correct capitalization</td>
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<td>Circle one: Consistently Usually Sometimes Seldom No Evidence Not Applicable</td>
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<td>Uses correct formatting (e.g., indentation)</td>
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<td>__ Fully develops a story/topic with appropriate use of paragraphs and supporting details</td>
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<td>__ Demonstrates a sense of audience, in addition to use of voice and descriptive detail</td>
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<td>__ Enhances writing through use of voice, in addition to use of descriptive detail</td>
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<td>__ Capitalization</td>
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<td>__ Formatting</td>
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Total (optional): __________

Developed by Arlington Public Schools. Arlington, VA, 1997
### Arlington County Spanish Partial Immersion Program

#### Writing Objectives

**Grade 4**

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<td>Present an original, focused, coherent topic with supporting paragraphs, and that gives in opinion or convincingly persuades</td>
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<td>Presents a well-organized topic that displays both depth and detail</td>
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<td>Develops a story/topic with appropriate use of paragraphs, supporting details, and a clear introduction and conclusion</td>
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<td>Presents a story/topic with a central idea and some supporting examples or details</td>
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<td>Presents a partially-developed story/topic that may include some unrelated information</td>
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<td>Writes some related sentences only, but without a clear central idea</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Style</strong></td>
<td>Uses vivid vocabulary, precise wording, and figurative language to enhance a point of view</td>
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<td>Demonstrates a good sense of audience, voice, and descriptive detail</td>
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<td><strong>Usage</strong></td>
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<td>Uses correct placement (adjectives, pronouns)</td>
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<td>Circle one: Consistently Usually Sometimes Seldom No Evidence Not Applicable</td>
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<td>Uses correct prepositions</td>
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<td><strong>Mechanics</strong></td>
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<td>(Check only those areas that need work.)</td>
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<td>_ Enhances writing through use of voice, in addition to use of descriptive detail_</td>
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<td>_ Sentence formations demonstrate a higher level of sophistication_</td>
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<td>_ Varies type, length and structure; uses some transitions_</td>
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Appendix R: Scoring Guide for the Rubrics

1 – Does not approximate the endo-fo-year expectation at this grade level

2 – Approximates the end-of-year expectation for this grade level

3 – Meets the end-of-year expectation for this grade level

4 – Exceeds the end-of-year expectation for this grade level

5 – Far exceeds the end-of-year expectation for this grade level
9/25/06

I asked him, "What sad I write about?" Then I got about asking her.

What school I write about? I don't know.
6/4/07
I got in my room. I saw my dad doing his computer. So I wanted to do the computer, too. He said, OK. I went to him and started the computer. I said, "Title my title was called End."

My second title was called: The End--bye. Once upon a time, there was a boy named Paul. He said, "bye."
Liz

9/8/06

Imaginative Story
Planning Sheet

Beginning: The beginning tells about the characters, the setting, and the conflict or problem. Tip-Try to start with action or someone talking.

He spoke. Peter, move his hand. Why don't you robber?

What is robber? Do you eat robber? How come you don't know about it? Robber is when you took something.

Bye Bye! Hey don't go! "No I'm going to be robber"

He went to little willy house. "Oh this dog is hot! Not dog hot! It's a hot dog!"

Come back. "We hid into box. Somebody said "Oh, my hot dog is gone. robber took it!"

Robber is a funny person. He is always funny. Some are too. Police. some are person who come to some one's house a lot and know about his house and him.

Tell me why he is funny? Because he have many funny jokes and he always thinking about jokes. Sometime too someone loves jokes.
Rising Action: The rising action tells what happens in the first part of the story. The story shares actions and speaking (dialogue). Tip—Think about what problem(s) do the character(s) face? What goes wrong?

Somebody told the police. Rodder said, "I can't go away." Police said, "What happen?" Rodder came in. "What did Rodder look?" "A hot dog." "Ok." "Color is red." "No, my hot dog is not red." "No!" "Of ketchup." "Ok." "And a book." "Ok." "Color is red." "You don't put ketchup to book!" "No, of color!"

Rodder put his hand to mouth. But I can't go out from here," Police said, "I think you didn't had thing like this. Some face was red." "Ok, ok." "Oh, one more hot dog: color is yellow." "Ok... no way!" "Hot dog is not yellow." "No, of mustard!"
Liz

**High Point:** The high point is the most exciting part. Tip: Introduce a new problem or add a twist.

"Oww I’m tired being this shape. "A blanket"etherlands: "Alright, what kind is it? "What kind of blanket do you have?"
"Mine is kind of a flower."Then mine too: "Alright.
"Oww I’m tired being this shape in this box."
I didn’t think you had things like this. Someone’s face is red. "Alright."A money. Ok. How much? "Like 50 dollars."That’s just a little bit. There is more money in this house. "Kind of a flower."No way, why is it kind of a flower?"
Ending/Conclusion: The ending tells how everything works out. If there is a problem, how does it get solved?

"Hahaha, Hahaha," rodder put his hand to mouth. "What's that sound?" "I think rodder is in here.
It was spor of time, rodder run away.
September 6, 2006

Today is the first day in 2nd grade English. My teachers name is Mrs.

pendant les vacances je suis aller en vacance en croisiere et je suis aller sur beaucoup d'ile et retourné bien.
May 19, 1907

On Saturday, Ernest J. Garth Benardsey, Victor Benjamin, came for a sleep-over at my house.

