

**A MIXED METHODS STUDY:
PENNSYLVANIA TEACHER ATTITUDES, UNDERSTANDINGS,
PRACTICES, AND PREPAREDNESS RELATIVE TO
PENNSYLVANIA COMMON CORE
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND ENGLISH
LANGUAGE LEARNER LITERACY**

by

Kimberly Ann Hite

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Robert Morris University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy with a major in Instructional Leadership and Management

March 2015

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Ph.D. in Instructional
Management and Leadership

School of Education and Social Sciences
**Mixed Methods Study: Pennsylvania Teacher Preparedness,
Practices, and Understandings Relative To English
Language Learners and Pennsylvania Common Core
English Language Arts Literacy**

by

Kimberly Ann Hite

ROBERT MORRIS UNIVERSITY

2015

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Ph.D.
in

Instructional Management and Leadership

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ABSTRACT

The paradigm shift to Common Core, known as *PA Core* in Pennsylvania, set requirements for not only English Language Arts (ELA), but for literacy across content areas in history, social studies, science, and technical subjects. The literacy standards are intended to complement the content standards, not replace them. Given that these literacy skills are expected to be applied across these content areas, there is a notion of shared responsibility for literacy development and literacy expertise from all teachers, requiring active participation of all students, which include English language learners. Assisting English language learners (ELLs) with adjustment to these shifts, presents pedagogical challenges for teachers, as they prepare and deliver instruction for ELLs.

The purpose of this study was to examine Pennsylvania (PA) PreK-12 public school teacher attitudes, understandings, preparedness, and knowledge of instructional practices, relative to PA Common Core (PA Core) ELA ELL literacy. A mixed-methods approach was utilized by the researcher to collect data from one hundred PA PreK-12 public school teachers, using a vetted 34-item survey-questionnaire. In addition, the researcher conducted six ESL Specialist interviews. Survey results revealed that while teacher attitudes reflect agreement that PA Core ELA ELL multicultural literacy is important to them, they lack knowledge of strategies and instructional practices, preparedness, and training, relative to ELA ELL literacy. The findings of the survey supported data revealed in the ESL Specialist interviews. The interviews offered further clarification and more robust descriptive data about teacher instructional practices, preparation, attitudes, and policy, resulting in four emerging themes: *Accountability*, *Alignment*, *Collaboration and Connections*, and *Equity and Fairness*, mediated and influenced

by social, cultural, political, human, and economic capital. Results from this study will better inform teaching practices, programs, and initiatives regarding pedagogy for ELLs.

Keywords: accountability, alignment, collaboration, Common Core, cultural capital, economic capital, English language learner (ELL), English as a Second Language (ESL), equity, human capital, PA Core, political capital, social capital, teacher attitudes, teacher preparedness

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background

U.S. education today has experienced change, with one of the most significant changes being adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), referred to in Pennsylvania as the *PA Common Core* or the *PA Core*. Common Core Standards were introduced July 2010 and these standards represent a historical shift in American public education. In addition, they have spawned significant interest in the states among stakeholders in education, with 45 out of 50 states now having adopted these standards, with the exception of all but five states: Texas, Virginia, Alaska, and Nebraska, with Minnesota choosing to adopt only reading standards and declining the math standards (Hakuta, Santos & Fang, 2013).

Prior to the adoption of CCSS, each state had standards unique to their state, and curricula were developed to meet the requirement of each state's standards. In order to fully understand the CCSS initiative, a brief history of the standards movement is warranted.

A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform, written in 1983 by the Commission on Excellence in Education, criticized the steady decline in student performance across the United States. This resulted in a series of reforms, two notable reforms being the *Improving Americas Schools Act* of 1994 and the 2001 *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB). While the NCLB Act revealed large inconsistencies in educational outcomes among and within states, it did not yield the results for which it intended (Bell & Meinelt, 2011). These disparities prompted a more close examination of standards at the state and local levels. One finding revealed that due to each state having unique standards and local curricula, the state and local standards and curricula lacked synergy. In addition, it was found many of these standards

remained in place without significant change over the years. It was discovered that as society's needs have changed, so too have the expectations for school systems, and as a result, standards needed to be updated. Furthermore, many argue that for the U.S. to remain competitive, students must lead in both academic and educational performance. Recognizing the need for educational reform and the need for students who are elite performers, the nation's governors and education commissioners, through their respective organizations, the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), led the development of the CCSS and continue to do so (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010a).

Common Core State Standards provide the participating forty-five states a common platform to build their local curricula. While the standards provide a framework for the school and teachers, and establish what students need to learn, they do not state how teachers should teach. Teachers will continue to construct lesson plans and differentiate instruction to meet the individual needs of the students in their classrooms; the teachers decide on the curricula and how to teach the material to meet the standards. Halladay and Moses (2013) state, "while these standards provide clear descriptions of what students should know and be able to do, they do not provide a blueprint for getting students there" (p. 33). These standards, an evolution of the previous state standards, provide a clear set of common goals and expectations for the knowledge and skills students need in language arts and mathematics at each grade level in order that students nation-wide are college and career ready by the time they graduate from high school (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010a). To address a framework for meeting the standards, Halladay and

Moses (2013) assert that educators must be prepared to apply their professional and instructional knowledge to make decisions to assist their students in achieving the standards.

The shift to CCSS presents both challenges and opportunities for teachers, students, and administrators. While the challenges include how to meet the rigor of CCSS, in addition to creating an equitable learning environment for our diverse learners, opportunities exist for teachers by allowing them to exercise their professional expertise and create unique, meaningful learning opportunities in order to meet the demands of the standards (Halladay & Moses, 2013).

Common Core State Standards consist of two overarching categories: Math and Literacy. Within the Literacy strand are included the Common Core standards for English Language Arts (ELA), requiring students to master content in reading, comprehension, writing, speaking, listening, and language. This literacy strand is meant to complement the standards in science, social studies, history, and technical subjects. As such, there is a shared responsibility of literacy among teachers from all content areas, requiring that all teachers have an understanding of literacy.

One common task of CCSS is the expectation of students to read and comprehend texts of increasing complexity to construct knowledge, and not only understand standards written and spoken English, but also “approach language as a matter of craft and informed choice among alternatives” (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010b, p. 2). Common Core calls for the following key shifts in ELA literacy: (1) balancing informational and literary texts; (2) regular practice with complex texts and their academic language; (3) reading, writing, and speaking grounded in textual evidence from informational and literary texts; and (4) building knowledge through content rich nonfiction. As a result of these shifts, students must write using evidence to inform, argue for

various audiences and purposes and present counterarguments, and introduce knowledge gained through research. Beyond this, in speaking and writing, students must work collaboratively, understand multiple perspectives, and present ideas creatively, in various formats (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010b).

PA Common Core presents a news lens for examining the cognitive rigor that learning outcomes demand. Curriculum alignment to CC alone will not prepare students for the challenges of the standards. PA Common Core requires deeper understandings of concepts to successfully interact with the content, and it requires different ways of thinking to complete literacy tasks. Students acquire skills and knowledge more quickly when they can transfer their learning to new or more complex situations, a process more likely to take place once they have developed a meaningful and deep understanding of content. Therefore, teachers must provide all students with challenging tasks and demanding goals, and they must structure learning so that students can reach rigorous learning outcomes that will result in enhancing both superficial and deep learning of content (Hattie, 2002). Figures 1, 2, and 3 present Hess' Cognitive Rigor Matrices in reading, writing, and math and science, giving curricular examples applying Webb's Depth of Knowledge (DOK) levels to Bloom's cognitive process components, demonstrating the depth and level of rigor for literacy tasks required for CC.

Revised Bloom's Taxonomy	Webb's DOK Level 1 Recall & Reproduction	Webb's DOK Level 2 Skills & Concepts	Webb's DOK Level 3 Strategic Thinking/ Reasoning	Webb's DOK Level 4 Extended Thinking
Remember Retrieve knowledge from long-term memory, recognize, recall, locate, identify	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recall, recognize, or locate basic facts, details, events, or ideas explicit in texts Read words orally in connected text with fluency & accuracy Define terms 			
Understand Construct meaning, clarify, paraphrase, represent, translate, illustrate, give examples, classify, categorize, summarize, generalize, infer a logical conclusion, predict, compare/contrast, match like ideas, explain, construct models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify or describe literary elements (characters, setting, sequence, etc.) Select appropriate words when intended meaning/definition is clearly evident Describe/explain who, what, where, when, or how 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specify, explain, show relationships; explain why, cause-effect Give non-examples/examples Summarize results, concepts, ideas Make basic inferences or logical predictions from data or texts Identify main ideas or accurate generalizations of texts Locate information to support explicit-implicit central ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain, generalize, or connect ideas using supporting evidence (quote, example, text reference) Identify/ make inferences about explicit or implicit themes Describe how word choice, point of view, or bias may affect the readers' interpretation of a text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain how concepts or ideas specifically relate to other content domains or concepts Develop generalizations of the results obtained or strategies used and apply them to new problem situations
Apply Carry out or use a procedure in a given situation; carry out (apply to a familiar task), or use (apply) to an unfamiliar task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use language structure (pre/suffix) or word relationships (synonym/antonym) to determine meaning of words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use context to identify the meaning of words/phrases Obtain and interpret information using text features 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply a concept in a new context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Illustrate how multiple themes (historical, geographic, social) may be interrelated
Analyze Break into constituent parts, determine how parts relate, differentiate between relevant-irrelevant, distinguish, focus, select, organize, outline, find coherence, deconstruct (e.g., for bias or point of view)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify whether specific information is contained in graphic representations (e.g., map, chart, table, graph, T-chart, diagram) or text features (e.g., headings, subheadings, captions) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Categorize/compare literary elements, terms, facts, details, events Identify use of literary devices Analyze format, organization, & internal text structure (signal words, transitions, semantic cues) of different texts Distinguish: relevant-irrelevant information; fact/opinion Identify characteristic text features; distinguish between texts, genres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze information within data sets or texts Analyze interrelationships among concepts, issues, problems Analyze or interpret author's craft (literary devices, viewpoint, or potential bias) to critique a text Use reasoning, planning, and evidence to support inferences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze multiple sources of evidence, or multiple works by the same author, or across genres, time periods, themes Analyze complex/abstract themes, perspectives, concepts Gather, analyze, and organize multiple information sources Analyze discourse styles
Evaluate Make judgments based on criteria, check, detect inconsistencies or fallacies, judge, critique			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cite evidence and develop a logical argument for conjectures Describe, compare, and contrast solution methods Verify reasonableness of results Critique conclusions drawn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate relevancy, accuracy, & completeness of information from multiple sources Draw & justify conclusions Apply understanding in a novel way, provide argument or justification for the application
Create Reorganize elements into new patterns/structures, generate, hypothesize, design, plan, produce		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generate conjectures or hypotheses based on observations or prior knowledge and experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Synthesize information within one source or text Develop a complex model for a given situation Develop an alternative solution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Synthesize information across multiple sources or texts Articulate a new voice, alternate theme, new knowledge or perspective

Figure 1. Hess' Cognitive Rigor Matrix and Curricular Examples: Reading. Hess applies Webb's Depth of Knowledge levels to Bloom's Cognitive Process dimensions for reading. Source: Hess, Jones, Carlock, & Walkup (2009). Cognitive rigor: Blending the strengths of Bloom's Taxonomy and Webb's Depth of Knowledge to enhance classroom-level processes. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED517804). © Karin K. Hess 2009: Hess' Cognitive Rigor Matrix.

Revised Bloom's Taxonomy	Webb's DOK Level 1 Recall & Reproduction	Webb's DOK Level 2 Skills & Concepts	Webb's DOK Level 3 Strategic Thinking/ Reasoning	Webb's DOK Level 4 Extended Thinking
Remember Retrieve knowledge from long-term memory, recognize, recall, locate, identify				
Understand Construct meaning, clarify, paraphrase, represent, translate, illustrate, give examples, classify, categorize, summarize, generalize, infer a logical conclusion, predict, compare/contrast, match like ideas, explain, construct models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe or define facts, details, terms Select appropriate words to use when intended meaning/definition is clearly evident Write simple sentences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specify, explain, show relationships; explain why, cause-effect Give non-examples/examples Take notes; organize ideas/data Summarize results, concepts, ideas Identify main ideas or accurate generalizations of texts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain, generalize, or connect ideas using supporting evidence (quote, example, text reference) Write multi-paragraph composition for specific purpose, focus, voice, tone, & audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain how concepts or ideas specifically relate to other content domains or concepts Develop generalizations of the results obtained or strategies used and apply them to new problem situations
Apply Carry out or use a procedure in a given situation; carry out (apply to a familiar task), or use (apply) to an unfamiliar task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply rules or use resources to edit specific spelling, grammar, punctuation, conventions, word use Apply basic formats for documenting sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use context to identify the meaning of words/phrases Obtain and interpret information using text features Develop a text that may be limited to one paragraph Apply simple organizational structures (paragraph, sentence types) in writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise final draft for meaning or progression of ideas Apply internal consistency of text organization and structure to composing a full composition Apply a concept in a new context Apply word choice, point of view, style to impact readers' interpretation of a text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select or devise an approach among many alternatives to research a novel problem Illustrate how multiple themes (historical, geographic, social) may be interrelated
Analyze Break into constituent parts, determine how parts relate, differentiate between relevant-irrelevant, distinguish, focus, select, organize, outline, find coherence, deconstruct (e.g., for bias, point of view)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decide which text structure is appropriate to audience and purpose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compare literary elements, terms, facts, details, events Analyze format, organization, & internal text structure (signal words, transitions, semantic cues) of different texts Distinguish: relevant-irrelevant information; fact/opinion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze interrelationships among concepts, issues, problems Apply tools of author's craft (literary devices, viewpoint, or potential dialogue) with intent Use reasoning, planning, and evidence to support inferences made 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze multiple sources of evidence, or multiple works by the same author, or across genres, or time periods Analyze complex/abstract themes, perspectives, concepts Gather, analyze, and organize multiple information sources
Evaluate Make judgments based on criteria, check, detect inconsistencies or fallacies, judge, critique			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cite evidence and develop a logical argument for conjectures Describe, compare, and contrast solution methods Verify reasonableness of results Justify or critique conclusions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate relevancy, accuracy, & completeness of information from multiple sources Draw & justify conclusions Apply understanding in a novel way, provide argument or justification for the application
Create Reorganize elements into new patterns/structures, generate, hypothesize, design, plan, produce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brainstorm ideas, concepts, problems, or perspectives related to a topic or concept 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generate conjectures or hypotheses based on observations or prior knowledge and experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a complex model for a given situation Develop an alternative solution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Synthesize information across multiple sources or texts Articulate a new voice, alternate theme, new knowledge or perspective

Figure 2. Hess' Cognitive Rigor Matrix and Curricular Examples: Writing. Hess applies Webb's Depth of Knowledge Levels to Bloom's Cognitive Process Dimensions for writing. Source: Hess, Jones, Carlock, & Walkup (2009). Cognitive rigor: Blending the strengths of Bloom's Taxonomy and Webb's Depth of Knowledge to enhance classroom-level processes. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED517804). © Karin K. Hess 2009: Hess' Cognitive Rigor Matrix.

Revised Bloom's Taxonomy	Webb's DOK Level 1 Recall & Reproduction	Webb's DOK Level 2 Skills & Concepts	Webb's DOK Level 3 Strategic Thinking/ Reasoning	Webb's DOK Level 4 Extended Thinking
Remember Retrieve knowledge from long-term memory, recognize, recall, locate, identify	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recall, observe, & recognize facts, principles, properties Recall/ identify conversions among representations or numbers (e.g., customary and metric measures) 			
Understand Construct meaning, clarify, paraphrase, represent, translate, illustrate, give examples, classify, categorize, summarize, generalize, infer a logical conclusion (such as from examples given), predict, compare/contrast, match like ideas, explain, construct models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate an expression Locate points on a grid or number on number line Solve a one-step problem Represent math relationships in words, pictures, or symbols Read, write, compare decimals in scientific notation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specify and explain relationships (e.g., non-examples/examples; cause-effect) Make and record observations Explain steps followed Summarize results or concepts Make basic inferences or logical predictions from data/observations Use models /diagrams to represent or explain mathematical concepts Make and explain estimates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use concepts to solve <u>non-routine</u> problems Explain, generalize, or connect ideas <u>using supporting evidence</u> Make <u>and justify</u> conjectures Explain thinking when more than one response is possible Explain phenomena in terms of concepts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relate mathematical or scientific concepts to other content areas, other domains, or other concepts Develop generalizations of the results obtained and the strategies used (from investigation or readings) and apply them to new problem situations
Apply Carry out or use a procedure in a given situation; carry out (apply to a familiar task), or use (apply) to an unfamiliar task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow simple procedures (recipe-type directions) Calculate, measure, apply a rule (e.g., rounding) Apply algorithm or formula (e.g., area, perimeter) Solve linear equations Make conversions among representations or numbers, or within and between customary and metric measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select a procedure according to criteria and perform it Solve routine problem applying multiple concepts or decision points Retrieve information from a table, graph, or figure and use it solve a problem requiring multiple steps Translate between tables, graphs, words, and symbolic notations (e.g., graph data from a table) Construct models given criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design investigation for a specific purpose or research question Conduct a designed investigation Use concepts to solve non-routine problems Use & show reasoning, planning, <u>and evidence</u> Translate between problem & symbolic notation when not a direct translation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select or devise approach among many alternatives to solve a problem Conduct a project that specifies a problem, identifies solution paths, solves the problem, and reports results
Analyze Break into constituent parts, determine how parts relate, differentiate between relevant-irrelevant, distinguish, focus, select, organize, outline, find coherence, deconstruct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retrieve information from a table or graph to answer a question Identify whether specific information is contained in graphic representations (e.g., table, graph, T-chart, diagram) Identify a pattern/trend 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Categorize, classify materials, data, figures based on characteristics Organize or order data Compare/ contrast figures or data Select appropriate graph and organize & display data Interpret data from a simple graph Extend a pattern 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compare information within or across data sets or texts Analyze and <u>draw conclusions from data, citing evidence</u> Generalize a pattern Interpret data from complex graph Analyze similarities/differences between procedures or solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze multiple sources of evidence analyze complex/abstract themes Gather, analyze, and evaluate information
Evaluate Make judgments based on criteria, check, detect inconsistencies or fallacies, judge, critique			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cite evidence and develop a logical <u>argument</u> for concepts or solutions Describe, compare, and contrast solution methods <u>Verify reasonableness of results</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather, analyze, & evaluate information to draw conclusions Apply understanding in a novel way, provide argument or justification for the application
Create Reorganize elements into new patterns/structures, generate, hypothesize, design, plan, construct, produce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brainstorm ideas, concepts, or perspectives related to a topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generate conjectures or hypotheses based on observations or prior knowledge and experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Synthesize information within one data set, source, or text Formulate an original problem given a situation Develop a scientific/mathematical model for a complex situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Synthesize information across multiple sources or texts Design a mathematical model to inform and solve a practical or abstract situation

Figure 3. Hess' Cognitive Rigor Matrix and Curricular Examples: Math/Science. Hess applies Webb's Depth of Knowledge Levels to Bloom's Cognitive Process Dimensions for math and science. *Source:* Hess, Jones, Carlock, & Walkup (2009). *Cognitive rigor: Blending the strengths of Bloom's Taxonomy and Webb's Depth of Knowledge to enhance classroom-level processes.* Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED517804). © Karin K. Hess 2009: Hess' Cognitive Rigor Matrix.

Hess' Cognitive Rigor Matrix (CRM) overlays present two different cognitive complexity measures streamlined into one matrix: Bloom's Taxonomy and Webb's Depth of Knowledge. This matrix produces a way of analyzing the emphasis placed on resources in curriculum and the focus of instruction and classroom assessment. As educators become more skilled at recognizing cognitive rigor and evaluating its implications for instruction and assessment, they can augment learning opportunities for all students across all subject areas and grade levels (Hess, Jones, Carlock, & Walkup, 2009).

While these CC standards prove challenging for domestic students, they present a unique challenge for students whose first language is not English, our English language learners (ELLs),

also referred to as Limited English Proficient (LEP) students or ESL (English as a Second Language) students as defined by federal law for students in the K-12 setting (Appendix A). In addition, a continuous challenge confronts K-12 settings and institutions of higher education to stay abreast of current ELL literacy trends, national and state mandates, and ELLs' language acquisition needs. These mandates include not only adhering to national and state ELP (English Language Proficiency) and ELD (English Language Development) standards, but also meeting the needs of ELLs as required by the 2001 legislation of NCLB, the *Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA)* of 2004 and the newly adopted CCSS (Garcia & Tyler, 2010). These Core standards transform how teachers, whether pre-service or those currently in practice, prepare and deliver pedagogy. In addition, the adoption of these standards require faculty in higher education to deliver instruction that requires pre-service teachers to think more critically about the lessons they prepare and deliver, not only for domestic students, but the continuously growing ELL population. Considering this, each school system in Pennsylvania, whether public, charter, or otherwise, must provide a program for each student whose primary language is not English, for the purpose of increasing not only their student achievement, but also contributing to the overall achievement of the district and the overall growth of the student as now evidenced through the use of PVAAS, the statistical analysis tool of Pennsylvania (PA) state assessment data, which also provides Pennsylvania districts and schools with growth data to add to achievement data

([http://www.education.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/state_assessment_system/20965/pennsylvania_value_added_assessment_system_\(pvaas\)/1426500](http://www.education.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/state_assessment_system/20965/pennsylvania_value_added_assessment_system_(pvaas)/1426500)). This data also contributes to the newly revised PA teacher evaluation tool (Appendix B) for assessment of district growth and achievement benchmarks signed into law under Act 82.

Statement of the Problem

As previously noted, CCSS present challenges and impact pedagogy not only for our native English speakers, but for one of our fastest growing populations, our ELLs (Halladay & Moses, 2013; Williamson, Fitzgerald, & Stenner, 2013). Likewise, Short and Echevarria (2005) find students with non-English backgrounds are “the fastest-growing subset of the K-12 student population” (p. 9). By 2015, trajectories indicate that ELLs in U.S. schools will reach 10 million and by 2025, nearly twenty-five percent of public school students will be an English language learner (National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition and Language Instruction, 2007). Dong (2004) endorses these findings and calls for the “...urgent need for all teachers to develop culturally sensitive and language appropriate instruction so that all students can succeed” (p. 202). However, Youngs and Youngs (2001) report that few classroom teachers are prepared to tackle the linguistic and cultural diversity present in classrooms today.

Given that each ELL student has a unique set of academic, social, emotional, and linguistic needs, teachers need to use literacy intervention techniques and tools that foster growth, to not only ensure ELLs’ academic success to meet the demands of Common Core, but position ELLs for success beyond the classroom. Considering this, it is important to examine teachers’ attitudes, understandings, preparedness, and practices about ELL ELA literacy in order to meet the challenging demands of CCSS and to understand its impact. To examine teachers’ attitudes, understandings, preparedness, and practices relative to ELL ELA literacy, a study utilizing the mixed-method design was conducted.

Research Questions

The primary question for inquiry for this research was “What are teachers’ attitudes, understandings, preparedness, and literacy practices relative to ELL ELA Common Core?”. To

examine teachers' attitudes, understandings, preparedness, and literacy practices relative to ELL ELA Common Core literacy, the following research questions guided this mixed methods study:

1. What teaching strategies, protocols, practices, and literacy terms are PreK-12 PA public school teachers familiar with or currently using relative to PA Common Core (PA Core) literacy for ELLs?
2. What are the attitudes and understandings of PreK-12 PA public school teachers relative to PA Common Core (PA Core) literacy for ELLs?
3. What are PA PreK-12 public school teachers' beliefs about the importance of understanding literacy relative to ELL students and PA Common Core?
4. How well prepared do PreK-12 PA public school teachers feel, based on their experience, preparation, and training in education, to teach ELLs and implement interventions?
5. What are the ESL Specialists' understandings and perceptions about PA Common Core (PA Core) ELA ELL literacy and its impact relative to teacher preparation and pedagogy?

Purpose of the Study

Overall, the purpose of this study was first, to critically examine Common Core literacy, referred to as *PA Core* in Pennsylvania (used interchangeably in this research with the term *Common Core*) and its impact on ELL literacy. More specifically, this mixed methods study examined teachers' attitudes, understandings, preparedness, and literacy practices as it relates to ESL ELA Common Core literacy. The study analyzed both qualitative and quantitative data. Survey-questionnaires were distributed using a purposive sample, and six ESL specialists participated in qualitative descriptive interviews about ELL PA Common Core ELA literacy.

This data revealed understandings, weaknesses and strengths from two perspectives, teachers and ESL specialists, allowing for reflection and suggestions for improvements for future teaching of ELLs. Furthermore, data was triangulated with the literature to reveal findings that confirmed or contradicted what current research revealed. Finally, gaps were uncovered to be investigated. Considering this, one practical purpose of this study was to improve current pedagogy and literacy intervention strategies for ELLs relative to PA Common Core.

Professional Significance of the Study

The final goal of this mixed-methods study was two-fold: to gain insight into teachers' perceptions, understandings, practices, and preparedness as it relates to ELL ELA PA Core literacy, and to deliver a website, *www.elliteracycentral.com*. One goal of the website is to deliver current up-to-date information regarding ELL literacy, in addition to providing teacher input about ELL literacy. This website will assist PreK-12 public school teachers, administrators, and stakeholders, as they plan, develop, and implement lessons to meet the needs of current literacy standards for ELLs.

With the adoption of CCSS, all teachers involved with ELL students play a critical role in this paradigm shift in educational reform. In order to create a pathway to academic success for our ELLs, teachers must begin to critically examine the PA English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS), the "CAN DO" descriptors, the CCSS, the TESOL revised standards, and the WIDA Consortium ELPS and amplified standards, to understand their role as an educator of ELLs (http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/measurements,_standards___policies/7531/elps_for_ells). In addition, educators must understand how the synergy of these standards combined, and the instructional practices they use, impact learning for ELLs. Staehr, Fenner, and Segota (2012) describe three components-- teachers, standards, and assessments,

that constantly interact, and must be equally developed, for effective ELL study. Figure 4 presents these components.

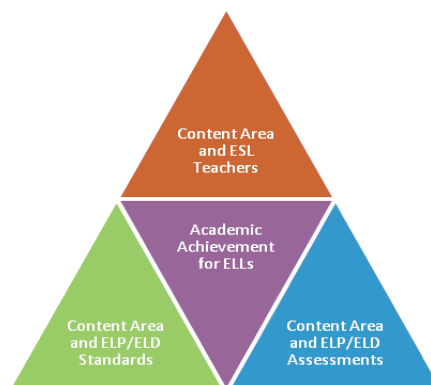


Figure 4. Staehr-Fenner Model. Teachers, standards, and assessments, that must interact and be equally developed, for effective ELL study. *Source:* Staehr-Fenner, D. (2013). *Implementing the Common Core State Standards for ELs: The changing role of the ESL teacher.* Alexandria, VA: TESOL.

It is important for educators to know and understand how these relationships are interwoven, working together, for if one area is overlooked, the other two will not prosper (Staehr-Fenner, 2013).

It is essential for K-12 educational systems and institutions of higher education to better understand the importance of what comprises ELL literacy relative to CCSS, and recognize the need for effective literacy assessments and interventions for ELL students. It is important to not only foster student growth as measured by state assessments through statistical analyses such as Pennsylvania's Value-Added Assessment System (PVAAS), but to contribute to the field by providing educational institutions a better understanding of how educators are managing issues pertaining to the literacy, assimilation, and acculturation of ELLs. By conducting this study, data was revealed that will prompt educational institutions to reflect on current pedagogy and literacy for ELLs. This study resulted in research-based, more well informed teaching practices, programs and initiatives that will cultivate growth not only for the ELL student, but will spur

change regarding pedagogy for ELLs in K-12 settings and within institutions of higher education.

Theoretical Framework

To understand more fully the challenges ELLs encounter relative to CCSS, it is necessary to examine existing theories and implications of second language acquisition (SLA). The process of language acquisition draws from many interdisciplinary perspectives. Current theories of ELL second language acquisition are based in research across a variety of fields which include psychology, linguistics, sociology, anthropology and neurolinguistics (Freeman & Freeman, 2011). The overall current theoretical framework that underpins this research is *Social Cultural Theory* (SCT) and is situated within the theoretical parameters of *Activity Theory*, also known as *Cultural Historical Activity Theory* (Engeström, Miettinen & Punamaki, 1999; Engeström, 1987).

Social Cultural Theory (SCT) suggests that the primary process in which learning takes place is through meaningful interactions, it “never takes place in a vacuum”, but rather “it is deeply embedded in the sociocultural milieu” (Walqui, 2006, p. 159). As such, learning “is not only a matter of cognitive development, but also part of shared social practices” (p. 59). SCT is based on the work of Vygotsky’s learning theory. It asserts students create meaning in learning through constant social interactions within new educational situations of common interest, such as social interaction with others (Vygotsky, 1978). Additional features of Vygotsky’s learning theory purports that learning precedes development, where learning can “only be successful if it is ahead of development, that is, if it challenges learners to think and act in advance of their actual level of development” where language is the “main vehicle of thought.” (Walqui, 2006, p. 160-161). In addition, learning is the “process of apprenticeship and internalization in which

skills and knowledge are transformed from the social into the cognitive plane”, with the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) being the primary platform for learning (p. 160).

Social Cultural Theory is grounded in the larger framework of psychological Activity Theory (AT) founded by theorists such as Vygotsky (1978, 1986), Leont'ev (1978, 1981) and Engestrom (1987). Figure 5 presents Engestrom’s Activity Theory Model where a wide range of factors work together to impact an activity.

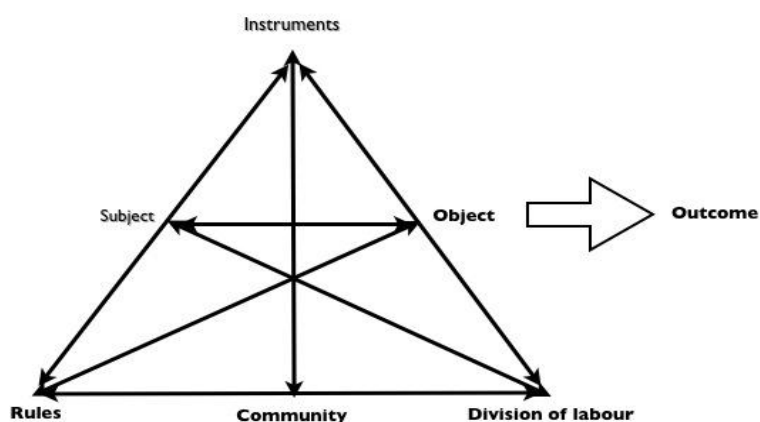


Figure 5. Engeström’s Activity Theory Model. Source: Engeström, Y. (1987). *Learning by expanding: An activity-theoretical approach to developmental research*. Helsinki: Orienta-Konsultit, p.78.

Activity Theory seeks to understand human activity as involved processes that comprise of actors (users, subjects) interacting within complex systems and environments of real-life activity. These complex processes also take into consideration the history of the actor (s), culture, role of the artifact, and motivations (Engeström, 1987).

Overview of Methodology

This critical action research study focused on examining teachers’ attitudes, understandings, preparedness, and literacy practices relative to CC ELA ELL literacy. It was the researcher’s belief that in order to fully understand how CC ELA impacts ELL literacy, a critical analysis of

CC ELA standards is necessary, followed by an analysis of the ELL state standards initiatives, in relation to CCSS. Furthermore, it was the researcher's belief that to more fully understand how CC ELA standards impact ELL literacy, it was important to gain insight about teachers' perceptions of ELA ELL literacy and how teachers prepare for delivering CC ELA ELL literacy. This required the researcher gather data to answer the researcher's questions about how teachers perceive ELLs and prepare for ELL CC ELA literacy, and further examine how ESL specialists perceive ELL literacy and preparedness relative to ELA CC. As a result, this study called for the researcher to implement a mixed-methods approach with a critical action research design.

The critical action research design incorporated a collection of both quantitative and qualitative data. The critical action research perspective Hammersley (1993) asserts provides a "helpful, or problem solving approach for teachers who are committed to investigate through action research the taken-for granted relationships and practices in their professional lives" (p. 441). Further, this critical action approach differs from a practical action research approach in that it is more philosophical in nature and enables more participation of people (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2006, p. 492). In addition, the values of critical action research dictate that action research is socially responsive and takes place in context (Flinders & Mills, 1993). Considering the academic needs of ELLs, socially responsive teaching requires culturally responsive teaching, and according to Gay (2000), uses "the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant and effective for them...it is culturally validating and affirming" (p. 29) and provides students with augmented engagement in the learning process.

Assumptions Underlying the Study

In order to proceed with this study, the researcher made the following assumptions drawn from literature relative to ELL ELA CC literacy and personal interactions with educators:

- ELL best literacy practices are among the many tasks required of all teachers, across all disciplines, in education.
- The concept of ELL ELA literacy relative to CCSS involves developing all stakeholders in education and improving their skillset.
- Educators and administrators have varying views of ELL ELA literacy as it pertains to CCSS.
- Educators and administrators, through gaining an understanding of their role as ELL ELA CCSS literacy specialists, impact other educators and administrators, on curriculum development and best practices for ELLs, and influence the performance of all learners.

Limitations

1. This study was limited in the collection of data from a purposive sample, interviews from ESL specialists and data collected from Pennsylvania PreK-12 public school teachers, and cannot generally be applied to a larger population, only suggested.
2. The generalizability or transferability of the findings of the study may not be able to be transferred from this setting to another.
3. Because of the interpretive nature of the qualitative research, the researcher may introduce bias into the analysis of the findings.
4. This study, being conducted over a certain interval of time, was a snap shot of the time in which it was conducted.
5. Finally, the limited number of participants limit the generalizability of the study.

Delimitations

1. The study was delimited by the research questions I have chosen.
2. The study was delimited by the methods I have chosen to employ the findings.
3. The study was delimited to K-12 public school teachers and ESL Specialists of Pennsylvania. The uniqueness of the study within a specific context makes it difficult to repeat exactly in another context (Creswell, 2012).

Chapter Summary and Conclusion

This chapter provided an overview of the components of the proposed study. In addition, it included a development of the context by providing a background summary about ELL ELA literacy relative to CCSS. Furthermore, the purpose of the study, the problem statement and the significance of the results were outlined. The research questions were presented as well as the significance of the study.

English language learners' literacy success relative to CC, requires in-depth understandings of ELL literacy, and a different kind of collaboration of all stakeholders, at all levels. It also requires a comprehensive understanding of not only CC ELA standards and the state's initiatives, laws, and policies set forth for ELL literacy relative to ELA CC, but an understanding of ELL language acquisition, and the challenges it presents. This includes the challenges it presents for educators and educational systems, charged with the responsibility of delivering meaningful pedagogy diversity, that will ensure ELLs' success.

Glossary for General ESL Key Terms

BICS - acronym for basic interpersonal communication skills required for verbal face-to-face communication; a type of "survival English" where linguistic interactions are embedded in a situational context accompanied by gestures

BEC - Basic Education Circular (BEC) provides the Pennsylvania Department of Education's guidance on the implementation of law, regulation and policy

Bilingual Education - a carefully planned instructional program in which two languages are used; the program provides ESL instruction and utilizes the student's native language as the medium for instruction in the content areas; language arts instruction in the student's native language is also provided; bilingual education models include transitional, development and dual-language programs

Bilingualism - the ability to use two languages

CALPS - acronym for cognitive/academic language proficiency skills; the language ability required for academic achievement

Dominant Language - the language with which the speaker has greatest proficiency and/or uses most often

Dual Language Program - also known as two-way immersion, development or two-way bilingual education; the program aims to develop language proficiency in two languages by putting two language groups together and delivering instruction through both languages; for example, in the US native English- speakers might learn Spanish as a foreign language while continuing to develop their English literacy skills and Spanish-speaking students might learn English while developing literacy in Spanish; the goal is for both groups to become bilingual.

ELD- acronym for English language development

ELL - acronym for English language learners; students whose first language is not English and who are in the process of learning English

ELPS- acronym for English Language Proficiency Standards

ESL - acronym for English as a second language; an academic discipline that is designed to teach English language learners social and academic language skills as well as the cultural aspects of the English language necessary to succeed in an academic environment; it involves teaching listening, speaking, reading and writing at appropriate developmental and proficiency levels with little or no use of the native language; courses of study must be carefully articulated K-12 and must be correlated to the PA Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening; ESL program models include departmentalized, sheltered, intensive, pull-out and push-in

ESOL - acronym for English for speakers of other languages

Equal Education Opportunities Act of 1974 - a civil rights statute prohibiting states from denying equal educational opportunity to an individual on account of his or her race, color, sex or national origin; the statute specifically prohibits states from denying equal educational opportunity by the failure of an educational agency to take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by its students in its instructional programs

Guided Discourse-discourse patterns of teacher for delivering information to learner

Immersion Program - an approach to teaching language in which the target language is used exclusively to provide all instruction

Input-Based Incremental Vocabulary Instruction- emphasizes the presentation of target vocabulary as input early on and the incremental (gradual) build-up of different aspects of vocabulary knowledge over time. - See more at:
<http://www.tesol.org/BookLanding?productID=752#sthash.WuL4Ilyd.dpuf>

Interactive Modeling- Interactive Modeling is a straightforward, quickly paced, seven-step process that's effective for teaching children any academic or social skill, routine, or procedure that you want them to do in a specific way. Interactive Modeling is said to be more effective than traditional modeling/ in that it provides seven distinctive steps that incorporate key elements of effective teaching: modeling positive behaviors, engaging students in active learning, and immediately assessing their understanding. Research shows that when we teach in this way, children achieve greater, faster, and longer-lasting success in meeting expectations and mastering skills.

With Interactive Modeling, children create clear, positive mental images of what is expected of them. They do the noticing themselves, which builds up their powers of observation and their analysis and communication skills. In addition, because they get immediate practice, they gain quicker expertise and stronger mastery of the procedure or skill being taught.

The seven steps are:

1. Briefly state what you will model, and why.
2. Model the behavior exactly as you expect students to do it (the right way, not the wrong way, and without describing what you're doing unless you need to "show" a thinking process).
3. Ask students what they noticed. (You may need to do some prompting, but children soon notice every little detail, especially as they gain expertise with this practice.)
4. Invite one or more students to model the same way you did.
5. Again, ask students what they noticed the modelers doing.

6. Have all students model while you observe and coach them.
7. Provide feedback, naming specific, positive actions you notice and redirecting respectfully but clearly when students go off track.

Keystone Exams - PA assessments given in Algebra I, Biology, Literature at the high school level.

Lau v. Nichols - 1974 landmark Supreme Court ruling that identical education does not constitute equal education under the Civil Rights Act; school districts must take affirmative steps to overcome educational barriers faced by non-English speakers

LEP - acronym for limited English proficient; a term used to identify those students who have insufficient English to succeed in English-only classrooms

LEA - acronym for local education agency

Migrant Education - educational programs established mainly to meet the needs of children of farm laborers, who often face such challenges as poverty, poor health care, limited English proficiency, and the readjustments of moving often from school to school

Multilingualism - use of three or more languages

NABE - acronym for the National Association for Bilingual Education; an association of teachers, administrators, parents, policy makers and others concerned with securing educational equity for language minority students

NEP - acronym for non-English proficient

OBEMLA - acronym for the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs in the US Department of Education established in 1974 by Congress to help school districts meet their responsibility to provide equal education opportunity to limited English proficient students

OCR - acronym for the Office for Civil Rights, US Department of Education; OCR has the responsibility for enforcing Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and investigates allegations of civil rights violations

PA ELL literacy Overlays- The PA Department of Education SAS website provides overlays that are a framework for classroom instruction and formative assessments. (Go to: <http://www.pdesas.org/curriculumframework/elloverlay/#> for a complete description.)

PDE 3044 - Pennsylvania Department of Education form for school district annual report of services to ELLs

PSSA - acronym for the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment

PHLOTE - acronym for primary home language other than English

RTI-acronym for Response to Intervention- is a multi-tier approach to the early identification and support of students with learning and behavior needs.

Scaffolding- Scaffolding refers to the idea that specialized instructional supports need to be in place in order to best facilitate learning when students are first introduced to a new subject.

SEA - acronym for state educational agency

S.I.F.E.- acronym for English language learning students with interrupted formal education

SIOP-Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol- There are eight interrelated components to The SIOP[®] Model which consists of:

1. Lesson Preparation
2. Building Background
3. Comprehensible Input
4. Strategies
5. Interaction
6. Practice and Application
7. Lesson Delivery
8. Review and Assessment

Structured Immersion - an approach to instruction in which students receive all of their subject matter instruction in their second language; the teacher uses a simplified form of the second language; students may use their native language in class, however, the teacher uses only the second language; the goal is to help minority language students acquire proficiency in English while at the same time achieving in content areas

TESOL - acronym for Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages; a professional association of teachers, administrators, researchers and others concerned with promoting scholarship, the dissemination of information and strengthening of instruction and research in the teaching of English to speakers of other languages and dialects

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 - prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance; Title VI regulatory requirements have been interpreted to prohibit denial of equal access to education because of language minority student's limited proficiency in English

TPR - acronym for total physical response; a language-learning approach based on the relationship between language and its physical representation or execution; emphasizes the use of physical activity for increasing meaningful learning opportunities and language retention; a TPR lesson involves a detailed series of consecutive actions accompanied by a series of commands or instructions given by the teacher while students respond by listening and performing the appropriate actions

Two-way Content Based Instruction- instruction that is a result of content teacher collaborating with ESL teacher where there is a reciprocity of ideas being exchanged.

WIDA- Created in response to NCLB requirements for ELLs pertaining to standards and assessments

- Funded originally through a USDE Enhanced Assessment Grant to the WI Department of Public Instruction in 2003
- Made up initially of three states: **Wisconsin, Delaware, and Arkansas**
- Changed to World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment in 2005
- Moved to the Wisconsin Center for Education Research at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2006

WIDA supports language development for linguistically diverse students through standards, assessments, professional development, and research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The purpose of the review of the related literature is to present a theoretical framework for the study, in addition to the related literature on the topic, in order to examine the implications of ELL ELA literacy relative to CC for content area teachers and those stakeholders charged with the success of ELLs. The literature review comprises books, on-line print and media sources, periodicals, language policy and law, and research reports. In order to fully understand ELL ELA literacy relative to CC, it is important to understand previous educational policy and law that influenced this seemingly large paradigm shift in education. Considering the aforementioned, this literature review is divided into the following sections: Theoretical Framework, Historical Policy and Law Impacting ELL Literacy, and ELA CC and its Impact on ELL Literacy. Considering the multifaceted challenges that CC ELA literacy presents relative to ELL literacy, this review of literature is further sectioned to include ELL changing demographics, expectations for ELLs, effective teacher pedagogy, teacher preparation, and teacher practices. In addition, school and district factors of leadership and cultural responsiveness are examined relative to their impact on ELL achievement and literacy.

Theoretical Framework

To understand more fully the challenges ELLs encounter relative to CCSS, it is necessary to examine existing theories and what second language acquisition (SLA) involves. The process of SLA draws from many interrelated fields. Current theories of ELL second language acquisition are based in research across varying fields which include psychology, linguistics, sociology, neuroscience, anthropology and neurolinguistics (Freeman & Freeman, 2011). The

overall current theoretical framework for this research is grounded in the theories of *Social Cultural Theory* and *Activity Theory*.

Social Cultural Theory (SCT) defines learning as “a dynamic social activity that is situated in physical and social contexts, and distributed across persons, tools, and activities” (Johnson, 2006, p. 237). Social Cultural Theory is based on the work of Vygotsky’s learning theory. It purports students construct their learning through continual new educational social interactions and situations of shared interest, such as social interaction with others (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986). Additional features of Vygotsky’s learning theory purports that “learning precedes development” where learning can “only be successful if it is ahead of development, that is, if it challenges learners to think and act in advance of their actual level of development” where language is the “main vehicle of thought” (Walqui, 2006, p. 160-161). In addition, learning is the “process of apprenticeship and internalization in which skills and knowledge are transformed from the social into the cognitive plane”, with the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) being the primary foundation for learning (p. 160).

Another concept central to Vygotsky’s learning theory contends that “mediation is central to learning” where “mediation is the use of a tool to accomplish an action” (p. 161). Children learn to use tools of many kinds. Many of these tools are manifested in cultural and history and are made available to children through social interaction, as a result “adding another layer of mediation: activities mediated by tools is mediated by social interaction” (p. 161). Vygotsky conclusively believes the basis to all learning is social interaction.

Beyond Vygotsky, others theorists (Leont’ev 1978, 1981; Cole 1990; Rogoff, Radziszewska, & Masiello, 1995; Engeström, Miettinen & Punamaki, 1999) have extended research in the area of sociocultural theory, theorizing it not only as it has been practiced in

psychology, but how it is applied to second language teacher education. Most importantly, sociocultural theory represents a shift in human learning from one that views human learning as primarily grounded in behaviorism and cognitivism, to one that views learning as an activity that is dynamic, interactive, social and mental, situated in environmental contexts, influenced by culture, context, language, and social interaction. Thorne (2005) concludes that the sociocultural perspective “offers a framework through which cognition can be investigated systematically without isolating it from social content or human agency” (p. 393).

Extending Vygotsky’s SCT, Activity Theory (Engeström, 1987) is a comprehensive theoretical explicatory tool, considered to be a context for understanding the complex activity system of human social interactions comprised of interconnected components. The theory provides a more all-inclusive account describing the interconnectedness of individuals, perspectives, motivations, culture, history, and artifacts.

Social Cultural Theory and Activity Theory provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the complex systems implicit in learning and literacy for ELLs. It presents a more holistic view to the interconnectedness of the entire “activity system”, which is complex and includes participants of different cultures, using objects and tools to facilitate and meet goals within a community that includes learners (Engeström, 1987).

Historical Policy and Law Impacting ESL Literacy

Educational policy and law has influenced the instructional development of English language learners over the past forty years. Upon its initial adoption, it reflected the change and growth of its time, however, over the years, its maturity impeded, according to Solomon (2008), because of “ideological panaceas of the educational policy that is influenced by various political ideologies and the instructional dilemmas faced by teachers of English learners” (p. 1-2).

Further she argues, this troubling cycle has impacted and smothered the pedagogy of English learners “as if a butterfly caught in the cocoon of policy and practice...not set free to reach its full growth” (p. 2). As a result, for the past forty years, there has been an ongoing struggle between policy and practice, speaking to the educational inconsistency of educational best practices for second language learning that exists between schools (p. 2).

Historically, teaching English to students whose primary language is not English, is not new and dates back to Colonial America where immigrants spoke both in their native language and English. Following this period, English prevailed over the language of Native Americans, with World War I and World War II placing additional restrictions on German and Japanese (p. 3). Situated between these wars, was the *Hart-Cellar Immigration Act* also known as the *Immigration Act of 1965*, which bolstered initial change for immigration. The Act dismantled immigration quotas from the 1920's, resulting in a steady entry of migrants as a result of the Cuban revolution, political upheaval in Southeast Asia, and the wide-spread poverty in Mexico (Keely, 1971). Following WWII, two laws served to spur change relative to immigrant literacy: the initial Elementary and Secondary Education Act of the 1960s and the Bilingual Education Act of 1968.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act

The ESEA was originally developed in the mid-1960's as part of President Johnson's War on Poverty Campaign, primarily to help poor children in U.S. schools. Over the years, from the mid-1960's until 1993, it was amended eight times, and it was expanded to help create programs to assist English language learners, migrant children, Native American children, neglected children, and other children with exceptional needs. In 1993, it was up for reauthorization, under the direction of Secretary of Education Richard Riley. Along with Riley,

the Department of Education analyzed to what extent poor children were profiting from these federal reforms. The ESEA, coupled with the *Goals 2000 Act*, served as the impetus for which to establish an educational system with more nationally-oriented goals (Tiorzzi & Uro, 1997, p. 242.)

Bilingual Education Act of 1968 (BEA)

In the 1960's, the Civil Rights' movement incited the passing the Bilingual Education Act (BEA) on January 2, 1968. This act was historic for its implied support of immigrant languages yet written in unclear terms, laying the route for inconsistent federal policies, reflecting changing politics, both in Washington and throughout the country. The BEA in its original form promoted celebrating linguistic and cultural differences and diversity in the United States. Yet, in its final form, one shortcoming was its inability to demonstrate the important link between language and culture, leaving the language vague (Wiese & Garcia, 1988).

In another prominent case, *Lau vs. Nichols* (1974), the United States Supreme Court found the San Francisco Board of Education failing to provide equal access to education of Chinese speaking students. The decision influenced all states by requiring that states now acknowledge and have a program that addresses the unique language needs of ELLs (*Lau v. Nichols*, 414 U.S. 563 (1974)).

The BEA was part of the ESEA Act, which later became the Title VII program (Crawford, 1995, p. 22). Eventually, the BEA was absorbed by No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in 2002.

The federal mandate for bilingual education continued to meet up with challenge with the passing of the following reports, laws and initiatives that impacted change and influenced the adoption of Common Core impacting ELL literacy. These include: *Nation at Risk* (1983),

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (Amended), Improving America's Schools Act (1994), Achieve Initiative (1996), Goals 2000: Educate America Act, the No Child left Behind Act 2001, The National Governor's Association 2008-2009 Development Initiative, and finally, the 2010 adoption of Common Core State Standards. To more fully understand the challenges impacting ELL education over this time, a number of these laws and initiatives merit discussion: A Nation at Risk (1983), Elementary and Secondary Education Act- Reauthorized (ESEA), Goals 2000: Educate America Act, the Improving America's Schools Act (1994), Title I (previously Chapter 1) of NCLB Act 2001, and The National Governor's Association 2008-2009 Development Initiative for Common Core Standards.

A Nation at Risk

In 1983, *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*, written by the Commission on Excellence in Education, condemned education for the steady decline in student performance (Good, 2010). This Commission was formed during the Reagan administration, at a time when Reagan wanted to downgrade the status of the Department of Education. The Commission was directed by Terrel Bell, appointed Secretary of Education under Reagan, and David Gardner, appointed by Bell, and comprised of people, as Good (2010) describes it, from, "varied areas of relation to education...an eclectic group of educators, politicians, business elite, teachers, all with a civic-minded approach" (p. 369) who wanted to help make change in education at this time. This Commission worked from March 1981 to April of 1983, compiling a document that accentuated the concerns of their findings about education; it was presented as a "clarion call' for the American public to both acknowledge and create change around the failures of American education" (p. 370). However, while *A Nation at Risk* acknowledged the failures in education at this time, it is criticized by its own Commission for not having had more

of an immediate influence. As evidenced in Good (2010), Commission members Francis and Larsen addressed how the concerns and recommendations went nowhere and left the document to fall flat. Therefore, it had success in getting America to recognize and realize the problem, but “failed to do anything about those problems ” (p. 384). Despite the document not providing any real follow-through to the next step, it did spur a wave of reforms; of these, several notable reforms were *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)- Reauthorized, Goals 2000: Educate America Act, Improving America’s Schools Act* of 1994 and the 2012 *No Child Left Behind Act*, or *NCLB*.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (Revised)

The ESEA, as previously mentioned, was part of President Johnson’s War on Poverty Campaign, initially to help poor children in U.S. schools. Over the years and it was expanded to help create programs to assist English language learners, migrant children, Native American children, neglected children and other children with exceptional needs. In 1993, it was up for reauthorization, as the Department of Education scrutinized to what extent poor children were benefiting from these federal reforms.

A second current public policy program falling under ESEA is Title III. Governed by the U.S. Department of Education through the Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students, Title III of the ESEA of 1965 provides “national leadership to help ensure that English learners and immigrant students attain English proficiency and achieve academically” and promotes “student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access” (<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/index.html>). Furthermore, the Office is responsible for providing grant programs that support academic achievement for

ELLs, support helping educators and other administrators in educating English learners, support research studies to inform policy, and to help relay information about instructional language programs to meet the needs of English learners. Title III also provides funding to states to implement ESL programs and research-based effective professional development to help teachers provide effective ESL instruction.

Goals 2000: Educate America Act

The *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* (P.L. 103-227), signed into law on March 31, 1994, was born out of a President Bush's 1989 meeting with the nation's governors at the University of Virginia during the 1989 Educational Summit. From this Summit, emerged *Goals 2000*, a federal educational reform act. The Act outlined eight specific objectives for American students to be achieved by the year 2000. Of the eight goals it proposed, six were more directly related to achievement and included: (a) all children starting school being prepared for learning; (b) a high school graduation rate of 90%; (c) all Americans being literate, producing a well-educated teaching force; (d) parental involvement in their children's education; (e) American being first in the world relative to science and math; (f) and high world class academic standards for all students in the traditional academic disciplines. *Goals 2000* was intended to measure student progress, to provide educational resources to assist students in meeting these goals, and to establish a framework for world class standards, while recognizing the failures of incremental reform efforts of the past. Congress hoped to capitalize on existing state efforts, and build those into a more comprehensive reform effort. *Goals 2000* established the National Education Standards and Improvement Council (NESIC) that was to oversee the development of the national standards. However, not all of the aforementioned goals were met. In fact, it was argued that none of the goals were met and, in two areas, teacher quality and school safety, the nation

actually had gone backwards. While proponents of *Goals 2000* felt these goals served as a catalyst for educational change, critics cited the goals did little to address how valid decisions could be made concerning the outcomes being achieved (Clinchy, 1985 as cited in Sewall, 1994, p. 7). At this time, it was felt that education needed to move beyond merely “mere platitudes and endless jargon about the value of nonspecific outcomes” (Campbell, 2003, p. 44) and address an “equally strong commitment to appropriate evaluation of these objectives against specifically explicit standards” (p. 45). Heiss (1994) noted that while *Goals 2000* marked the end of a five-year process, it marked the beginning of a change in education that would likely influence several decades (p. 347). Additionally, he addressed two important consequences that would result from *Goals 2000*: increased federalization, that is, movement of American educational policy control, from state and local government to the federal level, and second, further legalization of educational policy making and implementation, due to shifting supervision from “representative bodies to the judiciary” (p. 363). As a result, while *Goals 2000*, by increasing the federal government’s influence over educational policy making, it also passed the costs on to states and local schools boards. This is what made it different from previous reform efforts; as such, it was not without its consequences.

While the *Goals 2000* confirmed what *A Nation at Risk* reported, and it brought to the educational forefront issues confronting education, issues in educational reform endured. This included, among other issues, student academic underachievement despite the increasing educational costs at the federal, state, and local levels.

Improving Americas School Act of 1994

The Improving America’s Schools Act (IASA) of 1994 was the historic reauthorization of the previously mentioned, ESEA. While the Act’s changes drew from previous reform and

research, its goal remained to primarily focus on helping poor children. However, this program did not come without criticism. Tirozzi and Uro (1997) state, “this panoply of programs...well intentioned...resulted in a fragmented educational programs that provided uncoordinated, sometimes duplicative services” (p. 243). Furthermore, these programs were often implemented in isolation of one another. Despite this, the new ESEA bolstered individual programs, through better accountability and targeting measures, and emphasized the need for better coordination and integration of program services, while being driven by the need to keep the final product in mind: student needs and learning.

One significant program that was the core of ESEA, was the Title I of the No Child Left Behind Act, originally referred to as Chapter 1.

Title I of No Child Left Behind

Title I dated back to the ESEA of 1965, which supported “remedial programs” for the “educationally disadvantaged” (Fritzberg, 2003, p. 70). Initially, it was to be determined if the Title I money was only funding the disadvantaged or other students. It was ultimately determined that funding was strictly going to be for educationally disadvantaged. The Sustaining Effects Study (SES) (Carter, 1984) provided some evidence the program “was helpful in the short term for children near the income cut-off point (but not severely disadvantaged), mainly in the early grades and in mathematics” (p. 71). However, the fact remained that districts, states, and schools were, in spite of everything proposed, not directly accountable for students’ achievement. Title I was criticized for not demonstrating the accountability it purported, and suffered a cut in funding during the years of the Reagan presidency. However, it did survive, and the reauthorization of ESEA’s requirement that states move away from “compartmentalizing Title I” and invest in programs that would “advance the school’s academic

objectives” ensued (p. 71). Fritzberg (2003) identified three additional changes introduced by the 1994 reauthorization of ESEA and Improving America’s School Act. First, Title I students were now expected to tackle the same academic content as their advantaged peers. Second, the move toward school-wide rather than targeted initiatives was extended by dropping the percentage of poor students in the district required for Title I status from 75% to 50%, a shift that brought many new schools in. Third, Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) was introduced. While AYP was introduced, its “accountability language” was vague, in addition to how it was defined and timelines for meeting AYP varied greatly. The resulting discrepancies were blatant. As Fritzberg (2003) stated, “Arkansas and Wyoming did not identify any failing schools and Texas identified only 1%, while...Michigan identified 76% and the District of Columbia identified 80% of the Title I schools as substandard” (p. 73).

In January of 2002, President Bush signed into law the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB). NCLB was a reauthorization of ESEA’s *Improving America’s School Act* which required the states to evidence “adequate yearly progress” of disadvantaged students relative to meeting the academic standards. The evidence was to be demonstrated through created or selected tests that measured specific outcomes. The rules were intended to be strict about what outcomes the tests were to show, and the consequences for not achieving these outcomes. No Child Left Behind raised, yet again, the bar for accountability. With the passing of NLCB, it was assumed there would be less ambiguity about how districts and schools measured AYP (Simpson, LaCava, & Graner, 2004). Further, NCLB pushed states to meet “proficiency standards” and those that failed to demonstrate AYP two years consecutively were “identified for improvement” and were forced to give students the choice to attend another public school in the area, with their transportation covered. If the school missed AYP three years in a row, the

students were permitted choice, once again, and had the opportunity to be tutored at the district's cost. If the district failed to meet AYP for four years in a row, the district was required to choose from a list of "wholesale changes" of which included adopting a new curriculum, replacing staff, or decreasing authority of building leadership. Ultimately, if the district failed to meet AYP for five years, they faced continued realignment, in addition to being converted to a charter school, or being taken over by the state.

Another lofty goal of NCLB relative to AYP is that all students would become 100% proficient by the year 2013-2014. This "100% proficiency goal" had significant implications for students, especially students in underachieving subgroups, such as ELLs and those with special needs.

In 2013, legislators in Pennsylvania were granted a waiver from the Department of Education to abolish AYP, and to replace it with the "School Performance Profile" (<http://paschoolperformance.org/>). The waiver is designed to improve Pennsylvania education in three areas: (a) making sure all our students are ready for careers or college; (b) developing recognition and accountability standards by the state for all public schools; and (c) improving and supporting effective teachers and principals in all our classrooms (http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/federal_programs/7374/p/1433522).

While the intent of the NCLB Act was to hold public schools accountable for the quality of education for all children, it also revealed large discrepancies in educational outcomes among and within states, and it did not yield the results it was intended to. These disparities prompted a more close examination of standards at the local and state levels. One finding that was revealed was, due to each state having unique standards and local curricula, the state and local standards and curricula lacked synergy. In addition, it was found many of these standards remained in

place without significant change over the years. It was discovered that as society's needs have changed, so too have the expectations for school systems, and as a result, standards needed to be changed. Furthermore, many argue that for the U.S. to remain competitive, students must lead in academic and educational performance. Recognizing the need for standards reform and the need to develop students who are top-ranking performers, the nation's governors and education commissioners, through their representative organizations, the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), led the development of the Common Core State Standards and continue to lead the initiative (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010a).

Common Core State Standards (CCSS) of 2010

Common Core State Standards, as previously mentioned, provide the participating forty-five states a foundation for which to build their local curricula. CCSS account for 85% of each state's standards, with each state being able to identify the remaining 15%, provided they have adopted and accepted one hundred percent of the CCSS verbatim. The states decide how they want to approach the "15% Rule". However, the approaches on how to deal with the additional 15 percent vary among states. For example, states such as Montana, Minnesota, New York, and New Mexico added content more inclusive of diversity to assist in meeting the needs of their diverse populations (<http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED544664.pdf>).

While the CC standards are defined as "a clear set of shared goals and expectations for the knowledge and skills all students need in English language arts and mathematics at each grade level" to prepare all students to be "college and career ready" by the time they graduate from high school (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010a), the developers recognized the needs of ELLs needed to be

considered, but left the questions pertaining to ELP standards and resources up to the states (O'Loughlin & Carnuccio, 2010).

The CCSS are established as an over-arching framework for English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics curriculum. Currently, Pennsylvania has chosen full adoption of Common Core, called the *PA Core*, with a statement regarding the decision to not add the 15 percent state-specific content, unless deemed necessary in the future (Kendell, Ryan, Alpert, Richards & Schwols, 2012). There are five key components to the standards for English and Language Arts: Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, Language, and Media and Technology. Standards are developed separately for grades 6-8, 9-10, and 11-12, with considerable overlap between these grade levels (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010a). These standards represent the shift for CC ELA literacy. Table 1 shows the ELA literacy shifts for CC.