On Sunday, a lot of guests of friends went to the new house for they can visit it. We went to the deck there, after some games, and then we took our lunch there and Ernest and I went in the water.
The Courage of Sarah Noble - Chapter Two

What are some of the mean things that Mistress Robinson and her family say to Sarah? (list four)
How do you think they made Sarah feel? What should she do in this situation?

1.

the indians will eat her,
that she wasn't more than seven
that the indians all chop off your head,
that the indians will skin them alive.

She's probably a little scared and feeling sick.

If I was her I probably ignore them and go to bed pretend I was asleep.

Great strategy! Being mean to them

I would probably make things worse.
Character Sketch of Karana

Last week, you wrote character sketches of Karana, choosing one adjective that you thought best described her. There were many interesting choices of adjectives including resourceful, brave, caring, witful (not a word!), intelligent, and independent. Now, I would like you to revise and improve your paragraphs. You should be sure to:

1. Start with a TOPIC SENTENCE!!!!!!!
2. Finish with a concluding sentence that restates the topic sentence.
3. Be sure your sentences are neither too short nor too long.
4. Only include facts that PROVE your topic sentence!
5. Vary your sentence structure.
6. Fix your spelling and grammar.

Courageous: Karana is courageous. She is courageous in many ways. The first courageous thing she did was in that she didn’t make a whole story about her dying. She doesn’t really seem to care much about it. But I know that deep inside she is angrier at the Indians. Karana is courageous as she jumped off a boat into the stormy ocean,, swim back to the island. Just for her brother! Karana was also very courageous in another way. When her brother was killed, she was very angrier, and she promised that she would kill all the wild dogs. Two other last things to show that Karana is courageous is that she chose to make weapons and that was strongly forbidden by the Indians. At first last but not least, when she took a canoe and went out to sea for one or two
days. Susan has done many courageous things, I think
that you must see why courageous would be the best adjective to describe Susan!

This is excellent! Your examples are good and you do a good job of proving your point. Also,
# Appendix T: Writing Rubrics--Monolingual Contexts: Grade 1 and Grade 3

## Rubric for Narrative Writing  
### Grade One

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRAIT</th>
<th>Level 5</th>
<th>Level 4</th>
<th>Level 3</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Level 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IDEAS</td>
<td>Writing has one topic and great details</td>
<td>One experience is shared with some details</td>
<td>The experience needs more details to be clear</td>
<td>The narrative needs to focus on one experience</td>
<td>The narrative is not clear on experience and/or details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORGANIZATION</td>
<td>The narrative is well organized from beginning to end</td>
<td>Most of the narrative is organized and in time order</td>
<td>The main parts need to make more sense and be in order</td>
<td>The narrative runs together in all parts, is confusing</td>
<td>The narrative lacks any time order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOICE</td>
<td>The voice is original and exciting</td>
<td>The voice sounds just like the writer, like you're telling a friend</td>
<td>In most parts the voice sounds like the writer</td>
<td>The writing does not sound like the writer</td>
<td>The writing lacks voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORD CHOICE</td>
<td>Strong nouns and verbs create clear pictures</td>
<td>Nouns and verbs are used to give the reader a clear picture</td>
<td>More specific words are needed to create a clear message</td>
<td>Some words are overused</td>
<td>Some words make the understanding of the story confusing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SENTENCE FLUENCY</td>
<td>Sentences are clear and varied in length and beginnings</td>
<td>Long and short sentences are clear</td>
<td>Some sentences are choppy or incomplete</td>
<td>Many sentences are choppy or incomplete</td>
<td>Many sentences are incomplete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONVENTIONS</td>
<td>Conventions are correct</td>
<td>Most conventions are correct</td>
<td>Some errors may confuse the reader</td>
<td>Errors make the story hard to read</td>
<td>Help is needed to make corrections</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTES:**

[22]
4-Point Rubric for Narrative Writing

This rubric can help you score your writing.

Ideas
4 The experience and rich details make an unforgettable essay.
3 The experience is interesting, but it needs more details.
2 The experience isn’t clear, and some details don’t belong.
1 A new experience or suitable details should be found.

Organization
4 The writing is well organized from beginning to end.
3 Parts (beginning, middle, or ending) should be stronger.
2 All parts of the essay run together.
1 The narrative needs to be organized.

Voice
4 The voice is original and exciting.
3 The voice sounds like the writer most of the time.
2 The writing does not sound like the writer.
1 The writing has no real voice.

Word Choice
4 Strong nouns and verbs make vivid, clear pictures.
3 Some strong nouns and verbs are used.
2 Many strong words are needed.
1 Some words make the essay confusing.

Sentence Fluency
4 The sentences are clear and varied.
3 Most sentences are clear.
2 Many sentences are choppy.
1 Many sentences are incomplete.

Conventions
4 Conventions are correct.
3 Most conventions are correct.
2 Errors make the writing confusing and hard to read.
1 Help is needed to make corrections.