Table 1

ELA Literacy Shifts for Common Core

	Shift	Goal of the Shift
Shift 1	Balancing Informational & Literary Text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students read a true balance of informational and literary texts.
Shift 2	Knowledge in the Disciplines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students build knowledge about the world (domains/ content areas) through text.
Shift 3	Staircase of Complexity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students read the central, grade appropriate text around which instruction is centered. Teachers are patient, create more time and space and support in the curriculum for close reading.
Shift 4	Text-based Answers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students engage in rich and rigorous evidence-based conversations about text.
Shift 5	Writing from Multiple Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing emphasizes use of evidence from sources to inform or make an argument.
Shift 6	Building Academic Vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students constantly build the transferable vocabulary they need to access grade level complex texts. This can be done effectively by spiraling like content in increasingly complex texts.

Source: <http://www.corestandards.org/other-resources/key-shifts-in-english-language-arts/>

These six shifts within CC ELA literacy require alignment in terms of curricular materials and classroom instruction for learning outcomes to be met.

The CC standards are presented in four categories: key ideas and details, craft and structure, integration of knowledge and ideas, and range of reading and level of text complexity. Implicit in these categories is the notion that students will master complex vocabulary, analyze higher level texts, and be fluent in reading and comprehension based on the revised reading lexile levels for Common Core. In addition, for CC writing, in grades 6–12, students are expected to “write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences” (National Governors Association, 2010a, p. 41), and for language use, “demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking” (p. 51).

These ELA components have connections and uses for literacy in the content areas of History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects standards. Furthermore, they have connections and uses for content areas within the Arts and Humanities. As a result, the literacy standards serve to complement standards in these areas. These ELA standards connect a content focus to a language skill and are designed as broad statements rather than isolated separate criteria for curriculum (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010a). These standards indicate that academic success must be exhibited in various language components across many content areas for all students, including ELLs. Because the ELA standards serve as a connection and have uses across considerable content areas, it is important that all teachers and administrators have a thorough understanding of ELL literacy relative to ELA Common Core. With the introduction of the new ELA

standards, every teacher now is considered to be a teacher of literacy skills. (Reeves, et al., 2011).

Considering the increased demands CCSS presents, coupled with English language learners representing the fastest growing subgroup of the school-age population in the U.S., CCSS need to be implemented equitably for these students. Equitable implementation of CCSS pose challenges within language acquisition for ELLs, and beyond it.

Challenges in English Language Learner Literacy

Demographic Portrait of English Language Learners

The United States has experienced considerable growth in the influx of English-language learners (ELLs) over the past decade. From 1998-2008, the number of ELLs enrolled in public schools increased from 3.5 million to 5.3 million, or by 51 percent. From 2007-2008 two states, California and Texas had over 700,000 ELL students, with states such as Florida, New York, Arizona, and Illinois, experiencing the second highest growth. Conversely, West Virginia, Mississippi, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, and Montana experienced the lowest rates of growth (Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011). Over this same period, Pennsylvania has experienced an increase of 114 percent (Pena & Rodriguez-Diaz, 2012).

State-wide, according to data released from the PA Department of Education, there are 47,894 ELLs in PA, with Spanish speakers making up 70 percent. Beyond Spanish, the most commonly spoken languages are Chinese, Vietnamese, Russian, Arabic, Korean, Khmer, Gujarati, French, Creole and Pidgins

(http://www.education.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/program_statistics/7532).

As a result of these increases, public school systems are confronted with the increasing responsibility and accountability of meeting the needs of these students and complying with the

adopted national and state mandates such as Common Core standards. In addition, these mandates include not only adhering to national and state ELP (English Language Proficiency) standards, but also meeting the needs of ELLs as required by the 2001 legislation of *No Child Left Behind* and the *Individuals with Disability Education Act* of 2004 (Garcia & Tyler, 2010). While one of the provisions of NCLB is for school systems to have highly qualified teachers, this requirement has not yet extended to preparing content and general education teachers in teaching ELLs. While the course work and credit hours required for pre-service teachers and teachers vary by state, there is an urgent need for all teachers to have knowledge of second language acquisition, how to scaffold instruction, and best practices for ELLs. At a policy level, this may mean requiring new teachers to earn ESL endorsements, such as the case in Florida and California, or reorganizing planning time in school systems, so that content teachers and ESL specialists can work in partnership to meet the needs of ELLs (Roy-Campbell, 2012).

Each school system in Pennsylvania, whether public, charter, or otherwise, must provide a program for each student whose primary language is not English, for the purpose of increasing not only their student achievement, but also contributing to the overall achievement of the district and state. In order to achieve this, school districts are required to provide instruction through an ESL program. This requires districts employ ESL Specialists and teachers who are knowledgeable of ELL literacy, policy, standards, practices, and law impacting ELLs.

Pennsylvania has established the ESL Portal PA as the *Center for Schools and Communities* web-based ESL resource. This portal is maintained with support from the Pennsylvania Department of Education and provides current on-line information and resources for educators and other personnel who work with ELL students and their families (<http://www.eslportalpa.info/>). The portal outlines identification, placement, and exit criteria for

ELLs. In addition, it provides the ELL overlays, that serve as a guide for teachers when adapting lessons for ELLs.

Schools systems in Pennsylvania have a responsibility under Federal law to serve students who are limited English proficient and need ESL or bilingual instruction in order to be successful in academic subjects. As previously mentioned, The Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title III, Title VI, and Language Minority Compliance Procedures, to name only several laws impacting ELL literacy, requires school districts and charter schools to identify limited English proficient students in order to develop appropriate, culturally responsive programs of instruction. To be compliant, local education agencies (LEAs) must identify ELLs. According to the Basic Education Circular (BEC), in educating students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and ELLs, there are certain scenarios that may exempt assessment if a student can demonstrate English language proficiency (ELP) (<http://www.eslportalpa.info/>).

English language learners also impact newly adopted Pennsylvania teacher evaluations (Act 82 of 2012). Act 82 required the Secretary of Education to establish a new statewide rating system for evaluating teachers and principals. This law requires the new PA teacher rating system use 50 percent of evaluations on multiple measures of student performance including, but not solely, test scores. Classroom observation and practice comprise of the remaining 50 percent of evaluations (Appendix B).

ELLs are presented with challenges upon entering the U.S. education systems, and they also pose a challenge to school systems both state-wide and nationally; a continuous challenge confronts K-12 public schools to stay abreast of current trends, national and state mandates, and ELLs' language acquisition needs. Each ELL has an individual set of academic, social and emotional needs that must be addressed to ensure not only academic success, but position them

for success beyond the classroom, to meet the challenging global demands of the twenty-first century, as evidenced in the Common Core goal of preparing students to be “college and career-ready”.

In order to understand the challenges that confront ELLs within and beyond language acquisition, it is important to have a general understanding of language acquisition and recognize the complexity of issues surrounding it.

Challenges within Language Acquisition for English Language Learners

Language Acquisition: A Complex Issue

Language acquisition is the manner by which an individual acquires a language. For ELLs, they are learning in both L1, their native language, and L2, their second language. Some linguists differentiate between *language acquisition* and the *learning of a second language*, defining *language acquisition* as the informal process of acquiring language, and *learning a second language* as a formal study of a second language, while other linguists use the terms synonymously (Baker, 2000). Just as language acquisition is imbued by discussion about how it is defined, there are varying theories on how a first and second language is acquired (Gardner, 2002; Pence, 2008).

Language learning has been marked by debates over issues in human learning in a general sense. More specifically, debate arises over how much of human learning is innate, and how much of it is acquired through your environment. Behaviorist B.F. Skinner argued that language learning is learned through copying and memorizing behaviors from one’s environment, such as imitating and modeling behaviors from one’s care takers. Conversely, Chompsky contended that human language is too complex to be learned this way. He felt that there was an “innate core of abstract knowledge about language form, which pre-specifies a

framework for all natural human languages” known as a *Universal Grammar* (Mitchell & Myles, 2004, p. 312). Moreover, Krashen’s theory examines the modularity of language and is based on his *Monitor Model* theory. This theory centers around five basic hypotheses: (1) *the acquisition-learning hypothesis*, (2) *the monitor hypothesis*, (3) *the natural order hypothesis*, (4) *the input hypothesis*, and (5) *the affective filter hypothesis* (Krashen, 1981). Although these theories do not come without criticism, they have served to guide and shape research in second language acquisition.

Within the field of language learning, there are also decisions to be made about how teaching a second language should happen. Should delivery of instruction be English Immersion (EI), where the native language plays little role in new language learning, Structured English Immersion (SEI), where ELL students are separated from their English-speaking counterparts for several or more hours a day for the purpose of intense English instruction, or should Two-Way Bilingual Education (BE) prevail, where English is paired with support in the ELLs native language? Studies (Powers, 2008; Orfield & Lee, 2005) suggest segregating ELLs either into certain schools, or within a school setting, away from their linguistically rich English-speaking counterparts can be detrimental. While this topic remains widely debated, research supports what matters most is the quality of instruction (Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011).

Just as important as theory and the quality of instruction, is the impact first language acquisition (L1) has on second language acquisition (L2). Research reveals that an ELL’s acquisition of first language (L1), impacts acquisition of a second language (L2). One study (Lugo-Neris, Wood-Jackson, & Goldstein, 2010) examining English vocabulary acquisition of Spanish 4-6 year olds using vocabulary bridging techniques during shared storybook reading, suggests that the Cummins model proposes a supportive, interdependent relationship between

Spanish (L1) and English (L2) for word learning. Cummins argues there is a common underlying proficiency between two languages. Based on this model, the ELL uses his understanding of L1 lexical items to facilitate learning in L2. The ELL is not relearning the lexical item, but rather recoding it. While the study found vocabulary bridging in Spanish resulted in significant improvement in naming, receptive knowledge, and expressive definitions, it also confirmed that those with strong skills in both languages, showed more growth than those with initial limited language skills.

A second study provides additional evidence for the need for proficiency in L1. Examining a vulnerable group of ELLs, low literate adult English learners, Lukes (2011) argues that acquiring a second language later in life, coupled with low level L1 proficiency, impact the immigrant long-term. This research also has implications for ELLs who enter public school systems at a later age. Entering a school system at the high school level as a novice speaker poses challenges not only with assessment of potential learning disabilities, but acquiring language adequately enough to be able compete on state assessments. Roy-Campbell (2012) asserts that there are a growing number of adolescent ELL students with limited or interrupted formal education (SIFE). While these students enrich classrooms, they pose challenges for literacy teaching. These SIFE are most challenged because they enter in middle or high school lacking literacy in the first language and having little or no proficiency in English. In addition, SIFE have not been exposed to print literacy and word attack skills. Further, once SIFE attain basic interpersonal communication (BICS), the challenge of cognitive academic language that CCSS presents, remains. Content area teachers and general education teachers who lack the necessary preparation to teach ELLs, may view ELLs from a “deficit perspective”, due to their negative impact on state assessments (p. 187). Consequently, Hillard (2003) reports that deficit

thinking can lead to teachers doubting their students, which results in teachers offering less rigorous instruction to students such as ELLs. This can lead to subgroups, such as ELLs, performing lower on state assessments, appearing to verify the claim of their limited ability. Hillard (2003) believes that this achievement gap must be recast as an opportunity for teachers to construct lessons that meet the rigor that standards demand, while creating differentiated instruction to meet the unique needs of ELLs.

While language acquisition often poses a significant challenge for the ELL and educators, tacit and explicit issues within language learning pose obstacles for the ELL if not diagnosed and addressed.

English Language Learners with Special Needs

According to data released in 2009, in Pennsylvania, 6,270 ELLs were enrolled in special education services, or 1 of 8 ELLs had an IEP and received Special Education services (Pena & Rodriguez-Diaz, 2012). Schools are beginning to see a larger number of ELLs in special education. Over the past ten years, while the number of ELLs has increased by 61 %, the number of ELLs in special education has doubled (Huang, Clarke, Milczarski, & Raby, 2012). This data may reflect the varying processes used to assess for language acquisition and identification of learning disabilities in ELLs within and across states (McCardle, McCarthy, & Leos, 2005). In addition, there are a myriad of disabilities that are embedded within language acquisition, which pose problems when trying to identify the disability (Bedore & Pena, 2008; Ortiz, 1997; Wagner, Francis, & Morris, 2005). Of equal concern, nationwide, are the considerable achievement gaps reflected in the scores on the *2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress*. In the fourth grade, 12% of students with limited English scored “at or above proficient” in mathematics, compared to 42% of their English-speaking counterparts.

Experiencing a more severe decline, was eighth grade math, where 5% of ELLs were “proficient or above” on the 2009 NAEP, compared with 35% of non-ELL students. On the NAEP reading test, the percentages dropped; only 3% of ELLs met a “proficient” standard in eighth grade reading in 2009, compared with 34% of non-ELLs (Slavin, Madden, Calderón, Chamberlain, & Hennessy, 2011). This data reveals significant achievement gaps that must be addressed in order to prepare ELLs for success in the future. Furthermore, this research has implications for K-12 ELLs entering the country as immigrants and transitioning beyond high school. K-12 ELLs transition into sectors of society, higher education, and the global marketplace where deficits in their inability to communicate proficiently can thwart upward mobility and global success.

To more fully understand why these gaps may be occurring, a closer examination of ELLs and the issue of learning disabilities is warranted.

Learning Disabilities and English Language Learners

Coupled with the varying debates over theory and language acquisition practices, is the complexity of diagnosing learning disabilities of ELLs. For native English speakers, the range of disabilities affecting learning include: autism, deaf-blindness, deafness, blindness, emotional disturbance, hearing impairment, intellectual challenges, health impairment, specific learning disabilities, such as a reading disability, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury, and visual impairment. Just as these disabilities impact the learning of native English speakers, they also impact the learning of ELLs, making English language learning even more complex. It is important to recognize that English language deficiency alone is not a reason for placement in special education. ELLs are only eligible for special education services when it has been determined that a disability exists. In fact, past research has shown that by attempting to classify ELLs as learning disabled, results in academic deterioration (Cummins, 1984; Ortiz et al., 1985).

However, determining a disability exists, and what the disability is, presents a challenge for a number of reasons. Diagnosing learning disabilities in ELLs, considering the complexity of language acquisition, is no simple task.

Considering the aforementioned disabilities that can exist with native English students, Wagner, Francis, and Morris (2005) in their study assessing reading disabilities in ELL's, revealed that with most native English speakers, learning disabilities are often not identified until second or third grade. One reason for this delay is that identification for special education services requires the child have a significant discrepancy between levels of achievement based on IQ and observed levels of achievement. Second and third grade are where these discrepancy levels begin to surface. This presents a problem not only for native English speakers, but for ELLs, alike. The problem with a reading disability being diagnosed later, rather than earlier, is two-fold. First, the later disabilities are diagnosed in a child, the more challenging they are to overcome. Furthermore, when considering reading fluency in native English speakers, children are generally learning to read in grades K-3, while they are reading to learn and augmenting vocabulary in grades 4-12. This compounds the issue for ELLs, making it more complex, putting the ELLs at risk for further failure if not properly identified early. This becomes of increasing concern for ELLs that enter later rather than earlier into the PreK-12 systems.

Proper identification and assessment of learning disabilities in L1 and L2 are crucial for ELLs, if growth and learning is going to occur. This leads to a second problem that occurs with assessment of learning disabilities in ELLs; it is unclear how certain disabilities will manifest themselves in certain languages. McCardle, McCarthy and Leos (2005) cite significant past research documenting the weak validity of LD classification based on the aforementioned IQ-achievement discrepancy. The authors suggest a classification system needs to be developed for

the internal and external subtypes of LD's in ELLs. They concur that current research in the field must be studied, and valid tools found. This research also underscores the importance of accurate assessment and diagnosis for ELLs at the K-12 level, in order that they will transition more smoothly into institutions of higher education. Consequently, there has also been a gap in the research regarding the percentage of ELLs diagnosed with learning disabilities that enter institutions of higher education (Supple & Abgenyega , 2011).

The Common Core Standards with reference to students with learning disabilities and ELLs assert

It is not clear whether these learning theories apply equally well to diverse populations of students, including...underrepresented minorities, English language learners, and students with disabilities. These kind of variation among students need to be better understood through empirical study and incorporated into cognitive models of learning that serve as a basis for assessment and design (Committee for Conceptual Framework, 2012, p. 317-318).

Further, the developers of CCSS, pose the question:

How can assessments be developed that are fair, both for demographic groups and for students with disabilities? Have examples of these kinds of assessments, for the practices, concepts and core ideas in the framework been developed and implemented? (p. 339).

While these statements provide evidence of awareness of important issues surrounding learning disabilities and ELLs, unfortunately, little insight is given about how these issues will be addressed.

As evidenced, language acquisition is a complex process, beset with its own set of issues. Beyond the complexity of language acquisition and diagnosing disabilities within ELLs, ELLs are faced with the rigorous demands that ELA Common Core literacy presents.

Challenges Beyond Language Acquisition

ELA Common Core Literacy

The implementation of the CCSS adopted by the states, pose significant challenges to English language learners. While general guidelines and supplementary documents have been created, they are weak at best, and “beyond the scope or the Standards” (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2010b, p. 6). Teachers and other managing personnel for ELL academic content are responsible for making the rigorous academic standards accessible to ELLs, yet teachers report lack of preparation in this area (Ardilla-Rey, 2008). In order to understand the challenge that Common Core standards present, it is necessary to understand the framework of ELA Common Core Literacy, in collaboration with WIDA consortium alignment efforts and TESOL, that are collaborating to strengthen pedagogy in this area.

ELA CC literacy presents demanding state standards and local district accountability for all stakeholders. This accountability comes in the forms of a framework that include ambitious performance targets and rigorous assessments. The framework for Common Core literacy standards establish guidelines beginning in grade 6 for English language arts (ELA) as well as for literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects. The literacy standards are meant to supplement the content standard in these areas, not replace them. States determine how to incorporate these standards into their existing standards for the aforementioned subjects or adopt them as content area literacy standards. To assess these standards, Pennsylvania uses the

PSSA at the elementary and middle school levels. Beginning in grade nine, students are assessed by the state, using Keystone exams in Algebra I, Literature and Biology.

These Core standards require all students learn to read complex texts, representing information-based texts and literary texts, across all genres. In addition, all students must know how to speak, write, listen, and use language effectively and concisely across content areas. This requires having a command of tiered vocabulary. Beck and McKeown (1985) created a three-tiered system for selecting target words summarized in Figure 6.

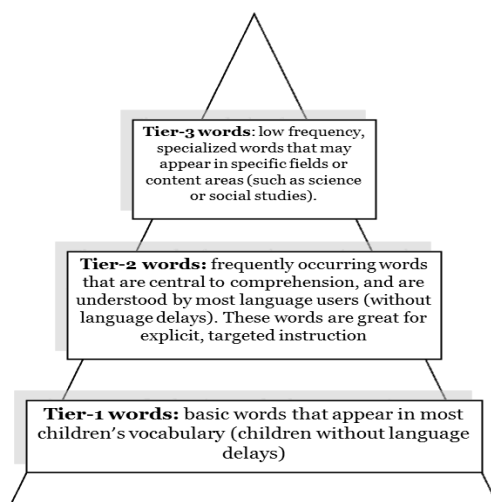


Figure 6. Beck and McKeown's (1985) Tiered System for Vocabulary Instruction. *Source:* Beck, I.L., & McKeown, M. G. (1985). Teaching vocabulary: Making the instruction fit the goal. *Educational Perspectives*, 23(1), 11-15.

The ELA standards further require students who can think critically, utilizing higher level thinking skills, read complex texts closely for text dependent analysis, and produce writing in response to literature, providing evidence cited from literature. Further, the students must not only be able to make connections within and between texts, but beyond. The writing requires students to analyze, synthesize, cite evidence, problem-solve, and use logical reasoning skills reminiscent of literate learners prepared for the demands of the twenty-first century.

ELA Common Core Literacy and English Language Learners

While Common Core ELA literacy presents a challenge for domestic students, it presents an even bigger challenge for the ELL. In addition, it presents a challenge for educators and administrators charged with the responsibility their academic success.

According to O’Loughlin and Carnuccio (2010), the fastest growing population in U.S. schools is the English language learner, with more than 5 million, and one in every five school age children comes from a home where a language other than English is spoken. By 2030, almost half the population in the U.S. will speak a language other than English, which has implications for school socioeconomic factors and assessments. This significantly impacts how instruction for ELLs must be delivered. Yet, when the CCSS initiative was introduced, it failed to address provisions for this population, even though the goal of CCSS is to provide standards framework for all students.

The Common Core challenge for ELLs occurs with the challenge of learning academic content coupled with the oral and written language skills needed for close readings of complex texts, all while becoming proficient in English. Coleman and Goldenberg (2012) point out that while literacy is an “aspect of language, listening and speaking are distinct from reading and writing. Literacy proficiency requires concepts and skills that oral language proficiency does not” (p. 48).

Common Core Assessments and Equity

Common Core Standards were designed to “foster students’ opportunities to read closely and critically... and calls for more thoughtful work with informational texts and for teachers, especially in grades K-5 to balance the reading of literature with the reading of informational

texts.” (Morgan & Rasinski, 2012, p. 585). Schneider (2011) argues one consequence of CCSS “may be the standardization of background knowledge if the student is to score well on the tests. Those who do not have the ‘standard’ schema may well be at a disadvantage” (p. 93). She contends that texts often deliver information relevant to a culture and teachers must not abandon content relevant to their classroom students (p. 99). While she argues that consequences of these standards have yet to be determined, she states that CCSS “offer an opportunity to promote bibliodiversity through the use of critical thinking skills, the use of primary sources as a way of knowing, student centered inquiry, and multiple ways of learning” (p. 101). Yet, how we embrace classroom diversity, while teaching from the same text (s), remains the challenge for classroom teachers relative to CCSS (p. 101-102).

WIDA Consortium Alignment Efforts in Collaboration with TESOL

Created in response to NCLB requirements for ELLs pertaining to standards and assessments, in an effort to help teachers in delivering equitable pedagogy for ELLs, the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) consortium was developed. This initiative, funded originally through a USDE Enhanced Assessment Grant, was given to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction in 2003. It consisted initially of three states: Wisconsin, Delaware, and Arkansas and converted to the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment in 2005. It moved to the Wisconsin Center for Education Research at the University of Wisconsin- Madison in 2006. As of 2012-13, WIDA states represent over 1,000,000 English language learners (see <https://www.wida.us/>).

There are six groups currently developing assessments for Common Core shown in Appendix D. These six different groups include: (1) Assessment Services Supporting English-Language Learners (ELLs) Through Technology (see <http://www.assets.wcemw.org/>); (2)

National Center and State Collaborative (see <http://www.ncscpartners.org/>); (3) Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (see <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/>); (4) Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment Consortium (see <http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/>); (5) Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (see <https://www.parconline.org/>); and (6) TESOL English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century Consortium (see http://www.k12center.org/publications/english_language_proficiency.html/)

Culturally Responsive Teacher Practices and Pedagogy

ELLs have unique cultural and linguistic needs, that require culturally responsive practices. Focusing research on effective approaches to standardized test preparation for ELLs, Cohan and Honigfeld (2011) argue that while high-stake standardized assessments present enormous challenges for the ELL and the teacher, based on a thorough review of literature and their own research of test preparation for ELLs, utilizing culturally and linguistically responsive strategies may lessen the stress associated with instruction that teaches to the test and increase learning outcomes.

Teachers are challenged to present culturally relevant and equitable pedagogy, and administrators are challenged to build frameworks that respond to the ELLs cultural needs. Culturally responsive teaching presents a way to create this environment by providing pedagogy that teaches towards equity (Banks, 2006). In addition, it provides culturally sensitive, relevant practices that are aligned with the culture and practices familiar and similar to that of the student (Gay, 2004).

Teacher Practices and Pedagogy

Culturally responsive teaching falls under the larger umbrella of multicultural education, yet they are not the same. Multicultural education is a milieu of interwoven components, theories and characteristics that work together to promote equitable academic outcomes furthering socially just practices in education. It has been uniquely defined by several prominent scholars; Banks' (1979) definition has evolved from one where "educators should carefully define concepts such as multiethnic and multicultural education and delineate the boundaries implied by these concepts" (p. 237) to one that now includes five specific dimensions: content integration, knowledge construction process, prejudice reduction, equity pedagogy, and empowering school culture and social structure (Banks, 2004). Nieto, Bode, Kang, and Raible (2008) define characteristics of multicultural education in a sociopolitical context where communities and the process of education are "elastic rather than fixed and static in form" (p. 7). They identify seven characteristics of multicultural education that are "antiracist, basic, important for all students, pervasive, education for social justice, a process and critical pedagogy" (p. 44). While multicultural education is a comprehensive approach that provides a framework for culturally responsive teaching, the authors further argue "political and transformative theories of multicultural education have often been neglected when translated into practice. As a result, even though multicultural education has made an important contribution to schools and communities, few long-term institutional changes have taken root" (p. 178). This research underscores the need for educators to examine critically the effectiveness of institutional changes and multicultural practices relative to ELL learning and literacy.

Within this broad spectrum of multicultural education, rests the component of culturally responsive teaching. Culturally responsive teaching, while it benefits all students, is an especially

applicable for students from culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) backgrounds, where it requires educators and administrators to understand learning from a cultural perspective. Gay (2000) defines culturally responsive teaching as affirming in its capacity to use the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and performance styles of diverse students to make learning more appropriate and effective for them; it teaches to and through the strengths of these students. Ladson-Billings (1992) explains that culturally responsive teachers develop intellectual, social, emotional, and political learning by "using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (p. 382). Further, Gay (2000) states that culturally responsive teaching is comprehensive in that it teaches the entire child, it is multidimensional in its goal to teach across content areas, where collaboration and student involvement is paramount. In addition, it is transformative, liberating and empowering for both the learner and teacher, and it desegregates curricular practices.

Multicultural education and culturally responsive teaching informs practice and pedagogy for teaching ELLs and helps teachers and administrators to understand the diverse experiences and perspectives of ELLs. In addition, culturally responsive practices, interwoven into curriculum, instructional materials, and assessments, present more equitable, fair learning environments for all students.

Challenges: Teacher Demographics

The 2011 National Center for Education's Profile of Teachers provides evidence that teaching remains an overwhelmingly female occupation. Eight-four percent of public school teachers are female as compared to 82% in 2005, 74% in 1996, 71% in 1990 and 69 percent in 1986. Rothstein-Fisch and Trumbull (2008) state that "School culture is relatively consistent across the United States and reflects the individualistic values of the dominant, European

American culture” (p.xiii). In addition, the profession employs predominantly White teachers, with a shift toward more people of color entering the ranks of teaching where Hispanics are the fastest growing non-White group entering the profession. One implication for this profession of predominantly white, female, monolingual educators is the perspectives from which they teach. The lives of these professionals may differ greatly from the diverse populations they teach, making it a challenge to understand the lives of the ELLs with whom they engage. In order to understand the linguistically and culturally diverse student, Nieto (1996) proposes that teachers must possess sociocultural consciousness and have an understanding about diversity. Teachers who do not have sociocultural consciousness, will rely on establishing meaning about their students from a biased, limited perspective, leading to misunderstandings. As such, teachers are forced to look beyond the ELL, and understand the inequities that exist within each ELLs culture and society, and how this impacts learning for ELLs.

Teacher demographics impact teacher sociocultural consciousness and have serious implications for ELLs, which include limited social capital, underachievement, increased drop-out rates, and poverty. Considering the powerful influence educators have on learning and learners, it is important that educators are prepared by programs that teach towards sociocultural consciousness and understandings of diversity, to meet the needs of ELLs.

Challenges: Teacher Preparation and Pedagogy

In 2002, NCLB emphasized that high-quality teachers were essential for student success. However, Ardila-Rey (2008) points out that NCLB's “definition of what it means to be a highly qualified teacher... does not provide any provisions on ...cultural requirements... Only a handful of states have developed policies or standards for teacher preparation and credentialing that address issues to diverse populations” (p. 341). Other research has underscored the inadequate

preparation of general education teachers for teaching ELLs (Olsen & Jimenez-Silva, 2008). A more recent study (Roy-Campell, 2012) that surveyed teacher educators (professors, assistant professors, adjunct faculty and graduate students) about their preparation for preparing general education English Language Arts teachers to work with ELLs, revealed that only 12% of the respondents completed degrees in TESOL or Bilingual Education certification programs and 18% had coursework related to ELLs. Sixteen percent (16%) revealed they had no preparation. Research conducted by Quaye and Harper (2007), that examined faculty accountability for culturally inclusive pedagogy, provides evidence that many college professors think that all students should “assimilate to white cultural norms and practices” (p. 36).

To better meet the needs of ELLs in Pennsylvania, policy published by the State Board of Education, included a requirement that all instructional and educational specialist and preparation programs have a minimum of 9 credits or 270 hours regarding accommodations and adaptations for students with disabilities in an inclusive setting. A minimum of at least 3 credits or 90 hours regarding the instructional needs of English language learners, beginning January 1, 2011(file:///C:/Users/Brian/Downloads/Framework%20for%20K2%20Program%20Guidelines_3-26-12.pdf, p. 14).

While the data reflects a trend towards attempting to prepare teachers for teaching ELLs, preparation programs for teachers vary from state-to-state, and within school systems (Nevárez-La Torre, Sanford-DeShields, Soundy, Leonard, & Woyshner, 2008). Furthermore, this research reveals policy, practices, and thinking that lack knowledge about culturally responsive pedagogy. While these deficits may be either unintentional or intentional, this has significant implications for teacher preparation programs and teacher professional development initiatives that are responsible for preparing educators to implement culturally responsive pedagogy to include

“experiences, knowledge, skills, and attitudes to successfully promote the educational success of all children” (p. 270), and include proficiencies in which educators “learn, reflect, introspect and incorporate ...new ideas into pre-service and in-service teachers' actions in their classrooms” (p. 277). Gay (2006) also emphasizes the need for high-quality teacher preparation and states:

U.S. society is becoming increasingly diverse, and that diversity is reflected in its classrooms. Creating a respectful, productive classroom environment is always a challenge; this challenge is even greater when students and teachers come from different cultural backgrounds, or when students differ in terms of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, cultural and linguistic background, sexual orientation, ableness, and academic aptitude. Unless teachers have the knowledge, skills, and disposition to effectively guide diverse groups of children, they are likely to face classes characterized by disrespect and alienation, name-calling and bullying, disorder and chaos. (p. 365–366)

Reeves' (2006) research found teacher preparation programs and teacher professional development initiatives must reflect culturally responsive practices that inform instruction and thinking. In addition to practice that is culturally responsive, teachers must engage in discourse that is informed by this preparation.

Challenges: Teacher Discursive Practices and Teacher Dialogue

Teacher discursive practices in second language learning has gained much attention over the past several decades due to the increasing diversity in the world and nation. Discursive Practice (DP), which also has been referred to as teacher discourse and the way they use language, have been defined in different ways and includes different types of discourse. One such definition defines discourse as “the uses of language in an educational context (e.g., the typical pattern of teacher question, student answer, teacher feedback). Language includes

spoken, signed, and written forms of communication”

(<http://knowledge.sagepub.com/view/foundations/n124.xml>). Gee (1990) defines discourse in-depth and defines Discourse, using the big “D”, to include a larger context, stating:

Discourse is a socially accepted association among ways of using language, of thinking, feeling, believing, valuing, and of acting that can be used to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group or 'social network', or to signal (that one is playing) a socially meaningful 'role'. (p. 143)

Discourse then, can be viewed in terms of how it is used in discursive practice in the classroom and in terms of discourse between educators. Teachers engage in discursive practices that can influence ELL outcomes, just as their discourse and the dialogue they engage in as a practitioner can reflect their thinking, as well as influence the thinking of others. Li (2010), in her review of Young’s (2009) book on DP states:

there has long been a division between the micro and macro views among researchers, with the micro view privileging the agency of learners at the level of local interaction (e.g. studies in the ethnomethodology and conversation analysis tradition), while the macro view attaches great importance to the constraints that social structure has on the learning process (e.g. studies informed by critical theory). (p. 113)

Li suggests that Young:

proposes Discursive Practice (DP) as a theoretical framework to transcend just such a division. Practice here is defined as ‘the construction and reflection of social realities through actions that invoke identity, ideology, belief, and power’ and DP is a practice that involves language, among other semiotic resources. These definitions suggest that L2 learning is a social action, discursively constructed as L2 learners participate in social

interactions that involve the negotiation of meaning, identity, and power relations. Such a view of L2 learning takes into consideration both interaction at the micro level and social influence at the macro level. (p. 113)

Teacher discursive practices impact ELL learning and must be examined for culturally responsive delivery that enhance learning, rather than limit it. Research conducted by Boyd (2012) suggests that teacher discursive practices need to be critically examined in ELL classrooms to transcend learning. In critically analyzing discourse in one ELL classroom, it was found in the study, that instruction that would be considered “good teaching”, did not achieve the outcomes presented by lesson plan goals; the ELLs did not have a thorough understanding of the difficult material presented. Yet, if the lessons within the unit were examined for the students’ ability to “grapple” with the information presented, then the teacher accomplished this goal. This study necessitates the need for critically analyzing discursive practices in ELL classrooms, to expose those practices that may appear to be “best practice” but in reality do little to augment instruction and learning.

Teacher discursive practices go beyond discourse between learners and teachers, and extend to include teacher discourse between and among educators. The teachers participate in a community that Gee (1990) defines as discourse community. This discourse community is a combination of five factors: Saying, doing, being, valuing, and believing. Discourse community within literacy consists of multiple theories that either provide or limit opportunities for students. Discourse within a community can be used to ostracize or move forward the community. It is important that teachers critically analyze what they say and how they deliver discourse for ELLs. Discourse must lead to meaningful exchanges and guide students towards educationally meaningful discussions (Mercer & Littleton, 2007).

Increasing the quality of discourse requires thorough well-defined concepts, where all participants have knowledge and a clear understanding of the process and their role in the process. Reflecting meaningfully about teacher discourse, can reveals deficit thinking among and between educators, and allow for correction, reducing further marginalization of groups such as ELLs.

In addition to examining the discursive practices of educators, leadership-initiated, culturally responsive frameworks must be in place, to create equitable learning environments.

Challenges: Leadership and School Culture

Leadership in education plays a central role in inspiring and guiding school culture. Leadership includes, but is not limited to, such stakeholders as faculty and administration. While faculty leadership has been previously discussed relative to teacher culturally responsive practices, the role of principals creating culturally responsive frameworks, warrants discussion.

Taliaferro, (2011) argues for culturally responsive leadership theories as a way to bridge the inequalities created by the diverse educational settings in public schools. He further argues that traditional mindsets of leadership fail to address the central aspect of the type of leader needed to restructure schools for today's 21st century environments. However, culturally responsive leadership addresses the many competencies that the 21st century leader will need to demonstrate to be effective and create the type of environment that promotes success for all students.

Coupled with knowledge about culturally responsive practices, Taliaferro (2011) argues school leaders must understand the influences of social capital, and the synergy between the two. He concludes by stating “culturally responsive leaders understand that to close the achievement gap, they must first close the opportunity gap for all students” (p. 6).

Bakken and Smith (2011) extend the argument for culturally responsive leadership and discuss a framework for setting up systems for responding to the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students with learning disabilities. They assert that by principals “engaging in his/her own efforts of continuous improvement, by empowering CLD parents, and by behaving in a manner and using language which conveys value and openness for differences, the culturally proficient/responsive school principal actualizes the vision” (p. 43). They argue for the need of development of curricular resources, continued professional development, and the development of learning communities that are culturally responsive.

In *A More Perfect Union: Building an Education System that Embraces All Children*, the National Association of State Boards of Education (2002) discusses culturally competent schools and offers school leaders suggestions for creating culturally responsive schools. They include: (a) adopting a curriculum that fosters cultural competency, (b) using high academic standards and believing they are attainable as the basis of instruction for all students, (c) demonstrating respect for students’ identities, (d) welcoming a diverse community to participate in schools, (e) acknowledging students’ diverse learning styles, (f) ensuring qualified personnel for all students, and (g) providing support for schools and students who need it.

Principals of culturally competent schools must encourage understanding and respect for diversity and stress high educational standards and levels of achievement for all students. They must view diversity not as detriment, but as an asset from which to build.

Culturally responsive teaching and frameworks serve as a catalyst for desegregating curriculum and creating equitable environments for learning to occur. Embracing the need for increasing the quality of discourse and practice pertaining to marginalized groups such as ELLs, is paramount. Equally important, schools must deconstruct archaic past practices that limit the

academic and social progress of ELLs. Effective leadership, informed by culturally responsive practice, is needed to move schools towards equity and social justice. Furthermore, there is a need for authentic ELL programs that critically challenge the status quo, dismantle inequities, and question current curricular practices.

Putting culturally responsive practices into place takes collaboration and often means overcoming barriers that impede progress.

Coles-Ritchie (2009), examined how change was incited in secondary English learning classrooms within one high school, despite the political hostility and the community opposition to programs for ELLs. The study critically examined issues relating to teacher discursive realignment, where teacher discursive practices were analyzed both before and after participating in university courses. Furthermore, discourse in and among participants were examined to determine if there was counter discourse. Teacher practices relating to the teaching of ELLs was examined, in addition how teachers adapted curriculum for ELLs. Last, the structure of the ESL program and discourse that promoted or limited teachers' abilities to make change in curriculum was analyzed. Critical theory grounded the study, to reveal how inequalities, power, and oppression manifested in institutional structures, impeding change. Within a three-year period, an almost non-existent ELL program developed into a bilingual program with sheltered instruction to guide ELL instruction.

Inciting culturally responsive change means not only critically challenging the status quo, dismantling inequities, and exposing current curricular practices that are ineffective, it also requires effective culturally responsive programs are delivered to educate teachers. One way these programs are delivered are through teacher preparation programs.

Sobel, Gutierrez, Zion and Blanchett (2011) examined one teacher education program at one Colorado university that needed reform. An expert panel found deficits in the program included a near absence of community-based learning experiences for teacher candidates, significantly limited understanding of social justice and diversity, and a need for heightened efforts at recruitment of diverse teachers. Using these recommendations, supported by funding from ASEED (Achieving Special Education Equity through Diversity project), the ASEED leadership team proposed a comprehensive teacher education redesign initiative, that first, focused on implementing professional development of faculty on culturally responsive teaching. Ongoing redesign activities (faculty meetings, retreats, advisory council, work group meetings), specialized workshops (conversation cafes, premier teacher preparation, and curriculum planning), and feedback loops (focus groups, external review of curriculum, external review of partner schools sites) were all part of the professional development plan. The university recognized the need to articulate a unified vision of teaching and learning that incorporated culturally responsive practices for the faculty, in order to deliver and teach culturally responsive instruction to teacher education candidates. The redesign of the program revealed the need for continual reflection, rethinking, and revision of the program. In addition, reflection on the program revealed a process that was not linear, often was met with resistance, fear, and difficulty moving through complex understandings of diversity.

Pérez, Holmes, Miller & Fanning (2012) examined the need for culturally responsive practices in response to the increase in culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) populations, and studied biography-driven instruction (BDI) as a means to meet CLD needs. The goal of BDI is to take into account each individual student's background knowledge, create an instructional environment tailored to the student's background that fosters growth from the known to the

unknown, and provide a “space” for each student to individually demonstrate his or her learning at the end of the lesson (Herrera, 2010). Santamaria (2009) suggests with emphasis on all four elements of the CLD student biography (sociocultural, linguistic, cognitive, academic), biography-driven instruction helps to address the limited attention currently devoted to second language learning issues in the literature and research of culturally responsive pedagogy. Findings of the study reveal that implementing BDI strategies can foster culturally responsive practices for K-12 teachers, and is especially helpful in assisting secondary teachers, who often are challenged, as data revealed in this study, to meet the needs of CLD students.

Creating culturally responsive classrooms requires challenging current practices and thinking to expose deficits, realign curricular practices, and create unique experiences for all stakeholders. In doing so, schools move towards creating equitable environments for all learners.

Conclusion

Multicultural education that is culturally responsive takes place inside social and political environments. As such, we need to consider the social, political and economic environments and the consequences of these environments. Being cognizant of barriers and assets in these environments can help educators and administrators bolster their teaching and be more effective practitioners of culturally responsive teaching. While research continues to grow in the areas of ELLs and culturally responsive practices, there is a need for research to continue in the area of ELLs with special needs. Overall, new scholarship on culturally responsive practices and marginalized groups relative to ELLs must be conducted to challenge the dominant thinking established by society and taught in classrooms. Educators need to make conscious efforts to incorporate culturally responsive and inclusive practices both in teaching lessons and

assessments designed for ELLs relative to Common Core. Furthermore, educators need to build cultural communities within, between, and beyond the system in which they teach. These cultural literacy communities must represent equity from all stake holders. Infused culturally responsive systems, that exhibit just and equitable practices, help to ensure that the school is culturally respectful and promotes practices that are just and fair for all. It is important that we as educators become a life-long learners in advancing our own culturally responsive practices and making this a way of life and thinking within our schools. In not challenging the status quo, we fail to offer equitable and fair learning environments to students we profess to move forward.

Chapter Summary

This review of the literature presented a historical overview of policy and law that has impacted ELL and ESL literacy. Next, challenges within ELL language acquisition and issues beyond it were presented. These included complex issues embedded in acquiring a language, as well as issues that compound language acquisition, such as Common Core literacy and issues of equity. Next, the needs and challenges within ELA ELL teacher pedagogy, preparation and culturally responsive practice were presented. Last, organizational structure and leadership was discussed relative to creating culturally responsive cultures of learning.

Given that each ELL student has an individual set of academic, social, and linguistic needs, which require teachers to use literacy intervention techniques and tools that foster growth, to ensure not only academic success for the demands of Common Core for positioning ELLs for success beyond the classroom, it is important to examine teacher perceptions of ELL literacy and teacher preparedness relative to ELL Common Core literacy, in order to meet the challenging demands of CCSS and to understand its impact on ELL literacy. In order to do this, a study utilizing the mixed-method design is conducted.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This research study is designed to critically analyze Common Core ELL ELA literacy. Specifically, the researcher investigated Common Core ELL ELA teacher literacy practices, attitudes and understandings, and preparedness, relative to ELL ELA literacy, through document research, a *2014 Teacher Instructional Practices, Attitudes, and Preparedness Survey-Questionnaire Relative to PA Common Core ELA and ELL Literacy* (Appendix D) and interviews conducted of six ESL specialists using the *ESL Specialist Interview Protocol* (Appendix E). To examine teachers' attitudes, understandings, preparedness, and literacy practices relative to Common Core ELA ELL literacy, the primary question for inquiry for this research is "What are teachers' perceptions, understandings, preparedness, and literacy practices relative to ELL ELA Common Core?" Specifically, six research the following research questions guided this mixed-methods study:

1. What teaching strategies, protocols, practices, and literacy terms are PreK-12 PA public school teachers familiar with or currently using relative to PA Common Core (PA Core) literacy for ELLs?
2. What are the attitudes and understandings of PreK-12 PA public school teachers relative to PA Common Core (PA Core) literacy for ELLs?
3. What are PA PreK-12 public school teachers' beliefs about the importance of understanding literacy relative to ELL students and PA Common Core?
4. How well prepared do PreK-12 PA public school teachers feel, based on their experience, preparation, and training in education, to teach ELLs and implement interventions?

5. What are the ESL Specialists' understandings and perceptions about PA Common Core (PA Core) ELA ELL literacy and its impact relative to teacher preparation and pedagogy?

Research Design

The researcher engaged in the following steps to determine the approach of mixed-methods for this study (Figure 7).

<u>Step 1:</u>	<u>Step 2:</u>	<u>Step 3:</u>	<u>Step 4:</u>	<u>Step 5:</u>	<u>Step 6:</u>	<u>Step 7:</u>
Researcher determined method to be used, based on the goals of the study.	Researcher determined questions justify a mixed-methods approach	Researcher identified survey-questionnaire statements and open-ended responses, and semi-structured interview questions that would be the best tools for answering researcher's questions.	Researcher refined questions for the study, based on the purpose and goals and study.	Researcher created an instrument and interview protocol to best answer researcher's questions.	Researcher collected data using survey-questionnaire and conducting semi-structured interviews.	Researcher analyzed data, presented findings, and wrote it up.

Figure 7. Steps researcher engaged in to determine approach for mixed-methods study.

This chapter presents the considerations of the philosophy underpinning this mixed-methods design, justification for the mixed-methods approach dictated by the research questions, the strategies used to employ this type of research design including the participants, data collection and the role of the researcher. Finally, the data analysis includes a discussion of ethical considerations, reliability, validity, generalizability, methods of triangulation and limitations of this study.

Philosophy and Justification for Mixed-Methods Approach

This critical analysis of ELL ELA Common Core literacy used a research design that adopted a post-positivist philosophy. Post-positivism purports that there is an objective world,

but knowledge of it is filtered through the subjective experiences of those who experience it (Philips & Nicholas, 2000). With post-positivism underpinning the methodology, this study used a mixed-methods design (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998), which is a procedure for collecting, analyzing and “mixing” both quantitative and qualitative data during research to understand a research problem more completely (Creswell, 2012). This mixed-methods design allowed for adequately capturing both quantitative data and rich qualitative description, that would not otherwise be captured by using one approach. When used in combination, quantitative and qualitative methods synergistically complement each other and allow for more in-depth analysis (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). In particular, a main advantage of qualitative studies is the opportunity to explore issues in greater detail and gather more rich descriptive data while a major advantage of quantitative research is working with larger samples of the population (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

In quantitative research, the researcher collects quantitative (numerical) data that are analyzed using mathematically based methods such as statistics (Aliaga & Gunderson, 2002). In addition, non-quantitative data, such as perceptions and attitudes reflected in this study, can be transformed into quantitative form by using measurement instruments such as Likert scale items as is used in the survey-questionnaire. Conversely, Creswell (1998, 2012) defines qualitative research as the process of understanding a “social or human phenomenon” where researchers aim gather comprehensive data through “an inquiry process of understanding” where the researcher develops a “complex, holistic picture, analyzes words and reports detailed views of informants...” (Creswell, 1998, p. 15). Mixed methods designs, such as the one this study employed, combined methods from research design and data collection to analytic processes and interpretation (McConney, Rudd, & Ayres, 2002; Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2004; 2005).

Researchers using mixed-methods choose approaches and elements of analysis which are most applicable for finding an answer to their research questions (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998).

While designing a mixed-methods study, three issues need consideration: timing, weighing, and mixing strategies (Creswell, 2012). Timing refers to the order of data collection, either sequentially or concurrently, weighting refers to the weight given in collection of data, either quantitative or qualitative, and mixing refers to if the qualitative and quantitative data are actually combined. It is possible to combine data at several stages, such as during the collection, while doing the analysis, or at the end during the interpretation stage. The primary goal is to collect one form of data and have the other form of data provide supportive information.

This study used the *Concurrent Transformative Design* (Creswell, 2002). *Concurrent Transformative Design's* main characteristics are the use of specific theoretical perspective, concurrent collection of both data, and a perspective that can be based on ideologies such as critical theory, advocacy, participatory research, conceptual or theoretical framework (Creswell, 2002). In this study, quantitative data was collected using a paper and pencil survey, and qualitative ESL Specialist interviews were concurrently conducted. The qualitative data and its analysis may refine and explain the quantitative statistical results by exploring participants' views on both the open-ended responses from the ELL survey questionnaire, and the ESL participant interview responses in more depth. In this design, the quantitative method represents the major aspect of data collection and analysis in the study, with the qualitative interviews providing elaboration and support either complimentary or contradictory, or producing additional findings for further research (Hammersly, 2005). As Hammersly (2005) further points out, these different forms of triangulation are "investigative strategies that offer evidence to inform judgments, not techniques that provide guaranteed truth or completeness" (p. 12).

The qualitative and quantitative components were concurrently conducted from the beginning of the study, and the survey completion had no impact on the selection of the ESL Specialist participants for the study. The results of the mixed methods were analyzed in the discussion of the outcomes of the entire study.

Research Strategy

To examine and investigate the research questions, the researcher distributed and gathered data utilizing the *2014 Teacher Instructional Practices, Attitudes, and Preparedness Survey-Questionnaire Relative to PA Common Core ELA and ELL Literacy* (Appendix D). In addition, the researcher collected data from six ESL Specialists using the *ELL Specialist Interview Protocol* (Appendix E) to guide the qualitative interviews. The following section explains how the researcher gained research permission and secured the purposive sample of participants for each data collection method. This is followed by the survey-questionnaire construction, design, and an overview of the ESL Specialist interview protocol.

Research Permission

In order to conduct this study, permission was granted through written consent by the cooperating administrators at schools and universities where data collection was done. Upon consent by these cooperating entities, the necessary Internal Review Board (IRB) application form, with paperwork and consent forms, was submitted for approval. Upon IRB approval, the study commenced.

Study Participants: Survey Subjects and ESL Specialists

The researcher sought permission to conduct research from gatekeepers by calling and e-mailing them to ask permission to conduct the study in their respective locations. This was followed up with a permission letter (Appendix F) for signature. Once permission was granted,

the researcher began the data collection process. The researcher surveyed PA PreK-12 public school teachers and interviewed six PA ESL Specialists who teach in Pennsylvania public schools. The specific data collection procedure is further outlined below, beginning with the survey-questionnaire subjects and the interview participants.

Survey Subjects

Securing Subjects

Principals and university educators served to assist in the delivery of the survey. In addition, the researcher distributed the survey at conferences. Teachers were represented from ten Pennsylvania schools that participated in March, April, May, and June education conferences and courses sponsored by Pennsylvania universities and colleges, teaching in PreK-12 public schools in PA.

Criterion Selection

Because PA Common Core ELA ELL Literacy requires teachers across all disciplines be prepared to deliver pedagogy that meets the needs of all learners, a purposive sample of teachers across all disciplines and content areas, PreK-12, were asked to participate in the survey.

a. Age

The purposive sample for this research study was selected from among K-12 Pennsylvania public school education teachers. The adults' ages range between the ages of 22 and 55, and represent a typical range for practicing classroom teachers.

b. Sex of participants

Both male and female (not necessarily of equal numbers) were included in this mix-methods study, since both male and female teachers across all content areas are responsible for the literacy of ELLs.

c. Number of participants

The number of participants included 100 Pennsylvania public school teachers, representing 12 Central and Western PA schools, teaching in K-12.

d. The survey participants took the survey from March 2014-September 2014 either at:

- 1.) conference sites where the survey was agreed to be distributed
- 2.) university courses where teachers are enrolled
- 3.) the confines of team meetings, teacher preparatory periods, or at the convenience of the participant in their respective school district

ESL Specialists

Securing Participants

ESL Specialists were chosen based on the following criteria:

- 1.) Currently held a PA ESL Specialist Certificate
- 2.) Currently taught ESL in a PA Public School, PreK-12.

This purposive sample was chosen to purposefully select informants who will best answer the researcher's questions and who are "information rich" (Litchmann, 2006).

Methods for Obtaining Data: Survey-Questionnaire and Interviews

Teacher Survey- Questionnaire

The primary technique for collecting the quantitative data was a self-developed survey-questionnaire, *2014 Teacher Instructional Practices, Attitudes, and Preparedness Survey-Questionnaire Relative to PA Common Core ELA and ELL Literacy* (Appendix D). This self-developed 34-item survey-questionnaire, contained items of different formats: multiple-choice, asking one option or all that apply, self-assessment items measured on the 5-point or 4-point Likert-type scale, and open-ended questions. The survey-questionnaire was constructed based

on the overarching research questions that seek to investigate and examine teachers' perceptions, attitudes and instructional practices, and preparedness relative to CC ELA ELL literacy.

The 34-item survey-questionnaire contains 32 Likert-type items, organized into six sections and two (2) open-ended questions. An expert panel of three professors and a teaching assistant specializing in quantitative research designs, from the RMU IML Ph.D. program was used to secure the content validity of the survey instrument. It was reviewed by this panel of experts and approved in January 2014.

The survey was administered to a purposive sample of one-hundred one (101) PreK-12 Pennsylvania teachers teaching in public education. The participants completed the survey using the pencil and paper format and that data was entered into a duplicated Question Pro Survey to continue with more sophisticated analysis.

The survey-questionnaire opened with an informed consent form on the first page of the survey. Participants were asked to sign and date the survey consent form, thus expressing their compliance to participate in the study and complete the survey. The survey continued with Questions 1-7 that consist of demographic information. Demographic data included information such as gender, race, years in teaching, grade level taught, subjects taught, number of courses completed relative to supporting ELL learning, and the estimated hours of professional development relative to ELLs. The second section required participants check items off about instructional practices, strategies and literacy terms they were familiar with or currently using relative to ELL literacy. A third section of the survey-questionnaire pertaining to teacher attitudes, understandings and beliefs measured these attributes, on a 5-point Likert type scale from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree", and provided data regarding how teachers perceive their role as a teacher of ELL literacy. The fourth section measured participants'

preparedness relative to PA CC ELL literacy. Again, a 5-point Likert type scale from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree” was used to measure preparedness. The fifth section focused on participants’ teaching strategies, literacy interventions and assessment methods relative to ELL Common Core literacy measured using a 5-point Likert type scale from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree”. For each of these aforementioned sections, a choice of “Neutral” was included. The sixth section of the survey- questionnaire asked about how well participants’ current teacher preparation provides instruction that supports academic content standards for ELLs relative to PA CC and prepares participants to teach ELLs relative to cognitive and learning disabilities, to provide academic language for reading, writing, speaking, and listening, and to provide research-based literacy practices and assessments relative to teaching ELLs. A scale from 1 to 4, from “Not Well Prepared” to “Well Prepared”, was used. Two open-ended questions constituted the final two questions of the survey-questionnaire and ask “What areas do you feel you have the best understanding about literacy as it relates to English language learners?” and “What areas do you have the least understanding about literacy as it related to English language learners?” The survey-questionnaire was duplicated in *Question Pro*, a web-based survey-questionnaire and data analysis tool, which was used for data analysis purposes only.

The survey instrument was pilot-tested on three randomly selected participants representing the former purposive sample. The goal of the pilot study was to validate the instrument and to test its reliability. Based on the pilot test, items on the survey were revised and amended. A week before each survey was delivered, participants received notification from the researcher about the survey and about the importance of their input for the study. This helped to reduce a low response rate, which is typical for surveys of this type.

ESL Specialist Interviews

The researcher secured six ESL Specialist interviews by contacting superintendents and principals via e-mail and phone to seek permission to interview ESL Specialists and to gain access to these educators in their buildings. After administrator approval, the ESL Specialist interviewees were contacted via e-mail and phone, were given an overview of the purpose of the study, and asked to participate. At the time of solicitation for the interview, the interviewee was read the *ESL Specialist Interview Consent Form* (Appendix G), and verbally asked for agreement to interview, to thwart participant cancellation upon arrival. (This same consent form was presented to each participant upon arrival for signature.) Upon agreeing to the interview, a time and date was secured for the interview location. The ESL Specialist interviews were conducted based on questions from *ESL Specialist Interview Protocol* (Appendix E) at locations convenient to the participant. Upon arrival, the researcher prepared for the interviews to be recorded via tape-recorder, while the ESL Specialist participants signed the *ESL Specialist Interview Consent Form* (Appendix G). After signing, the ESL Specialist completed the *ESL Specialist Background Information Sheet* (Appendix H) and then the researcher commenced with the interview. For the interview, the researcher conducted the semi-structured interview using the interview protocol (Appendix E) containing twelve (12) questions that served as the framework for the semi-structured interviews.

The data collection methods are described in further detail in the following sections.

Data Collection

Quantitative Survey-Questionnaire

Data was collected from March 2014 to September 2014. Approval was gained from the necessary gatekeepers. The distribution of the survey-questionnaires and collection of data

occurred through the following means: conferences, university courses where participants were enrolled, school team meetings, and teacher classrooms during preparatory periods.

Qualitative Interviews

Qualitative 30-minute semi-structured interviews of ESL specialists were conducted at the convenience of the participant. The participants were informed that the interview would be recorded prior to meeting and told it would be transcribed verbatim. Participants were asked to sign the *ESL Specialist Interview Consent Form* (Appendix G) and were told prior to the interview that the interview would consist of questions pertaining to ELL literacy relative to Common Core. The following background information was collected from each of the ESL Specialists: PA certifications, highest degree earned, number of years teaching, number of years teaching ELLs, race, and the number of courses taken in ESL. After the ESL Specialist completed the demographic information, the researcher audio-taped the interview and transcribed each interview immediately following the interview.

Role of the Researcher

This mix-method study involved qualitative research where the researcher played a central role in the research process. For qualitative research, the role of the researcher in these qualitative interviews was that of a primary instrument for data collection, interpretation, and analysis. Because I was the primary instrument for collection, analysis and interpretation, it was important that I state not only my role in the study, but that I also self-evaluate and clearly state my own biases that may impact analysis and interpretation of the data, and influence the outcomes. This research is one where “data are collected, information is gathered, settings are viewed, and realities are constructed through his or her eyes” (Lichtman, 2006, p. 21). As a result, all descriptions, understandings, and interpretations were based on the data I collected. In

addition, in this mix-methods study, I as the researcher, assumed reality was subjective and as seen through the lens of the participants. It is assumed that research reflects the context and the world of the participants (Merriam, 1997).

Data Analysis

Quantitative Survey-Questionnaires

Descriptive statistics for the survey items was summarized in the text and reported in tabular form. Frequencies analysis was conducted to identify valid percent for responses to all the questions in the survey. All statistical analysis of the quantitative results was analyzed using *Question Pro*. Chapter 4 discusses the findings and results.

Validity and Reliability

In quantitative research, reliability and validity of the instrument are important for reducing errors that might arise from measurement problems in this research study. Reliability refers to the accuracy and precision of a measurement procedure. Validity refers to the degree in which this study accurately assesses the concepts the researcher is trying to measure. The educational administrators from RMU, who have knowledge of survey development, reviewed the survey questions, to help the researcher assess whether the survey items and questions seemed relevant for the subject the survey was purporting to measure, as well as determining if the design was appropriate.

Qualitative Interviews

The qualitative interviews were transcribed immediately following the interview. The interviews were coded for categories, concepts and themes by breaking the interviews into segments and coding them, then collapsing the codes into categories or concepts, and finally analyzing them for common and different themes, while comparing and contrasting themes

across the interviews. The researcher reported the findings and compared and contrasted this with the survey-questionnaire and findings.

Validity and Reliability

One aspect of this study helped provide internal validity to the findings. First, a review of the data collected was done by the researcher and the ESL Specialists. Participants reviewed and analyzed their transcript following the interview to help to ensure that what researcher transcribed was what was intended by the participant. In addition, the researcher reviewed the transcripts repeatedly, and took marginal notes to help strengthen the internal validity of the data and interpretations. The development of a rich, robust, descriptive narrative of the findings is generally viewed as the primary means of achieving external validity (Creswell, 2012).

Ethical Considerations

As a researcher, given the importance of ethics for the conduct of research, it was necessary that I engaged in practices that were ethical. As a result, ethical principles of integrity, objectivity, and confidentiality were practiced.

Honesty and integrity were practiced throughout all aspects of this study. This included integrity in reporting the data methods, procedures, and results. Accurate records of research activities, such as data collection, research design, and correspondence with others were accurately documented.

Researcher Bias

Extra effort were undertaken to be objective and avoid or minimize bias in the design, data analysis, data interpretation and other aspects of research where objectivity is expected or required.

Confidentiality

All subject and participant names were not revealed in accordance with the study. Anonymity of participants was protected by detaching the survey consent form and signing, and handing it to the surveyor, prior to completing the survey. Numerical coding of each returned survey occurred before inputting the survey into *Question Pro*. During analysis, participants were assigned the name of “Participant 1-6” for use in the description and reporting of the results. Participants were told that in no way will their identity be revealed. All data for this study was secured and destroyed in accordance and policy of Robert Morris University IRB.

Triangulation

This researcher triangulated the research for convergence among the multiple data sources: the literature review, the survey-questionnaires and the ESL Specialist interviews. This required the researcher analyze the findings from the study and determine where findings from each method, converge, complement, contradict, or show gaps in the findings.

Limitations

This study was limited in the methods chosen. Further, it was limited by possible bias that may introduce itself during data collection and analysis. I as a researcher recognized my own perceptions about literacy and how they impacted the data collection, analysis and findings, and participants I under study. I remained cognizant of the presence and potential impact of such biases and disclosed it to prevent “design bias”. Particularly with my qualitative research, it is considered best practice to acknowledge bias and preconceptions through a process I used known as “reflexivity”.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the philosophy underpinning the study and reasoning for the mixed-methods research design chosen. Next, the research design was explained, including the

participants, the data collection methods and processes, and the role of the researcher. Then, data analysis was discussed, in addition to the validity and reliability. Further, ethical considerations and triangulation were discussed, and finally, limitations were presented.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

Overview

In this chapter, the researcher analyzed teacher attitudes and understandings, preparedness, and knowledge of instructional practices, relative to PA Common Core (PA Core) ELA ELL literacy. Data were collected from PreK-12 Pennsylvania teachers through survey-questionnaires and from ESL Specialists, through semi-structured interviews. The results, which consist of quantitative data such as frequency distributions and descriptive statistics, and qualitative data, such as coded data from the interviews and open-ended survey items, are presented in this chapter.

The purpose of this study was to examine PA PreK-12 public school teacher perceptions of preparedness, practices, understandings and attitudes relative to PA Common Core (PA Core) ELA ELL literacy. This chapter presents the findings from the vetted *2014 Teacher Instructional Practices, Attitudes, and Preparedness Survey-Questionnaire Relative to PA Common Core ELA and ELL Literacy* instrument (Appendix D) and the semi-structured ESL Specialist participant interviews using the *ESL Specialist Interview Protocol* (Appendix E), as they relate to the research questions composed for this study. The survey-questionnaire and the semi-structured interview protocol were comprised of questions developed by the researcher and vetted by collaborating professors at the university in the field of education. The data collected for this study were intended to inform teacher pedagogy and practice relative to PA Common Core (PA Core) ELA ELL literacy. The analysis of data answered and informed the following research questions guiding this study:

1. What teaching strategies, protocols, practices, and literacy terms are PreK-12 PA public school teachers familiar with or currently using relative to PA Common Core (PA Core) literacy for ELLs?
2. What are the attitudes and understandings of PreK-12 PA public school teachers relative to PA Common Core (PA Core) literacy for ELLs?
3. What are PA PreK-12 public school teachers' beliefs about the importance of understanding literacy relative to ELL students and PA Common Core?
4. How well prepared do PreK-12 PA public school teachers feel, based on their experience, preparation, and training in education, to teach ELLs and implement interventions?
5. What are the ESL Specialists' understandings and perceptions about PA Common Core (PA Core) ELA ELL literacy and its impact relative to teacher preparation and pedagogy?

The researcher collected data over a seven-month period, from March 2014 to September 2014. Concurrently, data was collected for the survey-questionnaires from one-hundred and one PA PreK-12 public school teachers, while over the same seven-month period thirty-minute ESL Specialist interviews were conducted of six ESL Specialists teaching in Central and Western Pennsylvania public school systems. During in-depth semi-structured interviews, ESL Specialists described their understandings and experiences as it related to PA Core ELA ELL literacy teacher pedagogy.

This chapter presents an analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data. It consists of several sections. First, data analysis is presented from the survey-questionnaires offering findings as they relate to RQ1-4 of this study. Then, findings from the qualitative ESL Specialist

interviews are presented, corresponding to RQ5 of this study. Last, an overall summary and conclusion is presented.

Research Questions 1-4: Data Analysis

Survey-Questionnaire Findings

The focus of this study was to explore PreK-12 teacher's feelings about preparedness, knowledge of instructional practices, and understandings and attitudes relative to PA Core ELA ELL literacy. Research questions 1-4 were addressed by the researcher utilizing the *2014 Teacher Instructional Practices, Attitudes, and Preparedness Survey-Questionnaire Relative to PA Common Core ELA and ELL Literacy* instrument (Appendix D). From March 2014 to September 2014, the researcher distributed the survey-questionnaires to Pennsylvania PreK-12 public school teachers. Solicitation, distribution, and completion of survey-questionnaires by the purposive sample of PreK-12 public school teachers were obtained through various modes: PreK-12 teacher conference attendees, university enrolled PreK-12 employed teachers taking courses in education, and PreK-12 public school teachers currently teaching in the PreK-12 public school systems.

PreK-12 teacher conference attendees. Teacher conference attendees were given a survey to complete and return, prior to the commencement of the session they attended.

University enrolled K-12 teachers. Participants at universities were told by their instructor that they would be participating in a survey two weeks prior to the survey distribution. A verbal follow-up reminder was again given, one week prior to survey distribution. The participants were told that the survey being conducted was part of a study to learn more about PreK-12 ELL literacy relative to PA Common Core, and would take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete, and it would be completed after everyone's arrival, during the first fifteen minutes of class.

PA PreK-12 public school teachers currently teaching in PA public school systems. School teachers were approached personally by the researcher and by teachers serving as survey assistants, assisting the researcher, and asked to take the survey. Both the researcher and survey assistants were given permission to administer the survey by building principals, during their preparatory period. The surveyor read the “Consent to Survey” letter on the front of the survey and requested that the participant tear off the “Consent to Survey” letter, sign it, and immediately return it to the surveyor. Then, the participants completed the survey, and they returned it to the teacher surveyor. It was returned to the research via inter-school mail or mail to protect participant’s anonymity.

Survey-Questionnaire Description in Brief

The *2014 Teacher Instructional Practices, Attitudes, and Preparedness Survey-Questionnaire Relative to PA Common Core ELA and ELL Literacy* instrument consisted of the following sections: Participant Consent Form, Demographic Data (Survey Items 1-7), Teacher Knowledge of ELL Instructional Strategies, Practices and Terms (Survey Item 8), Teacher Attitudes and Understandings about ELL Literacy (Survey Items 9-16), Teacher Preparedness Relative to ELL Literacy (Survey Items 17-24), Teacher Preparedness Relative to ELL Instructional Practices, Interventions, and Assessments (Survey Items 25-32), and Open-Ended Questions (Survey Items 33 and 34). Survey Items 9-27 had five possible responses using a 5-point Likert scale, in which a score of 1 indicates “Strongly Agree” and a score of 5 indicates “Strongly Disagree”. For survey items 28-32, the participant choose from among four possible responses, in which a score of 1 indicates “Not Well Prepared” and a score of 4 indicates “Very Well Prepared”. For the intent of understanding the researcher’s findings in this chapter, refer to Appendix D for a complete list of survey items.

Survey Delivery

The delivery of the survey was paper-and-pencil format for all participants. The researcher felt this would increase and ensure survey return rate and completion. Survey administrators verified when each survey was turned in, that all survey items were completed, and that each participant present returned a survey. The survey data was then input into the survey replicated in *Question Pro* for analysis and further export into SPSS for advanced investigation.

Anonymity

To ensure anonymity of participants, each participant signed and dated the consent form attached as the front page of the survey, detached it prior to completion of the survey, and returned it to the survey administrator as evidence of participation. All consent forms along with the corresponding surveys were then returned to the researcher.

Response Rate

Of the 101 surveys distributed, the response rate was 100% due to the method of delivery and collection. Of the 101 surveys distributed, one survey was not input into *QuestionPro* for analysis, as the participant did not meet the criteria for inclusion in the purposive sample of PreK-12 school teachers, identifying himself as a “coach” with no classroom teaching experience. One female teacher identified as a PreK-12 certified PA public school teacher, currently working full-time as a “Paraprofessional” within a special needs classroom. Because she was a certified teacher, and currently had been working for two years in a PA public school, her data was input into *Question Pro*.

Demographic Portrait of Survey Participants

Survey items 1-7, collected demographic data on each participant. All participants reported either having a Bachelor (34%) or a Master's (66%), with no participants earning a Ph.D. While data revealed the race the participant identified with was not diverse, with 97% identifying as "White/Caucasian", 1% identifying as "Hispanic/Latino", and 2% identifying as "African American", Table 2 illustrates the sample was more diverse among gender and years of teaching experience.

Table 2

Teacher Gender and Total Years Teaching

	Gender		Years Teaching			
	Female	Male	0-10	11-20	21-30	31+
PA PreK-12						
Public School Teachers	74	26	60	23	10	7

Note. n = total number of participants and percentage due to 100 surveys completed

Approximately three-quarters (74%) of the teachers were female with the remaining 26 percent being male. Over half (60%) of the participants reported having 1-10 years of experience, with 23 percent reporting 11-20 years of experience, and the remaining 17 percent having 21 years of experience or more. Table 3 provides the number of years these teachers' taught at their current school district.

Table 3

Teacher Years Teaching in Current District

	Year Teaching in Current District							
	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	25-30	31-35	36+
PA PreK-12								
Public School Teachers	33	24	14	9	3	7	9	1

Note. n = total number of participants and percentage due to 100 surveys completed

Overall, teachers' years teaching in their current district ranged from "0" years, being a "new teacher" to the most veteran teacher who reported teaching 36 years or more. Over half (57%) of the teachers reported teaching 0-10 years in their current district, 23% reported teaching 11-20 years in their district, with the remaining 20% teaching twenty-one years or more.

Due to overlap among grade levels and subjects taught for each participant, the grade level taught for each participant varied, with some teachers, such as elementary teachers, teaching three subjects within one grade level, or middle and high school teachers having dual or several certifications, teaching two separate subjects over two grade levels, both in middle school and high school. Figure 8 illustrates teachers' grade level taught, with some participants reporting teaching more than grade level.

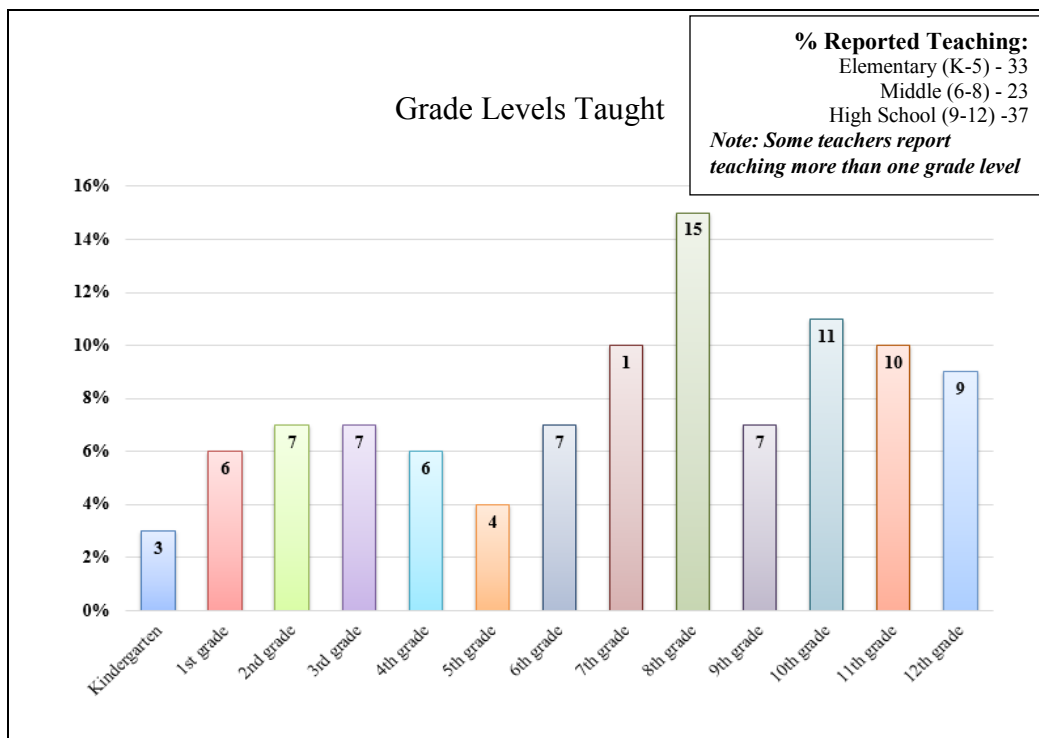


Figure 8. Teacher grade levels taught bar chart

PreK-12 public school teachers taught across disciplines with some teachers reporting teaching more than one subject. Figure 9 displays all reported subject areas across disciplines taught by teachers.

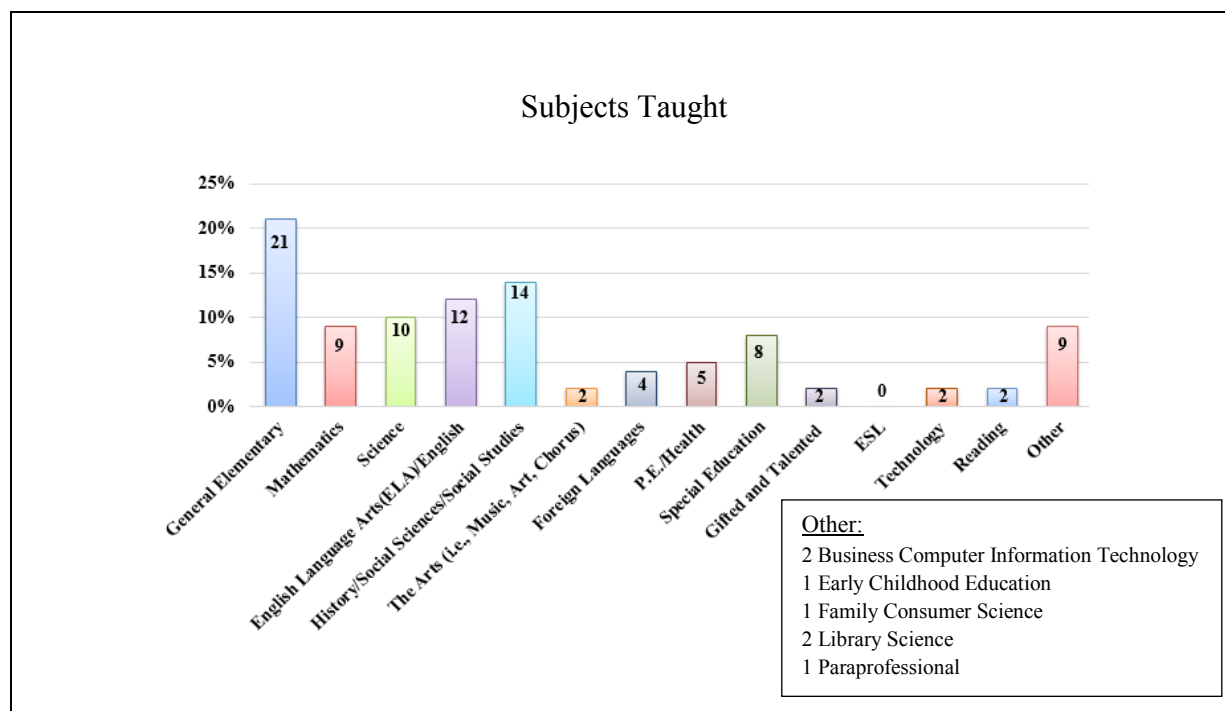


Figure 9. Teacher subject areas taught bar chart.

Of these PreK-12 public school teachers teaching across disciplines and grade levels, nearly three-quarters (72%) reported having ELLs in their district, while 5 teachers (5%) reported they were unsure if their district had ESL students. While forty-three percent (43%) stated they currently taught a class in their district where they were responsible for an ELLs instruction, they reported little previous coursework in ESL literacy, as well as little district in-service preparation in this area. Table 4 presents the number of courses taken and the hours spent in the past year in district preparation or training for ESL literacy.

Table 4

Courses Taken in ESL Literacy and Hours of District Preparation and Training

	ESL Courses Taken						
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6+
PA PreK-12							
Public School Teachers	37	33	10	8	2	3	7
	Hours Spent in District Preparation and Training Previous Year						
PA PreK-12							
Public School Teachers	43	12	12	6	3	4	20

Note. n = total number of participants and percentage due to 100 surveys completed

In responding to statements about courses taken and district preparation relative to ESL literacy, 70% of the teachers reported having 0 (37%) or 1 course (33%) in in ESL literacy. Twenty-three percent reported taking 2 to 5 courses in ESL literacy, and 7 teachers (7%) reported taking 6 or more courses in ESL literacy. Among those, was an outlier who reported taking 25 courses. Forty-three percent (43%) of the teachers reported having spent no (0) hours in preparation or training in the previous year in their district relative to ESL literacy. Nearly a quarter (24%) reported spending 1-2 hours in preparation and training, while thirteen percent (13%) spent 3-5 hours in preparation and training. Twenty-percent reported having spent 6 or more hours in training pertaining to ESL literacy, with 6 of those teachers reporting 30 hours or more spent in training and preparation for ESL literacy.

Research Question 1: Teacher ELL Instructional Practices, Strategies, and Terms

Survey item 8 gained insight into RQ1, “What teaching strategies, protocols, practices, and literacy terms are PreK-12 PA public school teachers familiar with or currently using relative

to PA Common Core (PA Core) literacy for ELLs?”, revealing PA teachers’ familiarity and/or use of ELL instructional practices, strategies, and terms. Table 5 presents the percent of teachers’ across all grade levels, who have knowledge or use of the practice, strategy, or term. Teacher knowledge varied, with some teachers reporting knowing more than one instructional practice, strategy, or term, while others reported knowing fewer.

Table 5

PA PreK-12 Teacher Familiarity or Use of ELL Instructional Practices, Strategies, and Terms

ELL Instructional Practices, Strategies, and Terms	<i>n</i>	%
<i>ELL Instructional Practices and Strategies:</i>		
Sheltered Instructional Observational Protocol	17	17.0
Systematic Monitoring	10	10.0
Two-Way Content-Based Instruction	10	10.0
Inquiry-based Practices	36	36.0
Interactive Modeling	17	17.0
Assistive Technology for ELLs	25	25.0
Guided Discourse	7	7.0
Pennsylvania English Language Learner Literacy	7	7.0
Response to Intervention RTI	48	48.0
Critical Thinking Strategies	48	48.0
Making Texts Accessible for ELLs	19	19.0
Responsive Classroom Practices	24	24.0
Writing Strategies for ELLs	31	31.0
Scaffolding	60	60.0
Input-based Incremental Vocabulary Instruction	2	2.0
Reading Intervention Strategies for ELLs	16	16.0
<i>Terminology:</i>		
Proficiency Levels of ELLs	32	32.0
PA State Standards for ELL/ESL/LEP/ELD	31	31.0
BICS/CALPS	11	11.0
Comprehension Restitution	5	5.0
Second Language Acquisition	14	14.0
WIDA	6	6.0
Other	6	6.0

Note. *n* and percent (5) are the same due to completion of 100 surveys.

Overall, more teachers reported being familiar with or using Scaffolding (60%), RTI (48%), and Critical Thinking Strategies (48%). Conversely, four (4) teachers reported under the

choice “Other” that they knew “None” of the strategies or terms, and one physical education teacher reported that “None Apply”. One teacher reported under “Other” being an “ESL Specialist”, justifying knowledge of most strategies and terms.

The researcher further analyzed the data by elementary, middle, and high school teacher groupings. Table 6 further aggregates the data by elementary, middle, and high school teachers’ knowledge or use of ELL instructional practices, strategies and terms.

Table 6

PA PreK-12 Teachers Knowledge or Use of ELL Practices, Strategies and Terms Aggregated

ELL Instructional Practices, Strategies and Terms	Elementary		Middle		High School	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
<i>ELL Instructional Practices and Strategies:</i>						
Sheltered Instructional Observational Protocol	7	18.4	4	11.8	6	21.4
Systematic Monitoring	2	5.3	4	11.8	4	14.3
Two-Way Content-Based Instruction	2	5.3	4	11.8	4	14.3
Inquiry-based Practices	11	28.9	16	47.1	9	32.1
Interactive Modeling	5	13.2	8	23.5	4	14.3
Assistive Technology for ELLs	8	21.1	10	29.4	7	25.0
Guided Discourse	3	7.9	2	5.9	2	7.1
Pennsylvania English Language Learner Literacy	2	5.3	3	8.8	2	7.1
Response to Intervention	19	50	14	41.2	15	53.6
Critical Thinking Strategies	14	36.8	21	61.8	13	46.4
Making Texts Accessible for ELLs	6	15.8	10	29.4	3	10.7
Responsive Classroom Practices	12	31.6	5	14.7	7	25.0
Writing Strategies for ELLs	7	18.4	16	47.1	8	28.6
Scaffolding	20	52.6	23	67.6	17	60.7
Input-based Incremental Vocabulary Instruction	0	0	1	2.9	1	3.6
Reading Intervention Strategies for ELLs	16	41.2	8	23.5	3	10.7
<i>Terminology:</i>						
Proficiency Levels of ELLs	13	34.2	10	29.4	9	32.1
PA State Standards for ELL/ESL/LEP/ELD	11	28.9	11	32.4	9	32.1
BICS/CALPS	3	7.9	4	11.8	4	14.3
Comprehension Restitution	2	5.3	2	5.9	1	3.6
Second Language Acquisition	7	18.4	3	8.8	4	14.3
WIDA	2	5.3	2	5.9	2	7.1
Other	1	2.6	1	2.9	4	14.3

Research Question 2: Teacher Attitudes (Understandings) of PA Core ELA ELL Literacy

The researcher investigated RQ2, “What are the attitudes and understandings of PreK-12 PA public school teachers relative to PA Common Core (PA Core) literacy for ELLs?” with survey statements 19 -15, to reveal teacher attitudes and understandings about PA Core ELA ELL literacy. Table 7 indicates the percentage of survey participants who responded to 1(Strongly Agree), 2 (Agree), 3 (Neutral), 4 (Disagree), and 5 (Strongly Disagree) for the survey statements that relate to teacher attitudes and understandings of PA Core ELA ELL Literacy. Also included are the mean and standard deviation for each item.

Table 7

Teacher Attitudes and Understandings of PA Core ELA ELL Literacy

Statement	<i>n</i>	Strongly Agree (1)	Agree (2)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly Disagree (5)	Mean	<i>SD</i>
S-9	100	45.0	42.0	8.0	4.0	1.0	1.74	.85
S_10	100	22.0	33.0	28.0	15.0	2.0	2.42	1.06
S_11	99	71.7	23.2	4.0	1.0	0	1.34	.61
S_12	100	50.0	36.0	11.0	2.0	1.0	1.68	.83
S_13	100	24.0	28.0	23.0	22.0	3.0	2.52	1.17
S_14	100	40.0	43.0	15.0	1.0	1.0	1.80	.80
S_15	100	28.0	34.0	29.0	7.0	2.0	2.21	1.0

Note. Likert scale items are percentage and total number of responses.

Looking at the mean, the range varies from 1.34 to 2.52, with corresponding standard deviations of .61 and 1.17 respectively. The range reflects the individual variance of responses, rather than the significance of the responses; the higher the standard deviation for an item, the more variability in responses for that item, and the percentages show some polar agreement among

participants on these items. Over 80 % of the participants agreed or strongly agreed with survey items 9-15, with the exception of survey items 10 and 13, 15. One (1) participant disagreed with survey item 11, with no one strongly disagreeing to this statement. Specifically, Over 80% of the PreK-12 teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they believe it is important for all teachers to understand PA Common Core literacy as it applies to ELLs ($M=1.74$; $SD=.85$) and in order to be an effective teacher, one needs to be aware of cultural differences in the classroom ($M=1.34$; $SD=.61$). In addition, over 80% agreed or strongly agreed that as content area teacher, they felt it important that they understand literacy practices for ELLs relative to PA Common Core ($M=1.68$; $SD=.83$) and that ELL literacy was important to them ($M=1.80$; $SD=.80$). However, 45% or more of the PreK-12 teachers reported they were neutral or disagreed that the academic expectations for PA Common Core literacy are the same for all students, regardless of their English language abilities ($M=2.52$; $SD=1.17$), or that they believed English language learners can successfully meet the demands of PA Common Core literacy ($M=2.42$; $SD=1.06$). Thirty-eight percent (38%) of the PreK-12 teachers reported they were neutral, disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, “I support the PA Common Core goals of multicultural-multilingual literacy” ($M=2.21$; $SD=1.0$). Further discussion and interpretation of this data occurs in Chapter 5.

The researcher also reported the same data set aggregating it according to grade level for a more in-depth summary. Table 8 presents aggregated data for teacher attitudes and understandings of PA Core ELA ELL Literacy. Also included are mean and standard deviation for each item.

Table 8

Teacher Attitudes and Understandings of PA Core ELA ELL Literacy Aggregated

Statement	Grade level	n	Strongly		Neutral	Strongly		Mean	SD
			Agree (1)	Agree (2)		Disagree (4)	Disagree (5)		
S-9	Elementary	38	52.6	39.5	5.3	2.6	0.0	1.58	.72
	Middle	34	41.2	44.1	5.9	8.8	0.0	1.82	.90
	High	28	39.3	42.9	14.3	0.0	3.9	1.86	.93
S_10	Elementary	38	23.7	21.1	26.3	28.9	0.0	2.61	1.15
	Middle	34	17.6	41.2	26.5	11.8	2.9	2.41	1.02
	High	28	25.0	39.3	32.1	0.0	3.6	2.18	.94
S_11	Elementary	37	75.7	18.9	5.4	0	0.0	1.30	.57
	Middle	34	70.6	23.5	2.9	2.9	0.0	1.38	.70
	High	28	67.9	28.6	3.6	0.0	0.0	1.36	.56
S_12	Elementary	38	57.9	36.8	5.3	0.0	0.0	1.47	.60
	Middle	34	47.1	35.3	11.8	5.9	0.0	1.76	.89
	High	28	42.9	35.7	17.9	0.0	3.6	1.86	.97
S_13	Elementary	34	26.3	21.1	28.9	21.1	2.6	2.53	1.18
	Middle	24	20.6	35.3	14.7	26.5	2.9	2.56	1.19
	High	28	25	28.6	25.0	17.9	3.6	2.46	1.17
S_14	Elementary	38	50	36.8	10.5	2.6	0.0	1.66	.78
	Middle	34	29.4	52.9	17.6	0.0	0.0	1.88	.69
	High	28	39.3	39.3	17.9	0.0	3.6	1.89	.96
S_15	Elementary	38	31.6	28.9	31.6	7.9	0.0	2.16	.97
	Middle	34	26.5	35.3	26.5	8.8	2.9	2.26	1.05
	High	28	25	39.3	28.6	3.6	3.6	2.21	.99

Note. Likert scale items are percentage and total number of responses.

Research Question 3: Teacher Beliefs Relative to PA Core ELA ELL Literacy

The researcher investigated RQ 3, “What are PA PreK-12 public school teachers’ beliefs about the importance of understanding literacy relative to ELL students and PA Common Core?” by

looking specifically at survey statements 9, 10, 12, and 16, from the same section of survey items previously mentioned, to look more closely at teacher beliefs about the importance of understanding literacy relative to PA ELA Core ELL literacy. Table 9 indicates the percentage of survey participants who responded to 1(Strongly Agree), 2(Agree), 3(Neutral), 4 (Disagree), and 5(Strongly Disagree) for the survey statements as they relate to teacher beliefs about PA Core ELA ELL Literacy. Also included are the mean and standard deviation for each item.

Table 9

Teacher Beliefs Relative to PA Core ELA ELL Literacy

Statement	<i>n</i>	Strongly Agree (1)	Agree (2)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly Disagree (5)	Mean	SD
S_9	100	45.0	42.0	8.0	4.0	1.0	1.74	.85
S_10	100	22.0	33.0	28.0	15.0	2.0	2.42	1.06
S_12	100	50.0	36.0	11.0	2.0	1.0	1.68	.83
S_16	100	42.0	41.0	12.0	3.0	2.0	1.82	.09

Note. Likert scale items are percentage and total number of responses.

Looking at the mean, the range varies from 1.68 to 2.42, with corresponding standard deviations of .83 and 1.06 respectively. The range reflects individual variance of responses, rather than to significance of the responses; the higher the standard deviation for an item, indicates more variability in responses for that item, and the percentages show some polar level of agreement among participants on these items. For survey item 10, 55% of the Pre-K12 teachers strongly agreed or agreed that they believed ELLs can successfully meet the demands of PA Common Core literacy ($M=2.42$; $SD=1.06$). For survey items 9, 12, and 16, overall, 80% of the Pre-K12 teachers strongly agreed or agreed that it is important for all teachers to understand PA Common Core literacy as it applies to ELLs ($M=1.74$; $SD=.85$) and believed multicultural literacy is

important to them ($M=1.68$; $SD=.83$). Last, 80% PreK-12 teachers strongly agreed or agreed that all teachers are responsible for the literacy of English language learners ($M=1.68$; $SD=.83$). Further discussion and interpretation of this data by the researcher occurs in Chapter 5.

The researcher also aggregated the data by grade level for further analysis. Table 10 indicates the percentage of survey participants who responded to 1 (Strongly Agree), 2 (Agree), 3 (Neutral), 4 (Disagree) and 5 (Strongly Disagree) for the survey statements as they relate to teacher beliefs and PA Core ELA ELL Literacy. Also included are the mean and standard deviation for each item.

Table 10

Teacher Beliefs Relative to PA Core ELA ELL Literacy Aggregated

Statement	Grade Level	<i>n</i>	Strongly Agree (1)	Agree (2)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly Disagree (5)	Mean	SD
S_9	Elementary	38	52.6	39.5	5.3	2.6	0.0	1.58	.72
	Middle	34	41.2	44.1	5.9	8.8	0.0	1.82	.90
	High	28	39.3	42.9	14.3	0.0	3.6	1.86	.93
S_10	Elementary	38	57.9	36.8	5.3	0.0	0.0	1.47	.60
	Middle	34	47.1	35.3	11.8	5.9	0.0	1.76	.89
	High	28	42.9	35.7	17.9	0.0	3.6	1.86	.97
S_12	Elementary	38	57.9	36.8	5.3	0.0	0.0	1.47	.60
	Middle	34	47.1	35.3	11.8	5.9	0.0	1.76	.89
	High	28	42.9	35.7	17.9	0.0	3.6	1.86	.97
S_16	Elementary	38	47.4	39.5	5.3	7.9	0.0	1.74	.89
	Middle	34	38.2	44.1	14.7	0.0	2.9	1.85	.89
	High	28	39.3	39.3	17.9	0.0	3.6	1.89	.96

Note. Likert scale items are percentage and total number of responses.

Research Question 4: Teacher Preparedness Relative to PA Core ELA ELL Literacy

The researcher investigated RQ 4, “How well prepared do PreK-12 PA public school teachers feel, based on their experience, preparation, and training in education, to teach ELLs and implement interventions?”, with survey statements 17-27 and statements 28-32, to reveal teacher feelings about preparedness, experience and training as it relates to PA Core ELA ELL literacy. Table 11 indicates the percentage of survey participants who responded to 1(Strongly Agree), 2 (Agree), 3 (Neutral), 4 (Disagree), and 5 (Strongly Disagree) for the survey statements 17-27 as they relate to teacher preparedness of PA Core ELA ELL Literacy. Also included are mean and standard deviation for each item.

Table 11

Teacher Preparedness and Training Relative to PA Core ELA ELL Literacy

Statement	<i>n</i>	Strongly Agree (1)	Agree (2)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly Disagree (5)	Mean	<i>SD</i>
S_17	100	4.0	25.0	34.0	31.0	6.0	3.10	.98
S_18	100	7.0	30.0	25.0	32.0	6.0	3.00	1.07
S_19	100	9.0	24.0	31.0	29.0	7.0	3.01	1.09
S_20	99	9.1	22.2	22.2	36.4	10.4	3.16	1.16
S_21	100	22.0	46.0	17.0	10.0	5.0	2.30	1.08
S_22	100	9.0	24.0	30.0	28.0	9.0	3.04	1.12
S_23	99	4.0	18.2	23.2	40.4	14.1	3.42	1.07
S_24	99	13.1	30.3	37.4	12.1	7.1	2.70	1.07
S_25	100	6.0	29.0	29.0	29.0	7.0	3.02	1.05
S_26	100	7.0	26.0	30.0	29.0	8.0	3.05	2.08
S_27	100	8.0	24.0	33.0	26.0	9.0	3.04	1.09

Note. Likert scale items are percentage and total number of responses.

Looking at the mean, the range varies from 2.30 to 3.42, with corresponding standard deviations of 1.08 and 1.07 respectively. The range reflects individual variance of responses, rather than to

significance of the responses; the higher the standard deviation for an item, indicates more variability in responses for that item, and the percentages show some polar agreement among participants on these items. As shown in Table 11, nearly 60 % or more reported they strongly disagreed, disagreed or were neutral with survey items 17-27, while 35% or more of the participants reported they agreed or strongly agreed with these statements, with the exception of one statement, survey item 21, with 68% agreeing or strongly agreeing to this statement. Specifically, over 60% of PA PreK-12 teachers disagreed, strongly disagreed, or were neutral about their district providing opportunities to prepare teachers to meet the PA Common Core standards for teaching ELLs ($M=3.10$; $SD=.98$) and, based on their current educational training and experience, that they could successfully prepare lessons that meet the needs of teaching English language learners relative to PA Common Core State ELA Standards ($M=3.00$; $SD=1.07$). In addition, over 60% expressed a level of disagreement or were neutral that they were adequately prepared to successfully meet the academic needs of English language learners ($M=3.01$; $SD=1.09$) and that ESL teachers and content area teachers share course content and confer daily in their school to align course content and make texts accessible for English language learners ($M=3.16$; $SD=1.16$). Based on their current experience and training in education, nearly 60% expressed similar disagreement or were neutral about feeling comfortable implementing interventions for English language learners with learning disabilities to assist them in meeting PA Common Core Standards ($M=3.04$; $SD=1.12$) and having adequate PA Common Core curriculum materials to prepare them to work with English language learners ($M=3.42$; $SD=1.07$). Finally, based on their current teacher preparation, over 60% reported disagreement or were neutral regarding being able to successfully introduce teaching strategies and protocols into the classroom to meet the needs of ELLs relative to PA Common Core ELA literacy

($M=3.02$; $SD=1.05$), as well as being able to successfully introducing reading, writing, listening, and speaking interventions into instruction to assist in meeting the needs of English language learners relative to PA Common Core ELA literacy ($M=3.05$; $SD=2.08$). Likewise, over 60% disagreed, strongly disagreed or were neutral that they could successfully develop assessments that meet the needs of ELLs relative to Common Core ELA literacy ($M=3.04$; $SD=1.09$). For survey items 21 over 60% reported they agreed or strongly agreed that they understand in preparing lessons for all students, this includes preparing lessons for ELLs, to make content accessible to them ($M=1.67$; $SD=.86$). Further discussion and interpretation of this data occurs in Chapter 5.

Survey items 28-32, further examined teacher preparedness as it related to PA ELL content standards, teaching ELLs with cognitive and learning disabilities, ELL literacy interventions, integration of academic language, and research-based assessments. Table 12 indicates the percentage of survey participants who responded to 1 (Not Well Prepared), 2 (Somewhat Prepared), 3 (Well Prepared), 4 (Very Well Prepared) for survey statements 28-32. Also included are mean and standard deviation for each item.

Table 12

Level of Teacher Preparation Relative to PA Core ELA ELL Literacy

Statement	<i>n</i>	Not Well Prepared (1)	Somewhat Prepared (2)	Well Prepared (3)	Very Well Prepared (4)	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
S_28	93	46.2	41.9	7.5	4.3	1.70	.79
S_29	95	54.7	28.4	9.5	7.4	1.69	.92
S_30	95	41.1	42.1	12.6	4.2	1.80	.82
S_31	95	51.6	30.5	13.7	4.2	1.71	.86
S_32	95	53.7	29.5	12.6	4.2	1.67	.86

Note. Likert scale items are percentage and total number of responses.

Looking at the mean, the range varies from 1.67 to 1.80, with corresponding standard deviations of .86 and .82 respectively. The range reflects individual variance of responses, rather than to significance of the responses; the higher the standard deviation for an item, indicates more variability in responses for that item, and the percentages show some polar levels of perceptions of preparedness among participants on these items. As shown in Table 12, over 80% of the participants reported being “Not Well Prepared” or “Somewhat Prepared”, for survey items 28-32, specifically related to how well current teacher preparation prepares teachers to provide instruction that supports PA academic content standards for English language learners ($M=1.70$; $SD=.79$), and to teach English language learners with cognitive and learning disabilities ($M=1.69$; $SD=.92$). Further they reported being “Not Well Prepared” or “Somewhat Prepared” to integrate content specific academic language development practices in the areas of reading, writing, speaking, and listening ($M=1.80$; $SD=.82$). In addition, participants’ felt they had little training and preparation to provide research based literacy interventions for speaking, reading,

writing and listening for English language learners ($M=1.71$; $SD=.86$) and to provide research-based assessments for these students ($M=1.67$; $SD=.86$). Further discussion and interpretation of this data by the researcher, occurs in Chapter 5.

Open-ended Survey Questions: Teachers' Best and Least Understandings

Two open-ended questions provided further insight into teachers' understanding relative to PA Core ELA ELL literacy at the end of the survey. Survey item 33, asked "What areas do you feel you have the best understanding about literacy as it relates to English Language Learners?" while survey item 34 asked, "What areas do you have the least understanding about literacy as it relates to English Language Learners?".

Of the 100 surveys received, half (50%) or 50 of the survey participants, both male (13) and female (37), offered insight about where they felt they had the best and least understandings as it related to ELLs (Appendix I). Of these fifty participants, eighteen (36%) reported teaching elementary, nineteen (38%) reported teaching middle school, six (12%) reported teaching both middle and high school, seven (14%) reported teaching across more than one level. The total years teaching ranged from 4 months to 35 years, with the average years teaching being 9.9 years. The researcher tallied the responses and categorizing the data as either "No Understanding", "Very Little/Little Understanding", or "Adequate/Substantial Understanding". Table 13 presents the number of times a participant made a response related to level of ELL literacy understanding.

Table 13

Level of Understanding Reported on Open-ended Survey Items 33 and 34

	Level of Understanding			
	NA	No Understanding	Very Little/Little	Adequate/Substantial
PA PreK-12 Public School Teachers	6	22	55	1

Note. Reported as the number of times participant stated a response related to that level of understanding

The majority of the responses reported by participants reflected little to no understanding of ELL literacy as it relates to PA Core ELA literacy. There was one outlier (P86) that reflected the participant had an adequate or substantial understanding, justifying it with “I am an ESL Program Specialist.” There was an additional outlier (P3) that reported, “All areas. This makes no sense. As a veteran teacher, you must want to make us look bad, especially #8, never heard of any.” Six of the participants, responded “NA” to these two open-ended questions, with no further clarifying remarks. Further discussion and analysis of these responses occurs in Chapter 5.

In addition to distributing the survey-questionnaire to gather data about teacher instructional practices, preparedness, and attitude and understandings, the researcher conducted six qualitative ESL Specialist interviews. It is the researcher’s belief while surveys can capture findings from a larger purposive sample, present it concisely, surveys can limit the types of response choices for complex situations, such is the case with PA Core ELA ELL literacy. Coupled with qualitative data, however, strength is added to the findings of survey data. Qualitative data can provide descriptive, more robust “rich” understandings of data revealed by survey data, and can help support or explain results indicated in the quantitative analysis.

Question 5: ESL Specialist Interviews

The researcher collected data by interviewing six PA public school ESL Specialists about their understandings, perceptions and experiences as it related to PA Common Core (PA Core) ELA ELL literacy gathering findings to answer RQ5: “What are the ESL Specialists’ understandings and perceptions about PA Common Core (PA Core) ELA ELL literacy and its impact relative to teacher preparation and pedagogy?”

The ESL Specialist interviews were conducted at locations convenient to the participant. Upon arrival, the researcher prepared for the interviews to be recorded via tape-recorder, while participants signed the *ESL Specialist Interview Consent Form* (Appendix G) form, as well as completed the *ESL Specialist Background Information Form* (Appendix H).

Demographic Portrait of ESL Specialist Participants

Six (6) ESL Specialists from Pennsylvania public schools teaching across various grade levels participated in the study. The gender, ethnicity, highest level of education attained, certification(s), years teaching, and years teaching ELLs are summarized in Table 14. In addition, the number of courses that ESL Specialists took pertaining to ESL literacy, approximate number of ELLs taught, and demographics relative to ESL enrollment and organization of employment are also presented in Table 13. Participant names were not revealed. Participants were referred to as “Participants 1-6”.

Table 14. *ESL Specialist Demographic Information*

Participant	Gender	Ethnic Group	PA Certifications	Highest Degree Earned	Years Teaching	Years Teaching ESL	Number of Courses in ESL	Approximate Number of ESL Students taught	Percent/ Number ESL Enrolled in District/Total Enrollment for District	Geographic Classification/ Organization Of Employment
Participant 1	F	C	Bachelor of Music Education, English- 9-12 Middle Level English ESL Program Specialist	Masters +3	10.5	5	5	60	.85/10 (1181)	Suburban/ IU
Participant 2	F	C	Elementary, Early Childhood, Middle Level English, ESL Program Specialist	Ph.D.	10	10	6	100	.34/11 (3258)	Suburban/ School District
Participant 3	F	C	Elementary Education- K-8, ESL Program Specialist	Masters +35	30	17	6	300	2.16/61 (2828)	Suburban/ School District
Participant 4	F	C	Elementary Education, ESL Program Specialist	Masters +30	15	8	6	150	2.16/62 (2828)	Suburban/ School District
Participant 5	F	C	French, K-12 ESL Program Specialist	Masters +15	15	11	6	260	1.34/57 (4245)	Suburban/ School District
Participant 6	F	C	French-K-12, Principal K-12 English-7-12, ESL Program Specialist	Ph.D.	16	14	8	500	5.42/223 (4117)	Suburban/ School District

The demographic information reveals all participants were Caucasian females and their overall years of teaching experience ranged from 10 to 30 years. Their average years of experience teaching was 16.5 years. Their overall years of experience teaching ESL students, ranged from 5 to 17 years. The average years of experience teaching ESL literacy was 9.5 years. All participants earned at least a Master's degree, with two participants having doctoral level degrees with their studies focusing on ESL education. All participants taught ten years or more and had five years' experience teaching ESL literacy. Participants took from 5 to 8 courses pertaining directly to ESL literacy. The number of ESL students taught by the ESL specialists

ranged from 60 students to 500 students, with ESL district enrollment vastly varying in their respective districts, ranging from 10 to 221 students, yearly. All ESL Specialists, except for one participant who was contracted through the Allegheny Intermediate Unit (AIU), worked within their district of employment.

Upon completing of the demographic data on each participant, the researcher conducted the ESL Specialist interviews.

ESL Specialist Interview and Analysis

The researcher conducted six semi-structured interviews based on the *ESL Specialist Interview Protocol* (Appendix E). Each interview lasted approximately thirty minutes. Data results from the interviews were manually transcribed, carefully analyzed, and manually coded by the researcher using processes similar to First and Second Cycle coding as described by Saldana (2013) and Lichtman's (2013) Three C's Process: Coding, Categorizing, and Concepts. Saldana's First Cycle coding includes analysis of the raw data using such coding techniques as initial coding (initial impressions made by the researcher), descriptive coding, or process coding (p.13). Second Cycle Coding is a process that allows you to move from multiple codes and categories in the first cycle(s) of coding to a few major concepts, patterns or themes, (p.13). This approach allowed for systematic analysis of the frequency of codes, as well as accounted for the emergence of categories and concepts. Similarly, Lichtman (2013) describes a process of moving raw data from codes, to categories, resulting in emerging concepts. This six-step process for coding data is broken down as follows: (1) initial coding of raw data, (2) revisiting initial coding, (3) developing an initial list of categories, (4) modifying initial list based on additional rereading, (5) revisiting your categories and subcategories, and (6) moving from categories to concepts (p. 252). Using these two methods as the basis for coding, the researcher manually

transcribed six ESL Specialist interviews. It was the researcher's belief that by personally transcribing the interviews and sorting the data for concepts and categories, as opposed to using a computer-aided software such as NVivo, the researcher was able to achieve a greater understanding of the data by working closely with it. The researcher did not want to risk missing the connections between and among data concepts, categories and emerging themes, which technology can impede. Further, Litchman (2013) acknowledges that irrespective of working with tools such as a "word processor" or "other software", it is the researcher's "responsibility to generate codes...and organize them" (p. 252). The researcher's process for coding data, is broken down into a process merged from both Saldana (2103) and Lichtman's (2013) and presented in Figure 10.

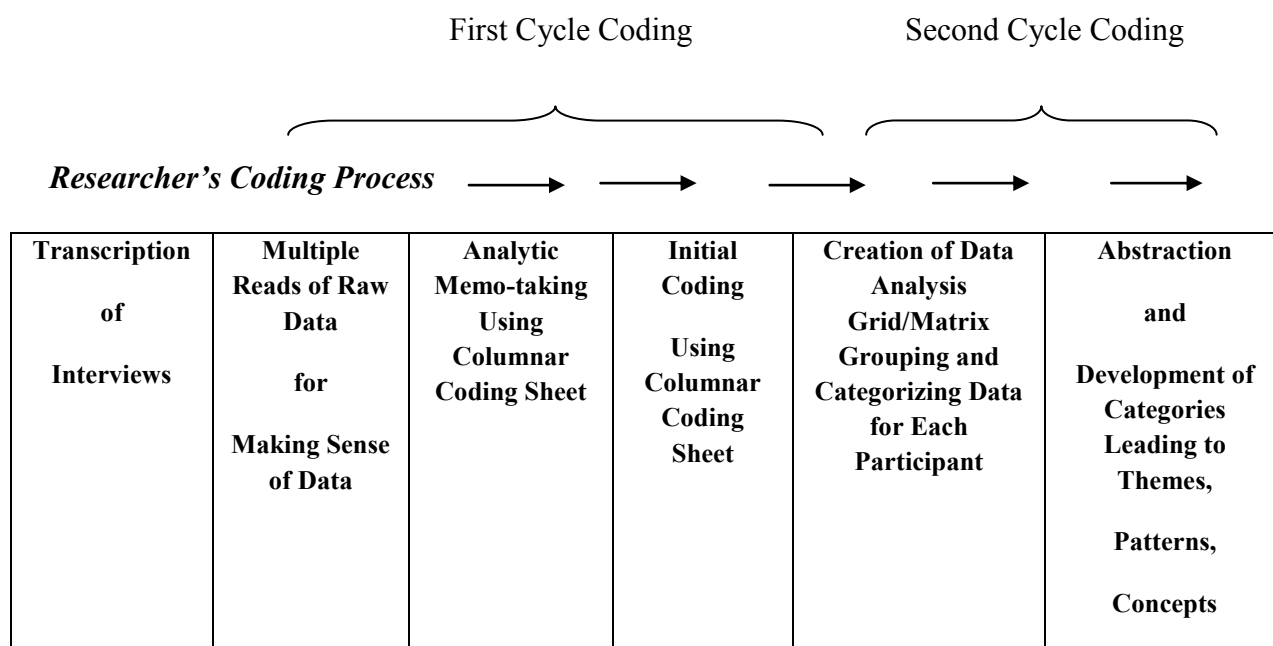


Figure 10. Researcher's coding process.

As a result of the semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and first and second cycle coding, categories emerged. The prevalence of the coded categories varied among and

between participants (Appendix J). These codes that emerged as a result of first cycle coding and second cycle abstraction of categories, ultimately resulted in emergent themes.

As a result of the first cycle coding and the second cycle abstraction of categories into themes, concepts or patterns, four themes emerged from the semi-structured ESL Specialist interviews relative to human, social, cultural, political and economic capital: *Accountability, Alignment, Collaboration and Connections*, and *Equity and Fairness*. It was the researcher's belief that the focus of analysis is not solely on specific participant interpretations, emerging into themes. Analysis also requires examining the social forces influencing these interpretations. As a result, the researcher recognized the emerging themes as positioned within and influenced by the larger context of varying *capital*.

As is evidenced, the researcher found considerable overlap of categories between themes. Specifically, while themes may appear as being discrete, there is considerable overlap among them, where participants' responses to interview questions often addressed more than one theme that emerged.

Figure 11 presents a summary of the second cycle categories collapsed by theme reinforced by human, social, cultural, political and economic capital.

Figure 11

Summary of the Categories from ESL Specialist Interviews Arranged by Theme

Theme One: Accountability	Theme Two: Alignment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessments: Teacher, Student, Leadership • Change/Transition • Common Core Texts, Content • Culture, Diversity, Difference • Curriculum • Disability/Differentiation • Effort: Teacher, Student, Leadership • ELL Expectations, Rigor, Difficulty • Teacher, Student, Leadership • Organizational Structure/Mission/ Scheduling • Methods of Instruction/ Instructional Strategies • Resources (Resource allocation and management) • Supportive Services • Teacher Knowledge Expertise (ESL Specialist and Content?) • Policy/Law/Standards • Professional Development • Priorities • Teacher Expectations • Time: Preparation and Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountability • Assessments: Teacher, Student, Leadership • Change/Transition • Collaborations, Connections, Partnerships, Relationships • Common Core Literature, Texts, Content • Culture, Diversity, Difference • Curriculum • Disability/Differentiation • Effort: Teacher, Student, Leadership • ELL Expectations, Rigor, Difficulty • ELL Academic and Educational Background/Family History • Equity and Fairness • Leadership • Organizational Structure/Mission/Scheduling • Methods of Instruction/.Instructional Strategies • Policy/ Law/Standards • Priorities • Professional Development • Resources (Resource allocation and management) • Support/Supportive Services • Teacher Knowledge Expertise (ESL Specialist and Content) • Teacher Expectations • Time: Preparation and Planning
Theme Three: Collaborations and Connections	Theme Four: Equity and Fairness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountability • Assessments: Teacher, Student, Leadership • Change/Transition • Common Core Literature, Texts, Content • Culture, Diversity, Difference • Curriculum • Disability/Differentiation • Effort: Teacher, Student, Parent, Leadership • ELL Expectations, Rigor, Difficulty • ELL Academic and Educational Background/ Family History • Equity and Fairness • Families, Leadership, Organizations, Students, Teachers • Organizational Structure/Mission/Scheduling • Methods of Instruction/Instructional Strategies • Policy/ Law/Standards • Professionals: Teacher, Student, Leadership • Resources , Resource allocation and management • Support/Supportive Services • Teacher Knowledge Expertise (ESL Specialist and Content) • Priorities • Teacher Expectations • Time: Preparation and Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountability • Alignment • Assessments: Teacher, Student, Leadership • Change/Transition • Collaborations, Connections, Partnerships, Relationships • Common Core Literature, Texts, Content • Culture, Diversity, Difference • Curriculum • Disability/Differentiation • Effort: Teacher, Student, Leadership • ELL Expectations, Rigor, Difficulty • ELL Academic and Educational Background/Family History • Equity and Fairness • Leadership • Organizational Structure/Mission/Scheduling • Methods of Instruction/.Instructional Strategies • Policy/ Law/Standards • Priorities • Professional Development • Resources (Resource allocation and management) • Support/Supportive Services • Teacher Knowledge Expertise (ESL Specialist and Content) • Teacher Expectations • Time: Preparation and Planning

In all ESL Specialist interviews, as previously evidenced, the categories that emerged into themes, did so with relative frequency and overlap. Tables 15-20 present examples of discourse by theme for each participant, with a concluding summary discussion after each table. Last, this qualitative analysis of interviews ends with an overall brief summary statement about the themes. Their overlap with reference to human, social, cultural, political and economic capital, is discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

Table 15

Examples of Interview Discourse by Theme for Participant 1

Theme	Example of Interview Discourse
Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "...who scored a certain level on the WIDA test..." • "...it is going to be more difficult for them [teachers] in their content areas to do the same [aligning instruction with higher level thinking tasks]..." • "...they [content teachers] will not be very happy...that [incorporating ELA objectives into instruction] will be very difficult for them to transition..." • "I am sorry, teachers do not give good assessments, because they [assessments] are objective."
Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Since I have literature...aligned now, I am about 70% informational texts...70%...so that will help them in content areas..." • "The problem is we [the district] are not aligned..." • "There are supposed to be ELA objectives in all our [ESL Specialist] lesson plans..." • "...the Common Core assessments...it is marked on there they are ELL, so they are going to grade it or not grade it accordingly..." • "I have never even gotten into learning styles [of ELLs], and that is really important here...learning styles and different kinds of intelligence..."
Collaborations and Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I provide Sheltered English instruction for students who need special instruction in English..." • "I don't exactly know what they are doing in the content areas..." • "These more abstract concepts, it's going to be difficult for them [ELLs in content areas], so I might need to support them more in content areas..." • "...he [ELL student] should be thinking more abstractly, but he never learned to think abstractly in his other country..."
Equity and Fairness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The things that I see as most challenging in the Common Core is...the way concepts are taught and higher-order thinking...we are asking them [ELLs] to do more and more with more difficult things." • "They [content teachers] should be differentiating for the slow learner or whatever, and some of the strategies they use for them [slow learners] are similar [for ELLs]..." • "The only bad news in all of this is we are not only doing ...more literature [nonfiction], ... fiction and poetry, we do not have as much of it anymore, and I find that is, it is fun for the kids and a good learning thing...but we won't be having as much of that, we still do, but not as much as we had..." • "I think they[content teachers] need to think of alternative assessments, such that they [ELLs] can put anything they know about the topic in a different way...they're going to have to modify assessments a lot."

Note. Discourse overlaps among themes

Summary Discussion: Research Participant 1 Interview

P1 answered a series of interview questions from the semi-structured interview protocol (Appendix E) as it related to P1's understandings and perceptions about PA Core ELA ELL literacy and its impact relative to teacher preparation and pedagogy. P1, an itinerant teacher from the IU, with five years of experience teaching ELLs, described her role as an ESL Specialist in terms of a "supporting role" for both elementary and secondary ELLs. P1 offered ELLs support in areas of English instruction, in the domains of reading, writing, speaking and listening, not only within her classroom, but beyond it, "supporting" ELLs in their content area. In reference to content area teachers, P1 felt these teachers need to have a better understanding of how to integrate higher-order tasks that are leveled into their lessons and instruction, to better meet the needs of ELLs, and believed it will be a great challenge for the content area teachers to do this. P1 referenced the need for teachers to create "alternate assessments" and "modify" the way they assess ELLs, as these teachers do not "create good assessments". Furthermore, P1 felt these same teachers need to "differentiate" instruction for ELLs. In addition, P1 noted that "alignment" is a challenge both in content areas and within ELL literacy. P1 spoke of the rigor of PA Core (Common Core) ELA ELL literacy where there is evidence of higher-order thinking skills, concepts and rigor confronting ELLs and stated, "...our students have very little higher order thinking skills. They do not understand the concepts and the words to describe that thinking process...so it takes me a day to explain the word 'visualize' and get them to understand that process". Further, P1 noted the requirement of ELLs to think "more abstractly", "more deeply", understanding the "bigger picture", not only across content areas, but also as it relates to many types of literacy tasks. P1 believes that teacher preparation impacts the ELL, and that all teachers need to have firm understandings, of not only methods of instruction for ELLs, but P1

implied understanding the ELLs' background knowledge and history, as evidenced when P1 states, "When did this student start with CC?", "learning styles are different" and "difference kinds of intelligence". Overall, P1 felt that the district was in transition with reference to PA Core ELA ELL literacy where there was little to no collaboration. P1 stated "I don't exactly know what they are doing in the content areas" and P1 felt the district needed to do considerable work with planning and preparation for all teachers in the areas of teacher preparation, planning, and alignment.

Table 16

Example of Interview Discourse by Theme for Participant 2

Theme	Example of Interview Discourse
Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The BEC (Basic Education Curricular) does have requirements or recommendations depending on their language level, [for] how long they should have ESL instruction.” • “In the past, there was [professional development for ELLs], but now because there are so many requirements to fit under the strategic plan, it has definitely fallen by the wayside, and it has become more of an as needed basis for the teachers who are specifically working with the ELLs.” • “We had a mock audit last week and one thing that was pointed out was every district should be providing annual professional development where it is documented...so we have it if we are audited in the future.” • “I think how I assess my students...and I use a lot of formative assessments in my classroom.”
Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “...we are currently in that [PA Common Core] transition right now...right now... we are currently rewriting out our curriculum to align to CC standards...” • “...the [PA State] ELL Overlays...they overlay the curriculum.” • “...you don’t water down curriculum...they [teachers] are so used to modifying things for students [in a certain way] and now they are seeing that they need to come up with [modifying] these things...like big ideas...higher-order thinking skills...and they do not see them [ELLs] as capable of attaining that...” • “There needs to be a lot of preparation [for teachers] in place this school year...something I may have taught in second grade I may have to push back to first.”
Collaborations and Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I work ...with the other teachers with adapting and creating assessments and giving them feedback for professional development on the best way to teach ELLs while they are in the classroom.” • “I am a liaison for the district. I work through the Title 3 consortium for the district...I am an advocate for the kids and families...” • “...giving them [teachers] strategies for different science or social studies lessons.” • “Getting to know ...every aspect of the [ELL] child...just no stereotyping them as one thing, but looking at the whole child...their culture.”
Equity and Fairness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “...I make sure I am a voice for them [ELL students and families]...making sure things are appropriate for them.” • “Every document that goes home needs to be translated if requested...” • “Through the Title 3 Consortium we have TRANSPERFECT, a translation service you can call anytime ...and in 30 seconds you can have any language.” • “We also have TRANSACT, which is translation for documents...every school in PA has access to...I think fifteen different languages are offered...” • “...they [ELLs] are not going to produce it the same way as a regular education student...” • “...do we have materials that are appropriate to address this content with ELLs?”

Note. Discourse overlaps among themes.

Summary Discussion: Research Participant 2 Interview

P2 answered a series of interview questions from the semi-structured interview protocol (Appendix E) as it related to P2's understandings and perceptions about PA Common Core (PA Core) ELA ELL literacy and its impact relative to teacher preparation and pedagogy. P2 had ten years of experience teaching ELLs, and described her role as an ESL Specialist in terms of a "teacher", "liaison", "advocate" and "resource person" for faculty and administration within the school district, as well as for ELLs and their families. P2 served a dual role in the district being both "teacher" and "expert" as she stated "I am the one who is knowledgeable on what makes us compliant, that makes education appropriate [for ELLs], what are the best practices...", serving as the district coordinator for the district and overseeing all issues pertaining to ESL literacy. P2 referenced policy and law such as "BEC" and "Title 3" and referred to standards and assessments such as "PA Core" "WIDA ACCESS", "WIDA Amplified Standards", that impact ELLs. Further, P2 spoke of "resources" for ELLs such as "TRANSACT", "TRANSPERFECT", "PA ELL Overlays", in addition to speaking of other teachers, such as reading specialists and content teachers as valuable "resources" for each other, and need to be utilized. Furthermore, P2 spoke of "resources" from "Title 3" monies that can be used to assist with teacher preparation and trainings. P2 consistently made reference to the upcoming considerable "thinking" and "planning and preparation" that the district and teachers need to do, as they begin "rewriting curriculum". P2 felt that the district needed to do more to with professional development for content teachers relative to ELL literacy. P2 believed that this "change" to PA Core will result in teacher reflection where teachers' will have newly aligned expectations as a result of the rigor and higher levels of critical thinking. In addition, P2 "worries about how this will affect ELLs". P2 felt one challenge for content teachers is lesson design and delivery to "make it meaningful

for” ELLs so they can retain information. P2 spoke of the way PA Core will impact assessments, where P2 currently uses “a lot of formative assessments” and in the future will need to “make sure they [ELLs] are “connecting” and “justifying”, thus having proof for the answers they provide. P2 spoke to the need for all teachers to really get to know every ELL, becoming familiar with their culture, family history, and educational background, so that ELLs recognize other teachers as a resource for them, and not simply viewing the ESL Specialist as their only “go to” resource person. P2 stated that itinerant ESL Specialists who travel do not “have enough time to provide support” [to teachers], so teachers may need to make their own effort to educate themselves, be proactive, and “just research on your own”. Overall, P2 felt that the district was in transition with reference to PA Core ELA ELL literacy and considerable planning and preparation was needed, both by teachers and administration, in that areas of teacher preparation, planning, and alignment of curriculum.

Table 17

Example of Interview Discourse by Theme for Participant 3

Theme	Example of Interview Discourse
Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “...it [PA Core ELL literacy] can help a content teacher realize that they are...that every teacher is a teacher of language...so you actually have two objectives for every lesson...here is my language objective and here is my content objective.” “Now, at our junior high for a while we had a principal that expected every teacher to have both a content objective and a language objective,...whether it was social studies, science, or whatever...” “...we do an induction program...we induct new teachers about what we expect from them in teaching ELLs.”
Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “...I think of the WIDA standards...and they frame what the ELL standards are for WIDA within Common Core very well...” “... I don't see it as a challenge [PA Core],...I think it really helps to frame everything better, so that everybody is on the same page.” “the yearly assessment that PA gives, at least at the elementary level, it is called the WIDA ACCESS and is based on the Common Core.”
Collaborations and Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “I have to facilitate the process [of components of ESL literacy] for content teachers.” “I think Common Core addresses a bridgework or a crosswalks for an ESL teacher to talk to a content area teacher...” “I teach a course through the Teacher Education Institute in Florida, and one of my teachers in the last course was from Washington State.” “We are doing some things in Indiana that is proactive...we encourage all parents to get tutors at home, and since we are in a university town, we tell them to look on the [university] bulletin boards...our Salvation Army provides tutoring for free...[the university] has a program called SUMMER STARS...where their graduate level reading specialists come in and get six credits...and they sit right there next to our ELLs and give tutoring to them...”
Equity and Fairness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “...when you get a newcomer [ELL] as a junior or senior [in high school] and they are expected to graduate...I see that as an absolute challenge.” “The freight train is going every year, 3rd grade curriculum that train is going a little faster, 4th grade curriculum even faster, and you can't expect your ELLs to run at a right angle and jump on the train...you have to run along side the train and [eventually you] jump on...” “You have to meet the child where they are and take them forward.” “Washington State's y early assessments, which would be equivalent to our PSSA, was given in five languages...in New York State, they call it the REGENTS test, is given in three languages...so how does or would the federal government justify giving out money to various states...[based on] if they are meeting AMO's[Annual Measurable Objectives],or whatever, when some states are giving the test in another language?” “...you can sit down with a content are teacher and say, 'How are you providing comprehensible input?...How are you developing background knowledge?', then you are all on the same page. They are going to begin to appreciate and understand bilingual materials, using materials that respect that ELLs culture, whether it be for a reading choice, or a...book to read in front of the classroom.”

Note. Discourse overlaps among themes.

Summary Discussion: Research Participant 3 Interview

P3 answered a series of interview questions from the semi-structured interview protocol (Appendix E) as it related to P3's understandings and perceptions about PA Common Core (PA Core) ELA ELL literacy and its impact relative to teacher preparation and pedagogy. P3, being the most senior teacher among all ESL Specialists interviewed, and in her final year of teaching within a rural district situated closely to a university, presented with a breadth and depth of experience. P3 had over 30 years of experience in teaching, and 15 years teaching ELLs. P3 described her role as an ESL Specialist in terms of a "multifaceted role" where P2 is an "expert in teaching ESL", a "mentor" to other teachers, a "facilitator" of the "process" for the content teacher, and a "mediator". Unlike other ESL Specialist participants, P3 did not feel that PA Core presented a "greatest challenge" but rather, P3 felt this "bridgework" or "crosswalk" was one that "framed everything quite well, so that teachers of ELLs and content teachers can be speaking the same language and heading to the same goal....so everybody is on the same page...". P3 strongly supported the SIOP method of instruction for ELLs and felt PA Core "fit very well" with it, hoping that the state of PA would look at implementing this model for all teachers. P3 spoke about alignment in terms of content teachers and standards, believing that PA Core helps in that it will emphasize the importance of all teachers as teachers of all four language domains: reading, speaking, listening and writing. As such, P3 referenced the proactive requirement of a high school principal in the district requiring every teacher, regardless of content area, to provide two standards in their lesson objective: a content objective and a language objective. P3 appeared to have a realistic understanding about expectations for ELLs as she spoke about the great challenge ELLs face entering the system at a high school level, verses those that enter early in their elementary and middle school years. P3's

evidence of resource utilization and collaboration was supported when P3 spoke of collaborations, such as the university “SUMMER STARS” program, the “IU8” , “graduate students in the reading specialist program” and the “use of university bulletin boards” for tutoring help. Further support for P3 being an “expert in ESL” and a resource person that was knowledgeable, was evidenced as P3 stated, “I teach an on-line course through Teacher Education Institute in Florida,” in addition to referencing terms such as “comprehensible input”, “Lev Vygotsky”, the “Zone of Proximal Development”, and “AMO’s”. P3 believed collaboration between and among content teachers and ESL Specialists was important and that content teachers have an understanding of how to “provide comprehensible input” and “develop background knowledge” for ELLs, in addition to having an appreciation and understanding for “bilingual materials” that “respect ELLs culture”. Overall, P3 had a positive perspective about PA Common Core in its power to initiate collaborations and better understandings about ELL literacy. She suggested that PA Core could in fact be a “helping” tool in its capacity to facilitate a content teacher’s understanding about literacy in the areas of language.

Table 18

Example of Interview Discourse by Theme for Participant 4

Theme	Example of Interview Discourse
Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "...it is going to take some leadership on making that (ESL literacy collaborations with content teachers] happen. • "I think if you are a new teacher or even a seasoned teacher...go seek out you ESL teacher [on your own] ..." • "I think there are things that are set up by the state that are encouraging content teachers and other teachers to get involved."
Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "...that marriage [ESL teacher and content teacher collaboration] could be quite a wonderful thing if those two would ever get together." • "I think what is going on is that we are all at sort of a learning curve, I think we are going to miss an opportunity, if a few don't construct that time [planning and collaboration] and construct a way to have all parties get involved, dismantling and dissecting the CC, so what we are all understanding what we are doing and then relate it to the populations of students who we are trying to help meet that CC..." • "I think that...when we are talking about the rigor for the CC, sometimes for newcomers for example, that CC or state standards or even sometimes the ESL standards, they cannot be matched with the student just yet...the student is growing as a newcomer."
Collaborations and Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "It is my role to bring students into the English- speaking world...also working with families to make the experience of our ELLs the best it can be." • "It can also be that barriers with parents...so busy with their own schooling...they are sort of absent from the things that are going on." • "I know that...there is a school of thought that students should be put in ESL, basically in with the ESL teacher all day, until they have enough English to survive along side their peers. Well, that could be a tremendous amount of time." • I think that it is unfortunate, when you are traveling teacher, there are some challenges in being connected, not because of time or desire...not because there is an us vs. them kind of attitude...it is merely a time factor, where I believe in our schedule, we should be having time to collaborate with classroom teachers..." • "...it is building that relationship with the parent,... and you are trying to break through a lot cultural [barriers]... it could be a language barrier...lots of things and someone needs to spend time with that family."
Equity and Fairness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I can say without reservation that it [ELL entrance into a new school system]is vastly different than that school they have experienced with their child before." • "...you have a student that is learning English as a second, third, or fourth language, as well as having cognitive disabilities..." • "I think the challenge is...do they have enough support, whether that is graphic support or language support to help them produce like their peers if they are being measured by the CC, they need maybe some more teaching methods, different teaching strategies, as well as some kind of instructional support to make sure they are able to better match the CC." • "Teachers need assistance in making those accommodations, I think there is a whole other piece that the ESL teacher knows about that they could help the classroom teacher make happen."

Note. Discourse overlaps among themes.

Summary Discussion: Research Participant 4 Interview

P4 answered a series of interview questions from the semi-structured interview protocol (Appendix E) as it related to P4's understandings and perceptions about PA Common Core (PA Core) ELA ELL literacy and its impact relative to teacher preparation and pedagogy. P4 had 10 years of experience in teaching overall, and 6 years teaching ELLs as a "traveling teacher" employed by a rural school district, that P4 describes as "uniquely" situated within close proxemics of a university. P4 described her role as an ESL Specialist as a person who "brings students into the English-speaking world" both in school and outside of school in connections with parents and families, some of whom attend the local university. With reference to parents and families, P4 described many of the ELL parents as "university students" absent from their ELLs' experience, for which P4 serves as the "connector" for ELLs' parents and students. P4 helps parents make the connection by informing them of meeting and experiences that their child is having at school as well as orienting the parents to policy and practices of their "new school". P4 has seen in recent years, more identification of ELLs with special needs, as well as students with cognitive disabilities. With reference to PA Common Core, P4 feels that the "newcomers" are growing as a new student, and sometimes placing and aligning them to the ELP and CC standards is challenging. P4 also expressed concerns about the support that is provided to ELLs, and felt that additional teaching strategies, different teaching methods, and other kinds of instructional support may be needed. While P4 felt that all teachers in general need to engage in collaborations and preparations about literacy, due to the scheduling, time, and proxemics, doing so in the buildings and the district, was difficult. P4 believes it will take "some leadership" to make this happen and felt "a marriage" between content teachers, ESL Specialists and scheduling (time) would be "a wonderful thing". P4 cited a future ESL Symposium sponsored

by the state that she would be attending, for whom she was given permission to choose another content teacher to take with her. P4 felt uncertain about who to take, considering the newer teachers had coursework as required by the state, while the tenured teachers did not. Further, P4 felt that content teachers could capitalize on collaborations with ESL Specialists, by gaining insight into new teaching strategies that will not only prove positive gains for ELLs, but students in their regular education classrooms. Thus, collaborations she perceived had synergistic benefits. P4 sees PA teachers involved in a “learning curve” and “flux period” where teachers are trying to “figure out” what is “going on in their own field” where an opportunity will be missed if a “few” [leaders] don’t construct time and construct a way to have all parties get involved, “dismantling and dissecting CC” to understand the literacy behind the framework. Responding the impact of CC on instruction, assessment, and preparation, P4 perceived these areas a challenging for teachers and commented “we need to think about how we are delivering instruction”. Further, P4 added that assessments may “look different” and “vary” in the way teachers deliver and adapt them, noting the way a teacher “assesses a beginner is going to look vastly different then the way you are going to assess a student that is on the verge of exiting the ESL program, working along side of an English only peer”. P4, like P2, felt strongly about content teachers seeking out education about ELLs, whether it be through speaking to ESL Specialists, other teachers, or having your own “willingness” and motivation to seek out educational opportunities as it pertains to ELL literacy.

Table 19

Example of Interview Discourse by Theme for Participant 5

Theme	Example of Interview Discourse
Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “...for teachers, one of their greatest challenges is just understanding the academic language or tier two words they will be seeing through all the content areas...those have to be explicitly taught and reviewed all the time...in order for ELLs to understand that.” “I have noticed some of them [teachers] are nervous about how to teach the developing learners in their class...so whether they have or have not been modifying and adapting...I had a couple of the teachers come to me and say, ‘I am supposed to be teaching to the top of my class’, and I am thinking... that is not what CC is about. It may have more rigor...but you still have to scaffold and modify instruction so that all your students can reach that level...” “Every school district is required to have PD for their teachers concerning ELLs...and we...I am not sure address that need.” “I think sometimes they expect the ESL teacher to do that [modify and adapt materials]...and I think that they do not understand I am not a resource teacher and that is the teacher’s job to be adapting and modifying.”
Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “...I also collaborate with content area teachers, guidance counselors, and lots of other staff to ensure that my ELLs are succeeding in their other academic courses.” “I think ESL teachers and teachers that deal with ELLs students...we always hear...Simplify your language... adapt your language...say it in a different way...but now I am realizing...they have to start hearing those academic words, and I have to make sure they are including that in their writing.”
Collaborations and Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “I also make sure I advocate for my students and I really try to get them involved in lots of outside activities, both for them and their families as well.” “They [teachers] have to use the content Core standards with ELPS and they have to be using both in order to teach their ELLs.” I don’t think they [teachers] understand...even when I meet with them at the beginning of the year...I give them a whole resource guide...their scores, I give them the ELPs and they should be using those...with the CC, in order to guide their instruction...I do not think that is happening...and I think they have a very hard time adapting and modifying...even if they want to...I think they find it hard.”
Equity and Fairness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “I just think the greatest challenge for them[ELLs] in their content classes related to CC is making sure the teachers know how to modify and adapt for them... instruction and assessment...because you can’t have one without the other...it can’t be just one...you can just adapt one...it has to be instruction and assessment.” “One of the shifts is...it’s not just about narrative writing...they [ELLs] have to analyze...and provide evidence from the text...so they are forming their own opinions and conclusions...that is really hard for a lot of ELLs, because they come from countries where they are not expected to discuss and form opinions.” “I think the first one I am concerned about is that... they [ELLs] have to have a lot of nonfiction and informational texts and they have to gain knowledge through that. Well, they have to have background knowledge for whatever the subject that they are dealing with and they have to have background knowledge...so I think making sure the content teachers know that there may be some preparation before they actually get to that informational text is really important.”

Note. Discourse overlaps among themes.

P5 answered a series of interview questions from the semi-structured interview protocol (Appendix E) as it related to P5's understandings and perceptions about PA Common Core (PA Core) ELA ELL literacy and its impact relative to teacher preparation and pedagogy. P5 had 15 years of experience in teaching overall, and 11 years teaching ELLs, and was employed by a suburban school district. P5 described her role as an ESL Specialist as a person who is a teacher, collaborator, and advocate as she teaches "core content curriculum so students can become fluent conversational and academic speakers ...in the four domain areas: listening, speaking, reading, and writing". P5 also cited working with "content area teachers, guidance counselors and lots of other staff" to make sure the ELLs are successful. P5 felt one of the greatest challenges with this "paradigm shift" to CC, is in the area of content teacher instruction and assessment, where content teachers will need to know how to modify and adapt for ELLs and provide background knowledge for their informational texts, in addition to understanding the academic, tier two language. P5 also noted the need for students to provide evidence when they respond in writing to these texts, writing that will require forming an opinion, an "opinion" that in some countries is culturally not practiced, compounding the challenge for ELLs in the domain of writing. P5 noted the "nervousness" of content teachers about how to teach developing learners, and stressed the need for content teachers to scaffold their lessons, while constructing lessons and teaching that "go deeper" so all students can "reach that level". This will require teachers differing their teaching "format and method, giving "support" in the forms of "sentence starters" and language in general. This is where P5 perceives there is a disconnect. While P5 feels content teachers do their best to help the ELLs in the district, in cooperation with the "resource guide" (ie., WIDA scores, ELPS, data on ELL) P5 gives them at the beginning of year to help guide their instruction, P5 does not believe that content teachers understand [what to do for ELLs], and that

the content teachers have a hard time adapting and modifying. Additionally, P5 felt it is the content teacher's responsibility to adapt and modify as she declared, "I am not a resource teacher and that is the teacher's job to be adapting and modifying...". P5 expressed concern about the testing environment of content area classrooms for ELLs, stating, "I think they [ELLs] would prefer to be tested in a small group classroom" where she implied they feel more comfortable using supportive materials such as their "dictionary". P5 reiterated the need for content teachers to use CC standards with the ELPs, even though they are a "little different" and a "little more complex". In the district, P5 did not feel that teachers were adequately prepared about ELL literacy and trained how to teach ELLs, even though P5 has asked many times to assist in this area, P5 feels this is an area where the district can improve.

Table 20

Example of Interview Discourse by Theme for Participant 6

Theme	Example of Interview Discourse
Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “...so those students who do not perform proficient on the Keystone in the coming years are most likely going to have some kind of portfolio, which again, that’s just going to go, will trickle down to the ESL teacher who will help the ESL student prepare that portfolio.”
Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “...WIDA scores really are not part of the school and the teacher are being assessed...its strictly the ELLs Keystones score. Are you familiar with PVAAS?” when looking at my profile, in relationship to my students profile, with the PVAAS data they are only looking at...they are only looking at the Keystone Score...they do not take into consideration the gains the ELL is making with WIDA...so which is completely inconsistent with WIDA...because WIDA is the state mandated test...but they just totally disregard the data from that and they only go off of the Keystone score.” “They [teachers]are unfamiliar with their own curriculum right now because everything is being realigned [in the district], so they have not even thought of adaptations and modifications for ELLs...or any other struggling students [like] special education ELLs, they are really just trying to understand how it impacts their regular curriculum...not even looking at different demographics in their classroom...yet.” “Since CC is so new, it is up to the state to decide how CC aligns for ELLs. If you look on the states website, so far they have ‘ELL Overlays’. I am not sure who was involved...I mean it is their first attempt...I do not want to say there...it is not the greatest but I guess it is something.”
Collaborations and Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “I have found that a lot of my ELLs are less prepared for actual life outside of graduation...but they are more prepared to be successful on a state mandated test...so they are very good test takers...but they may not have the skills to interview for a job and maintain a job...and just life skills that you need.” “But I found with that with talking with my content area teachers, that it [ELL Overlays] is not very helpful and it may look good on paper, and the state has provided something...but when you look at those overlays...they skip several different areas of the CC...for example, if there are so many strands in secondary ELA, they only give examples of two of the strands where there are overlays and I guess the rest...your up to yourself to try and create your own overlays...so in planning, teachers need a lot more direction and guidance.”
Equity and Fairness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “the greatest challenge would be that,...at the state level they are expecting ELLs to perform at such high expectations in too short of an amount of time, so that’s the greatest challenge...I mean pretty much it is biologically impossible for a student to become English proficient in 1 to 2 years, like I think a lot of the CC demands of it, so more realistic expectations are really needed. “...WIDA scores really are not part of the school and the teachers are being assessed [Act 82 Teacher evaluation System]...its strictly the ELLs Keystones score. Are you familiar with PVAAS?” ...O.K., when looking at my profile, in relationship to my student’s profile, with the PVAAS data they are only looking at...they are only looking at the Keystone Score...they do not take into consideration the gains the ELL is making with WIDA...which is completely inconsistent with WIDA...because WIDA is the state mandated test...but they just totally disregard the data from that and they only go off of the Keystone...”

Note. Discourse overlaps among themes.

P6 answered a series of interview questions from the semi-structured interview protocol (Appendix E) as it related to P6's understandings and perceptions about PA Common Core (PA Core) ELA ELL literacy and its impact relative to teacher preparation and pedagogy. P6 had 16 years of experience in teaching overall, and 14 years teaching ELLs, working with "high school" ELLs, employed by a Western Pennsylvania suburban school district. P6 described her role as an ESL Specialist as a person who not only provides English language instruction in the four language domains, but who has many other roles which include that of "guidance counselor" and "social worker", in P6's dealings with the many family and emotional issues of ELLs that present themselves. P6 felt one of the biggest issues with PA ELA Core and ELL literacy is the high expectations for ELLs to perform in a short amount of time, especially at the high school level, perceiving it as "nearly impossible", and sees a need for "more realistic expectations". With reference to PA teacher evaluations and ELL assessments, P6 cites inconsistencies in the way PA state evaluates ESL Specialists, and contends when analyzing the teacher evaluation data in relationship to student data, "with the PVAAS data, they are only looking at...the Keystone score...they do not take into consideration the gains the ELL is making with WIDA...which is completely inconsistent with WIDA...because WIDA is [one of] the state mandated tests...but they [the state]...disregard the data from that, and they only go off of the Keystone." P6 also considers teachers being in a "realignment phase" where they are currently trying to understand content related to their "regular curriculum", so the content teacher has not even begun to think about modifications and adaptations for ELLs, describing this shift as "just too new". P6 perceives her high school ELLs as "very good test-takers" but not prepared for "life outside of graduation". In reference to how assessments will impact ELLs, P6 cites the high school Keystone as an important assessment for his/her ELLs, but is unsure how the outcome on

this test will impact ELLs that do not perform at a proficient level, suggesting that perhaps ELLs that do not score proficient, may be required to complete some kind of portfolio, that will “trickle down to the ESL teacher” who will help the ESL student prepare. Further, P6 found the PA State ELL Overlays as “not the greatest” suggesting, “I guess they are something” and questioned who was involved with their creation. P6 claims that a close analysis of the Overlays reveals only “two strands” of the “so many secondary ELA strands” with the teacher responsible for creating their “own overlays” [for the remaining strands that were omitted]. P6 felt that teachers must take initiative and be responsible for maintaining their own professional development as it relates to ELLs, which P6 feels may require “paying for” out of your own pocket, in the midst of state budget cuts. She suggests if you cannot attend conferences such as the “PA ESL Symposium”, then read articles on the topic. Overall, when asked, “Do you feel there is an integrated approach in school systems among ESL teachers and content area teachers?”, P6 felt it differed according to the school system and the position of the ESL Specialist holds, either as an itinerant teacher or employed directly by the district. P6 concluded by stating that “nobody really knows a lot about” CC and “educators are confused about it”. P6 cautions listening to responses of anyone who claims to be a “Common Core expert”.

Conclusion: Qualitative Interviews

The outcome of this inductive analysis of ESL Specialist interviews resulted in categories emerging into themes with relative frequency and overlap. As previously mentioned, these themes are positioned within a larger context of varying types of *capital* that influence and intersect these themes. For example, *Accountability* can be examined from the perspective of economic, human, and social capital and the interactions and intersections between them. More specifically, by holding “human capital” (people) *accountable*, where “social capital” (relationships) exist, “economic capital” is impacted. Further, through *Alignment*, human, social, cultural, and political capital intersect, again impacting economic capital. Similarly, *Collaborations and Connections* and *Equity and Fairness* share considerable overlapping categories and are impacted by varying degrees of different types of capital. While each theme’s categories share overlap, so too are they influenced and mediated by varying degrees of capital. The researcher further discusses these varying degrees of capital and presents a model in Chapter 5 of this research study.

Chapter Summary

Chapter 4 reported the findings attained through both quantitative and qualitative research. A mixed methods study was chosen by the researcher due to its potential for increasing the ability to understand teacher perceptions, understandings, attitudes, and preparedness related to PA Core ELA ELL literacy, from not only the audience of ESL Specialists, but PreK-12 teachers teaching in PA public schools. Based on the quantitative survey results of the statistical data reported through *Question Pro* and sent to SPSS for advanced analysis and the qualitative interviews conducted with six ESL Specialists, this chapter presented the following findings: (1) quantitative data from the 32 statements from the *2014 Teacher Instructional Practices, Attitudes,*

and Preparedness Survey Questionnaire Relative to PA Common Core ELA and ELL Literacy and the two qualitative open-ended questions on the survey, showed the degree of teacher understandings, teacher attitudes, and teacher perceptions, and teacher preparedness relative to PA Core ELA ELL Literacy and (2) qualitative data from the six ESL specialists resulted in the four themes emerging from the semi-structured ESL Specialist interviews mediated by human, social, cultural, political and economic capital: *Accountability, Alignment, Collaboration and Connections, and Equity and Fairness*. The survey data results indicate that while PA PreK-12 teachers feel ELL literacy is important, they lack understandings and preparation. The survey data further supports and explains specific areas and concepts relating to teacher attitudes, understandings, and preparedness as it relates to ELL literacy. Within the ESL Specialist interviews and the qualitative responses from the open-ended survey questions, the researcher not only identified compatible categories within discourses, but identified discourse that was inconsistent, ignored, omitted, or unspoken, so as not to provide an analysis of what is already known by the researcher, but to examine potential gaps that merit further discussion and investigation in Chapter 5. Chapter 5 will synthesize and discuss the significance of the findings as they relate to the research questions for this study. In addition, the triangulation of data in Chapter 5, will reveal convergence, overlap, contradictions, and omissions, and provide a valuable contribution to research on teacher pedagogy as it relates to ELL literacy relative to this paradigm shift in education.

Chapter V

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

AND

CONCLUSIONS

Overview

The goal of the final chapter of this research study is to review the purpose of the study, and present and discuss the meaning of the findings of qualitative interviews and the quantitative and qualitative survey data as they answer the research questions for this study. In addition, this chapter presents conclusions, with recommendations for further research and study.

Statement of the Problem

As previously noted, CCSS present challenges and impact pedagogy not only for our native English speakers, but for one of our fastest growing populations, our ELLs (Halladay & Moses, 2013; Williamson, Fitzgerald, & Stenner, 2013). Research by Short and Echevarria (2005) find students with non-English backgrounds are “the fastest-growing subset of the K-12 student population” (p. 9). By 2015, trajectories indicate that ELLs in U.S. schools will reach 10 million and, by 2025, nearly one out of every four public school students will be an English language learner (The National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition and Language Instruction, 2007). Dong (2004) endorses these findings and calls for the “...urgent need for all teachers to develop culturally sensitive and language appropriate instruction so that all students can succeed” (p. 202). However, Youngs and Youngs (2001) report that few classroom teachers are prepared to address the linguistic and cultural diversity present in classrooms today.

Given that each ELL student has a unique set of academic, social, emotional, and linguistic needs, which require teachers to use literacy intervention techniques and tools that

foster growth, to ensure not only academic success for the demands of Common Core for positioning ELLs for success beyond the classroom, it was important to examine teacher perceptions of ELL literacy and teacher preparedness relative to ELL Common Core literacy, to gain insight into CCSS and to understand its impact on ELL literacy.

Review of Methodology

The thirty-four (34) item survey-questionnaire (Appendix D) and the twelve (12) question interview protocol (Appendix E) used to guide the ESL Specialist interviews, were the methods chosen by the researcher to answer these questions. Both tools were vetted by a panel of experts in education consisting of the researcher's advisor, committee members, and a quantitative researcher in the education department. The data collected from these two methods served the purpose of gaining insight into teachers' knowledge, attitudes, understandings, and preparedness as it relates to PA Core ELA ELL literacy. Using a critical action research approach, with Social Cultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978) and Activity Theory (Engeström, 1999) underpinning this study, this the researcher interviewed six ESL Specialists and surveyed 100 PA PreK-12 public school teachers to accomplish this goal.

Discussion of Findings

As a conceptual framework for understanding this discussion, the researcher discusses these findings according to the research questions as follows: First, the researcher discusses the findings from the survey-questionnaire as it relates to overall teacher familiarity or use of ELL strategies and terms, teacher attitudes, understandings, and beliefs, and teacher preparedness as it relates to ELL literacy and current research. Next, the researcher discusses the ESL Specialist discourse emergent themes, presenting significant findings in interview discourse from six ESL Specialists as it parallels or contrasts with survey-questionnaire data as well as current existing

literature, offering strength or opposition, while also revealing gaps in previous findings and current literature, thus synthesizing the literature within the findings for congruency and omissions.

Research Question 1: Teacher Knowledge of ELL Instructional Practices, Strategies, and Terms

Teacher knowledge of ELL instructional practices, strategies, and terms varied, with some teachers reporting knowing more than one instructional practice, strategy, or term, while others reported knowing fewer. Across elementary, middle, and high school, teachers reported a higher percentage of familiarity or use of “Inquiry-Based Practices”, “RTI”, “Critical Thinking Strategies” and “Scaffolding” relative to PA ELA ELL literacy, and reported lesser knowledge of “Systematic Monitoring”, “Two-Way Content- Based Instruction”, and terms such as “BICS”, “CALPS” and “WIDA”. Overall, however, teachers reported little familiarity with or current use of instructional practices, strategies or terms related to ELL literacy. Considering that within CCSS literacy, the foundation from which PA Core was adopted, emphasis is placed on students being able to approach texts employing a critical “lens” of analysis, resulting a deeper understanding of content (Hattie, 2002), is it understandable that PreK-12 teachers would report having a higher general familiarity or use of strategies such as “Inquiry-Based Practices”, “RTI”, “Critical Thinking Strategies” and “Scaffolding” to meet the needs of their current student population which may or may not include ELLs. Yet, while those strategies reported higher use or familiarity, the percentage of teachers reporting their use, remains low. Similarly, terms directly related to ELL literacy such as “WIDA”, “PA ELP Standards”, “Guided Discourse” and “Interactive Modeling” reported little familiarity or use. Given that PreK-12 teachers are to effectively serve diverse populations of students, it is reasonable to expect that they will engage in interactions that benefit ELLs and understand terms that overlap content and language.

However, literature (Craighead & Ramanathan, 2007) reveals that while general education teachers are reflective practitioners who are committed to the success of ELLs, embracing duties associated with this population, they are also aware they lack knowledge related to ELLs, such as ELL language learning processes, and academic knowledge for making decisions regarding ELLs. This research not only underscores the need for teachers to be knowledgeable about ELL strategies that work for ELLs, but to understand and implement strategies they exercise with integrity, for optimal achievement of their students. Recent research (Short, Echevarría, & Richards-Tutor, 2011) on the SIOP method of instruction for ELLs confirms this, and indicates that students with teachers who are trained in the strategy and maintain the integrity of the protocol while implementing it, achieve significantly higher on assessments, than those students with teachers that were not maintaining the integrity of the protocol.

Responses from the open-ended questions in the survey, further confirmed that teachers lack familiarity with or use of strategies, protocols, and terms related to ELL literacy. Of the fifty (50) respondents, when asked either question about their least or greatest understanding about literacy as it relates to PA Core ELL ELA Literacy, common responses for each question were “Very Little” (P4), “None” (P27, P32, P81, P82) , and one outlier (P3) that reported, “All areas. This makes no sense. As a veteran teacher, you must want us to look bad, especially #8, never heard of any.”

Research Question 2 and 3: Teacher Attitudes and Beliefs

Relative to PA Core ELA ELL Literacy

Teacher attitudes and beliefs were revealed by examining survey items 9 -16. The researcher chose to analyze these two questions together, due to the overlap of the topic. Overall, a majority (80%) of PreK-12 teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they believed it is important

for all teachers to understand PA Common Core literacy as it applies to English language learners and believed that and in order to be an effective teacher, one needs to be aware of cultural differences in the classroom. Teacher awareness of cultural differences can lead to practices that support culturally responsive pedagogy and practices (Gay, 2000, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2006; Orosco & O'Connor, 2014). In addition, from a sociocultural perspective (Vygotsky, 1978) teachers are offered the opportunity to understand complex linguistic and cultural situations that influence student learning. Similar to the above findings, 80% of the teachers also reported that they strongly agreed or agreed ELL literacy was important to them. However, while the teacher attitudes reflected one that felt ELL multicultural awareness and ELL literacy was important, 45% or more of the PreK-12 teachers reported they were neutral or disagreed that the academic expectations for PA Common Core literacy are the same for all students, regardless of their English language abilities, and were neutral or disagreed that they believed ELLs can successfully meet the demands of PA Common Core literacy. This has several implications for ELL literacy. First, with reference to teacher expectations for ELLs, teachers must hold high expectations for ELLs, while preparing effectively leveled lessons that meet the needs of these learners, while recognizing that teacher effectiveness is significantly related to student achievement and the students' own sense of efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Current literature further confirms that teachers' beliefs that are linked to their socio-cultural backgrounds can impact ELLs' academic lives. These beliefs further shape what teachers teach and how they teach, in working with ELLs. By teachers reflecting about their thinking, engaging in metacognition, teaching and learning can be transformed and more equitable teaching practices for ELLs can be delivered (Jenna Min, 2014).

Finally, thirty-eight percent (38%) of the PreK-12 teachers reported they were neutral, disagreed, or strongly disagreed with the statement “I support the PA Common Core goals of multicultural-multilingual literacy”. This relative neutrality or disagreement of PA PreK-12 teachers about the goals CCSS goals for multicultural literacy, may find support in recent research comparing the language demands of the CCSS-ELA with those of English language arts (ELA) and English language proficiency (ELP) standards from 3 states at Grade 8 (Wolf, Yuan, Blood & Huang, 2014). Findings revealed that teachers’ understandings of the CCSS expressed varying interpretations of the standards. In not fully understanding CCSS goals, lack of support can result. This underscores the need for adequate teacher preparation and education about the CC ELA and ELP standards, driving teacher practice.

Research Question 4: Teacher Preparedness Relative to PA Core ELA ELL Literacy

Overall, 60% or more PA PreK-12 teachers disagreed, strongly disagreed, or were neutral about their district providing opportunities to prepare teachers to meet the PA Common Core standards for teaching ELLs and their current educational training and experience, preparing them to successfully meet the needs of teaching English Language Learners relative to PA Common Core State ELA Standards. Further, these teachers reported some to little preparatory materials to adequately teach ELLs. Current research (Chu & Garcia, 2014; Gunn, Bennett, Evans, Peterson, & Welsh, 2013; Lucas & Villegas, 2013), calls for the need for culturally responsive practices for pre-service teachers in higher education and educators at all levels within education.

Next, PA PreK-12 teachers disagreed that ESL teachers and content area teachers share course content and confer daily in their school to align course content and make texts accessible for English language learners. Last, based on their current experience and training in education,

PA PreK-12 teachers expressed similar disagreement about feeling comfortable implementing interventions for ELLs with learning and cognitive disabilities to assist them in meeting PA Common Core Standards. Both collaboration and alignment are critical pieces in literacy instruction for ELLs and ELLs with special needs.

While research (Cannon & Guardino, 2012; Liasidou, 2013; Hart, Cheatham & Jimenez-Silva, 2012) is beginning to spawn relative to ELLs with special needs, there is much research to be done. Furthermore, there is a need for school counselors to have an understanding of the emotional needs of ELLs, that result from the stressors of transitioning.

Research Question 5: ESL Specialist Interviews

The ESL Specialist semi-structured interviews revealed participants understandings and perceptions about PA Common Core (PA Core) ELA ELL literacy and its impact relative to teacher preparation and pedagogy. In all ESL Specialist interviews, as previously evidenced, categories emerged into four (4) themes: *Accountability*, *Alignment*, *Collaboration and Connections*, and *Equity and Fairness*, and did so with relative frequency and overlap. Further, these situate within and are influenced by varying types of capital.

Researchers (Becker, 1996; Bordieu, 2005; Coleman, 1986; Shultz, 1961) holding differing perspectives of capital, have enriched understandings of capital and bolstered interdisciplinary connections between sociology and economics. Relative to economics, the term “capital” is one of the elements of production. More specifically, “capital” has a special significance: as it comes into existence by means of economic activity, it can be basis of further production. Production includes a network of connected entities which include but are not limited to people (human capital), interactions (social capital), and tools influenced by, leveraged, mediated, augmented or even mitigated by contextual factors embedded within

cultural (ie., ethnicities, cultures) and political capital (ie., policy, laws, curriculum). Together these impact each other and influence economic capital. Every network of social relations and each kind of social structure fosters a sort of social capital, social capital containing participants, holding human capital, maintaining deliberately developed relations until they are advantageous. As such, social capital has an extremely important impact on the production of the next generation's human capital. Further, from Portes' and Sensenbrenner's (1993) understanding, the concept of social capital does not focus merely on privileged situations.

Coleman (1986), examined the most essential component of human capital, *accretion learning*, nestled in a network of interpersonal relationships. As a result of his research, the impact of interpersonal relationships occurring in different social areas, such as family bounds or religious relations, was shown to greatly affect the success of the individual's learning efforts. In Coleman's understanding, *human capital* is realized in the learned abilities and knowledge of the individual. It is created by transforming people, thus enriching them with skills and abilities for new types of activities and cognitive knowledge matter. As a result, *social capital* impacts the production of the next generation's *human capital*. Becker (1964) introduced the notion of *personal capital*, which incorporates *human* and *social capital* and depicts them as mutually interdependent.

Bourdieu extends discussion on social capital, and discusses the pivotal role that schools play in replicating social and cultural inequalities (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). He explains that it is the culture of the dominant group—that is, the group that controls the economic, political, and social resources—that is represented in schools. Thus, educational institutions propagate the cultural capital of the dominant. It then remains then, the challenge for leadership to mediate the capital of the dominant group to foster equitable outcomes.

The overlap of these themes, mediated by varying degrees of aforementioned capital, create of network of interactions described much like Engestrom's (1987) *Activity Theory* grounding this research. *Activity Theory* seeks to understand human activity as complex processes that involves actors (users, subjects) interacting within complex systems within real-life environments. These complex processes also take into consideration the history of the actor(s), culture, role of the artifact, and motivations (Engestrom, 1987). These overlapping categorical themes, where such complex processes and interactions exist, are captured by the researcher in the *Continuous Planned Collaborative Closely Aligned Literacy Model* (Figure 12).

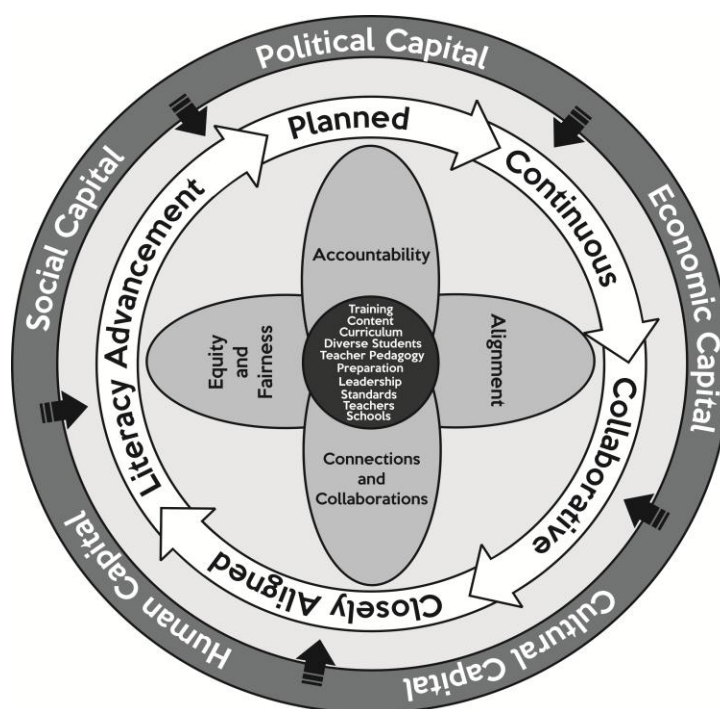


Figure 12. *Continuous Planned Collaborative Closely Aligned Literacy Model* emerging from ESL semi-structured interviews in this study.

The participant discourse, emerging into themes, influenced by varying capital, reflects significant findings consistent with current existing literature relating to CC ELA and ELL

literacy. In order to more fully understand the significance of the themes that emerged, it is important to identify significant findings from participant discourse that not only supports survey findings, but extends these findings, and corroborates current and existing research.

As a conceptual framework for this discussion, the researcher will introduce significant discourse as they are revealed in themes relating to summarized categories. Discourse findings share considerable overlap, both within and between themes, and support and extend survey data and open-ended questions. As a result, the discussion here will reflect this overlap. Table 21 presents significant findings as they directly related to participant discourse, and Table 22 presents a summary of categorical findings by theme, and as they support and extend the interviews, survey findings and current existing research. In addition, gaps and nuances are discussed that were not overtly uncovered in the survey and interview findings, but revealed in existing literature. Findings in Table 21 are collapsed and summarized in Table 22. The findings that were not revealed in this research study, but were found in current literature, are marked with an asterisk (*) in Table 22.

Table 21

Significant Findings in ESL Specialist Interview Discourse Collapsed

	Accountability	Alignment	Collaborations and Connections	Equity and Fairness
P1	-Language and content objective "Teachers don't give good assessments, because they are objective."	"I am about 70% informational texts..." "...ELA objectives in our ESL Specialist lesson plans..."	"I have not even begun to talk about the learning styles... and different kinds of intelligence [of ELLs]."	"They [ELLs] need to think abstractly...but he never learned to think abstractly in his country." "Content teachers need to think of alternative assessments [for ELLs]...they are going to have to modify a lot." "More nonfiction and less poetry...but it [fiction] is fun for kids."
P2	-BEC -Professional development lacking for ELLs due to other priorities designated by strategic plans "We had a mock audit...it was pointed out that we should have professional development that is documented [for ELLs]."	"I work through the Title 3 Consortium..."	"Getting to know every single aspect of the [ELL] child...just not stereotyping them, but looking at the whole child...their culture."	-TransPerfect (language) -TransACT (documents) "...they [ELLs] are not going to produce the say way." "[ELL] materials that are appropriate..."
P3	"It [PA Core ELA ELL literacy] can help a content teacher realize that they are...every teacher is a teacher of language."	"You have two objectives for every lesson...your language...and content objective."	-WIDA, WIDA ACCESS, PA Core "It [PA Core ELA ELL literacy] frames everything better so that everybody is on the same page." "It is [CC] a bridgework or cross walk for an ESL teacher to talk to a content teacher..." -SUMMER STARS Program -ELPS, PA Core Standards	"The freight train is going faster every year...and you can't expect your ELL to run at a right angle and jump on..." "You have to meet the child where they are, and move them forward." Assessments in other languages and AMO's "...background knowledge and comprehensible input..." "...reading choices (culturally responsive) that respect ELLs culture..."
P4	"It going to take some leadership to make this [collaborations between teachers and ESL Specialists] happen."	"that marriage [ESL teacher and content teacher] could be a wonderful thing." "rigor cannot be matched with the student [upon initial arrival of ELL] as they are growing as a newcomer."	"... when you are a traveling teacher, there are some challenges in being connected." "It is building that relationship with the parent...and you are trying to break through a lot of cultural barriers..."	"You have a student who is learning a language as a second, third, or fourth language, as well as having cognitive disabilities." "...do they[ELLs] have enough support[graphic, language] to help them produce like their peers?...they may need different teaching methods and strategies...instructional support."
P5	-Content teacher use of academic and tiered language -Modifying, adapting, scaffolding	"I am not a resource person...it is the teacher's job to be adapting and modifying..." "...make sure they [teachers] are including that [academic language] in their writing."	"I collaborate with content teachers, guidance counselors and lots of other staff." "Simplify your language...adapt your language...but...[you have to be careful]." "...outside activities...and their families as well." "I don't think teachers understand...[how to use CC, ELPs and data (WIDA) on ELLs to guide instruction]."	"...you can't just adapt one, it has to be instruction and assessment." "so they [ELLs] are forming their own opinions and conclusions [in response to material they read]...but it is hard when they come from countries that do not support that [expressing opinions]." "...there is [emphasis] on a lot of nonfiction and informational texts...they have to have background knowledge..."
P6	-PA Keystone Exams -Act 82 Teacher Evaluation -CC Assessments	-WIDA -PA Keystone Exams -PVASS	"...they [ELLs] are less prepared for actual life outside of graduation." "PA ELL Overlays are not very helpful."	"...more realistic expectations are needed [for ELLs to become proficient in 1-2 years at the high school level]."

Table 22

Summary Findings in Interview Discourse and Open-ended Survey Items

Theme	Significant Findings Supporting Research
Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documented district professional development for ELLs for future audits • Content areas teachers instruction alignment with higher level thinking tasks • Content teachers incorporating ELA (Content) and WIDA/ELA (Language) objectives into every lesson • Valid Assessments • Knowledge of Laws and Policy • Culturally Responsive Leadership* that is Competency Based • Leadership Expectations for ELLs • All teachers as teacher of language literacy • Teacher Induction Programs • University Preparation Programs • School Counselors*
Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of Nonfiction vs. Fiction Impacting Teacher Pedagogy and Lesson Calibration* • ELA objectives in all ESL Specialist lesson plans • Learning styles of ELLs, Different Intelligences of ELLs • Watered- down curriculum vs. authentic curriculum • Teacher Preparation , Planning, Instruction(Pedagogy) • WIDA, PA State Assessment, and PA Teacher Evaluation Tool(Act 82) • Alternative Assessments (Formative and Summative) • Milieu of Laws and Policy* • Policy, Standards, Content, Practice, Preparation • Teacher Testing for Teacher Education Programs* • Guidance Counselors • Discursive Practices
Collaborations and Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content area teachers, Administration, ESL Teachers, Master Schedule Organizational Structure, Outside Resources • Background Knowledge of ELLs (Family and Educational History) • Good Test Takers vs. Career and Life Readiness • Peer Supports
Equity and Fairness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modifying, Differentiating, Scaffolding, and Adapting for ELLs • Learning Differences vs. Learning Disability • Cognitive and Emotional Needs • Physical, Visual and Hearing Challenged • Alternative and Equitable Assessments (Summative and Formative) • ELL Expectations and Demands • TRANSPERFECT, TRANSACT • Funding Formulas by State • Culturally Responsive Teaching • Materials (Library, Text Bias, Classroom Reading Materials) • Background Knowledge • Leadership Ethnic Background Demographics*

Note. Findings overlap among themes

To understand the themes that emerged and their overlap, each theme is discussed here in more detail, with related evidence from current literature.

Accountability. As revealed in the in the interviews, teachers, leaders, policy makers, institutions of higher education, and training programs needs to be held accountable for requiring culturally responsive teaching pedagogy. Culturally responsive teaching as described by Gay, (2000) uses students' culture and background as a conduit, leveraging it to create lessons to meet the needs of diverse learners. Evidence (Schott Foundation, 2009) shows that this is not happening, and further finds that the projected total annual economic burden to American taxpayers due to inequities is estimated at 59.2 billion. Further, the consequences for social and civic impact are a concern, specifically as they relate to underemployment, health risks, and incarceration. Further, Nieto, Bode, Raible, and Kang (2008) argue in practice, "political and transformative theories of multicultural education have often been neglected...As a result, even though multicultural education has made an important contribution to schools and communities, few long-term institutional practices have taken root" (p. 178.) As P4 stated, "*it is going to take leadership to make this [collaborations] happen.*" Yet, current literature (Taliaferro, 2011) finds that culturally responsive leadership, based on competency, is lacking, arguing that the "traditional mindscape of current leadership fails to address the central aspect needed to redefine schools for today's twenty-first century leadership" and suggests that culturally responsive modalities will help to bridge this gap and ensure success for all students (p. 3). Twenty-first century leaders must be informed by barriers of cultural ineptness, and strive to understand diverse perspectives, and be competent in certain skill sets that are measureable. Leadership must not only be culturally responsive but competency-based, as a result. In addition, leadership must also be held responsible for professional development related to ELL literacy, but as P2

states, “Professional development is lacking for teachers about ELLs, due to other priorities designated in the strategic plan,” and P2 further elaborates, “We had a mock audit and it was pointed out that we should have professional development that is documented, in case it is needed for future audits.” Considering that by 2025, one in four students (25%) nationwide will be an ELL, this is a concern (NCLEA, 2007) .

Collaborations must extend beyond classrooms and school systems, and marry with policy and law that has impacted instructional development of ELLs. While ELL policy and law reflects change that has occurred in the U.S. over the past forty years, Solomon (2008) argues “its [policy and law] maturity has been thwarted, due to ideological panaceas of the educational policy that is influenced by various political ideologies and instructional dilemmas faced by teachers of ELLs” (p. 1-2). Further, she argues this disruptive cycle has suffocated the pedagogy of ELLs, for which they are caught in between, resulting in misalignment and struggle between policy and practice. Relative to policy and practice, and seemingly important, teachers must self-educate regarding local, state, and national ELL initiatives that impact them, becoming informed practitioners in their field. Likewise, teachers must engage in culturally responsive skill-based instruction that teaches reading, writing, speaking and listening. As is evidenced by P3, “...every teacher is a teacher of language.” Current literature (Course Crafters, I., 2012) corroborates these findings charging, “English language learners throughout the state must be included in core academic instruction. ELLs must be taught by effective, highly qualified teachers, certified in the core content area in which they teach. All teachers must now include language acquisition and development strategies in instructional delivery” (p. 39).

Alignment. Alignment of all systems relating to ELL literacy is critical. From efforts made at national levels, to state and local initiatives, such as instructional practices and materials

implemented in teacher practice. As P1, and P3 state with reference to their practice, “I have ELA objectives in my ESL lesson plans” and “You have two objectives for every lesson, ... your language objective and your content objective.” In addition, P5 expresses concern about the level of knowledge content teachers have about tiered language, and whether they are or know how to incorporate it in lesson planning and instruction, while P1 is concerned about the emphasis on nonfiction and informational texts and states, “There is more nonfiction and less poetry, and that is a concern. It [fiction] is fun for the kids.” This notion of a percentage of certain content, such as nonfiction, being emphasized over another, can be investigated under the umbrella of curricular and instructional calibration of lessons. Curriculum calibration, a process of determining the alignment of instructional materials to the rigor of the CC standards, also consists of an objective review of student assignments for alignment to the CCSS shifts and assessments. Included in this practice, are suggestions for how to modify materials to meet these rigorous demands. One such modification or area that needs to be considered is the emphasis on nonfiction and fiction, as it applies to CC standards, where there is an emphasis on the informational and nonfiction texts (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices [NGA] & Council of Chief State Schools Officers [CCSSO], 2010). In addition, the fact that reading these texts does not show direct improvement in achievement and could possibly show an imbalance in reading achievement should be considered (Shanahan, 2013). As P1 asserts, “I am about 70% informational texts,” yet developers of CC argue, “The percentages...reflect the sum of student reading, not just reading in ELA [English language arts] settings. Teachers of senior English classes, for example, are not required to devote 70 percent of reading to informational texts. Rather, 70 percent of student reading across the grade should be

informational” (NGA & CCSSO, 2010, p. 5). Considering this, questions remain about the impact of teaching certain percentages of content, over another.

One study by Wolf, Blood, and Huang (2014), investigated the language demands in the CCSS for English language learners. Two implications emerged: First, it is very important that ELLs be “given opportunities to engage in literacy tasks involving higher order academic language functions” (p. 49). Second, the CCSS tend to leave out basic skills for language acquisition, focusing instead on outlining higher expectations for student performance by the end of each grade level. For ELL students and their teachers, then, emphasis must be on “building foundational skills while engaging in higher order tasks” (p. 50).

Another finding that was revealed relates to the changing role of the ESL Specialist. P1, P2, P3, P4, and P6 all viewed themselves as resources specialists who were attempting, albeit time and scheduling constraints, to work collaboratively with content area teachers, while P5 asserts, “I am not a resource person, it is the [content] teacher’s job to be adapting and modifying.” This conflicting response, prompts the question, “What are the roles of ESL Specialists?” Valdes, Kibler, and Walqui (2104) report the answer lies within two key challenges: (1) language practices required by the new standards (conceptual understandings, analytical tasks, engaging with complex texts, constructing valid arguments, synthesis of ideas) and (2) inclusion of ELLs in new standards aligned instruction. Further, ESL Specialists must be knowledgeable about placement, law, and theories that underlie practices (p.10-14). Moreover, they must also be supporting teachers with resources and expertise (p.25). As a result, they contend preparation must be redefined for ESL professionals (p.26). ESL Specialist certifications, over the past decade, in Pennsylvania, have undergone changes in the requirement for obtaining ESL Specialist Certification. (<http://www.education.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/>)

community/applications_for_certification/8649/pde_338_ps_-_esl_program_specialist/506894). Ideally, due to the strong emphasis on language in the four domains of speaking, reading, writing and listening, ESL Specialists and teacher candidates should be required to demonstrate knowledge, at minimum, in the areas of reading, writing and speaking.

Finally, a finding revealed by P6 pertaining to alignment, was concern about inequitable alignment of WIDA, PA Keystone, and the way reporting affects PA teacher evaluations, for teachers of ELLs. P6 reports "...WIDA scores really are not part of the school, and the teachers are being assessed [Act 82 Teacher Evaluation System]...it's strictly the ELLs Keystone's score. Are you familiar with PVAAS?"...O.K., when looking at my profile, in relationship to my students profile, with the PVAAS data, they [the state] are only looking at the Keystone score...they do not take into consideration the gains the ELL is making with WIDA...which is completely inconsistent with WIDA...because WIDA is the state mandated test...but they just totally disregard the data from that and they only go off of the Keystone." This lack of alignment has ramifications for data impacting teacher evaluation scores for the PA Teacher Effectiveness System, of PA Act 82: Teacher Evaluation Law. While Act 82 is currently being implemented within school districts across the state, and considered a tool "for making progress" in the area of teacher accountability, Tucker (2015) contends that this tool is based in an industrial model, a model grounded in a theory of industrial management, and as a result, is obsolete (<http://www.ncee.org/2015/01/tuckers-lens-the-rise-of-intelligent-machines-implications-for-education/>). He proposes a different accountability model, one that is a professional development system, an accountability system, and a continual improvement system.

Collaborations and Connections. The theme of collaboration and connections was interwoven throughout much of the discourse among ESL Specialists. While both survey

findings revealed content teachers and ESL Specialists do not collaborate, either due to scheduling issues, time, being an itinerant teacher, P4 felt that a “marriage” of this type would be a “wonderful thing.” P3, referenced PA Core ELA ELL literacy as a “bridgework” or “crosswalk” for content teachers and ESL Specialist to be on the “same page” and speaking the “same language”. In addition, P3 spoke of collaborations the district had with a local university, and other peer university “tutors” as well as the Summer S.T.A.R.S. where reading specialists from the university team up with ELL students in the district for instruction in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. English language learners require teaching where ELLs are explicitly taught and collaborative. Without explicit and extensive instruction in English vocabulary within a variety of diverse contexts, ELLs will struggle to understand texts and may demonstrate signs of “word calling”—fluent reading of text with little to no actual understanding of what they are reading. This non-explicit instruction compounds the issue of ELLs already having greater challenges using semantic and syntactic cues to determine the meanings of words they are able to decode (Gregory, 1996). This underscores the need for partnerships in ELL instruction as transformative and meaningful, and producing collaborations rooted in social equality. Further, teachers must understand the need to engage in authentic language instruction.

Speaking to this idea of connections, P5 voiced concerns about teachers not understanding how to mesh PA Core, ELPS, WIDA and ELL data, to guide ELL instruction, stating “they don’t understand” how to use CC, ELPS and data to guide instruction. This finding highlights the need for teacher education about how to use data to inform instruction. If data is not used correctly, it will deliver results that can further foster inequity.

Speaking further to collaborations and connections, P1 pointed out that teachers need to understand ELLs “unique learning styles”, who also share “different kinds of intelligences”. P3 felt

it important to connect with every child, “getting to know every aspect, just not stereotyping them, but looking at the whole child...their culture.” P4 echoed similar sentiments, stating, “It is building that relationship with the parent...and you are trying to break down cultural barriers.” P6 reported that ELLs have become inherently “good test takers”, however, they are “less prepared for life outside of graduation.” This comment stands in stark contrast to one of the goals CC proposes to promote: college and career readiness for all students (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices [NGA] & Council of Chief State Schools Officers [CCSSO], 2010).

Equity and Fairness. Creating fair and equitable educational opportunities as revealed in the data and current literature, included examining special needs populations, providing alternative assessments, and engaging in equitable discursive practices. In addition, it was revealed that teachers need to be teaching with equitable curricular materials, while states need to be adopting funding formulas within and between states that reflect diversity proportionately. Last, teachers need to be building background knowledge for understanding texts that is equitable, and human resource personnel need to be engaging in hiring practices that reflect hiring employees from diverse backgrounds.

Education standards will not impact student achievement equitably, unless they are combined with policy and practices that specifically address inequity. Providing alternative learning experiences, where teachers modify, adapt, scaffold, and differentiate, is critical. As P5 argues, “...you cannot just adapt one, it has to be instruction and assessment” if ELLs are going to be academically successful. In addition, instruction for ELLs includes more than modifying, as P3 addresses culturally relevant materials for ELLs and suggests teachers need to aware of “reading choices that respect the ELLs culture.” Reading materials, such as novels, stories, and poems reflect the society and culture for which they were written. Related to reading choices

that reflect an ELLs background, the degree to which readers share the same cultural background as the literature they are reading impacts their comprehension of the text (Chamot & O'Malley, 1994).

P1 references ELLs prior literary experiences, and states, “They need to think abstractly...but they never learned to think like that in their country.” Similarly, P5 comments about the literacy tasks that ELLs are asked to perform, and argues, “...they are forming their opinions and conclusions [in response to material they read], but it hard for them when they come from countries that do not support that.” Research supports that the background knowledge and previous literacy experiences ELLs have had may differ greatly from their native English-speaking peers (Garcia, 1991; Jimenez, Garcia & Pearson, 1996). Instructional practices then must connect to the ELLs cultural frames of reference and their personal experience. The challenge for teachers is gaining background knowledge about the ELL, merging it with instruction, while at the same time helping the student move beyond their cultural boundaries (Banks and Banks, 1993).

Equity not only must be viewed in terms of instructional practices and materials that meet the needs of ELLs, but equity also needs to be understood in relationship to assessments, both formative and summative, that reflect the needs of the ELLs. P1 asserts, “Content teachers need to think of alternative assessments...they are going to have to modify a lot...”, while P2 points out, “They [ELLs] are not going to produce the same way,” while P5 acknowledges, “teachers are going to need assistance in making those accommodations.” P3 references the states of Washington and New York speaking about their annual assessments that are given in languages other than English, and questions, “How can states justify giving out money based on AMO’s, when states are only giving the assessment in one language?”

Teachers need to examine how they are assessing learning, and align it with the backgrounds and needs of ELLs, using it as leverage to bolster achievement, not deter it. Further, states need to examine the languages and the methods for the way they deliver assessments, and seek alignment. The while testing plans differ on accommodations for ELLs, consortia such as Smarter Balanced group and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers, or PARC seek more-inclusive experience for ELLs, special education students. For example, student will have access to highlighter tools, text-to-speech (read aloud), braille, stacked translation, and glossaries in languages other than English (Heitin, 2014). While it is a movement in the right direction for equity in assessments, as P1 stated, “What is fair is not what is equal, it is what meets the individual need of that student.” These needs include more individualized resources for assessments to meet the needs of these diverse students.

Equitable learning environments take into consideration all learners, including those students that have special needs. P4, speaking to the challenges ELLs face, states, “You have a student who is learning a language as a second, third, or fourth language, as well as having cognitive disabilities, which presents a challenge.” Research (Gage, Gersten, Sugai, & Newman-Gonchar, 2013; Nguyen, 2012; Mohamud & Abniur, 2010; McCardle, McCarthy & Leos, 2005) is growing in the area of ELLs with special needs. Although English learners currently represent approximately 21% of all students in U.S. schools, little is known about their representation in the EBD category (Aud et al., 2010). There has been disproportionate representation of English learners in special education. One challenge that remains it is unclear how certain learning disabilities manifest themselves indifferent cultures (McCardle, McCarthy & Leos, 2005). Research (Orosco & O’Connor, 2014) indicates that that the success of special education with ELLs at the elementary education level might be dependent on how well the special education teacher aligns and integrates culturally responsive

instruction with ELLs' cultural and linguistic needs. Through collaborative efforts of special education teachers, ESL Specialists, and content area teachers, it is evidenced that progress can be made (Nguyen, 2012).

Not revealed in the researcher's findings, but revealed in the review of literature (Hongmei, 2014; Smart, & Marshall, 2013) and related to equity, is the concept of discursive practices. Teacher and leadership discourse, both in the classroom and beyond it shapes the way instruction is delivered. As a result, conversation needs happen about how to align discourse, so that it meets the needs of diverse learners and augments instruction.

Nationally, education reform and standards revision, require preparing and equipping all students for success in the 21st century diverse world we live in. There are six goals identified and endorsed by ten Equity Assistance Centers (EAC) and supported by Common Core. These include (1) comparably high academic achievement and other positive outcomes for all students on all achievement indicators, (2) equitable access and inclusion, (3) equitable treatment, (4) equitable resource distribution, (5) equitable opportunity to learn and (6) shared responsibility (Scott, 2002).

Interpretations of Findings

Based on the quantitative and qualitative open-ended survey-questionnaire data of PA teacher attitudes, understandings, and preparedness about PA Core ELA ELL literacy, it is revealed that while teachers attitudes reflects one where teachers believe multicultural literacy is important to them, as it relates to PA Core ELA ELL literacy, PA PreK-12 teachers lack understandings and preparation about ESL and ELL strategies, terms, methods, assessments, and interventions for teaching ELLs. In addition, the qualitative ESL Specialists interviews provide both support and conflicting data about teacher attitudes, understandings and preparedness. As a result, themes of *Accountability, Alignment, Collaboration and Connections*, and *Equity and*

Fairness emerged, influenced and mediated by social, cultural, political, human, and economic capital. Each ELL enters the U.S. classroom with unique social, academic, linguistic, and emotional needs. This positions each ELL at a certain locus on a literacy continuum. Both data sets reinforce the view that, as a result of ELLs' unique needs, there is a need for all stakeholders, systems, and instruments, to be held accountable, collaborating and connecting within, between and beyond, to establish seamless alignment, and foster equitable and fair outcomes. According to TESOL, this paradigm shift to Common Core literacy, requires teachers to move from teaching content and language with a previous focus on vocabulary and grammar, to one which requires teachers to teach content and language with focus on language concepts of discourse, complex texts, tiered language, explanation, argumentation, purpose, text structures, and vocabulary practices. As a result, this requires "a different collaboration at all levels", including but not limited to collaboration between students, teachers, leadership at the state, local, and national levels, but also "pre-and in-service providers, test makers, publishers and funders" (TESOL International Association, 2013, p. 4). Considering this, archaic systems that contradict literacy practices deterring growth, will need to be dismantled, and researched-based equitable practices adopted.

Limitations of the Study

1. Data collection is limited to interviews from ESL specialists and data collected from Pennsylvania PreK-12 public school teachers.
2. This study is limited in the collection of data from a purposive sample and cannot generally be applied to a larger population, only suggested.
3. The generalizability or transferability of the findings of the study may not be able to be transferred from this setting to another.

4. Because of the interpretive nature of the qualitative research, the researcher may introduce her bias into the analysis of the findings.

Delimitations

1. The study is delimited by the research questions I have chosen.
2. The study is delimited by the methods I have chosen to employ the findings.
3. The study is delimited to K-12 public school teachers and ESL Specialists of Pennsylvania. The uniqueness of the study within a specific context makes it difficult to replicate exactly in another context (Creswell, 2012).
4. This study, being conducted over a certain interval of time, is a snap shot of the time in which it was conducted.

Recommendations and Considerations for Future Research

Based on the results of this study, the researcher recommends this research can be utilized by:

1. Informing policy, leadership, classroom practice, faculty and support staff, parents and families, and all stakeholders of the impact of culturally responsive practices and policy, and its impact on ELL literacy.

In addition to serving as an informative tool, this study has contributed to the increasing research in the areas of ELL literacy. In addition, the researcher makes the following suggestions for further research:

1. There is a need for research focusing on ELLs with learning, social, and cognitive issues and disabilities.
2. Related to this, there is a need for research on teacher training and teaching with digital content, differentiated or adaptive.

3. Additional research is needed on leadership's impact on ELL literacy, and integrating culturally responsive models that are equitable.
4. There is the demanding need for all teachers to teach both language and content at the same time, so new products need to be designed and developed that incorporate both the appropriate language development strategies and activities as well as academic content. The products need to include both English Language Proficiency objectives and grade-level, content area objectives for every lesson. All product development must be looked at through the lens of language: What language do ELLs need to know to understand and access, use and master the content they're being taught? What do teachers need to know about the language that is inherent in the content they're teaching. As a result, there will be a need to develop and market instructional materials for ELLs in these areas (Course Crafters, I., 2012).
5. In order to understand content and language standards for ELLs, Hakuta (2013) in his research with The Gordon Commission, suggests there will be growth in the area of linguists, relative to how language operates in the different contexts of knowledge domains and within systems of learning.
(http://gordoncommission.org/rsc/pdfs/hakuta_assessment_content_language.pdf).

Chapter Summary

This chapter presents an interpretation of the study's data, which will help inform educational practice, leaders, practitioners, and policy makers about literacy as it relates to ESL literacy and Common Core. In addition, the researcher provides a model of continuous planned literacy advancement, emerging from the themes, which is supported by findings in both the qualitative and the quantitative data. The researcher sees this model as an ideal model explaining

the researcher's understanding of ELL literacy, where continuous closely aligned planned literacy advancement promotes continuous growth, academically, socially, emotionally, and linguistically for ELLs. Finally, the researcher presented recommendations for further study.

Researcher Final Thoughts and Website

ESL literacy intersects many disciplines and topics, resulting in complex understandings that need to be carefully considered in order for literacy practices to be efficient and effective, resulting in achievement for ELLs. Considering the complexity of issues related to the topic of ESL and ELL literacy as it impacts achievement and growth, the researcher created a website, www.ellliteracycentral.com (Appendix K), to assist practitioners as they have questions related to ESL and ELL literacy relative to new standards.

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Appendix A

FEDERAL DEFINITION OF AN ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER (ELL)

The U.S. Congress passed Public Law 107-110, the *No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001*, as a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. NCLB was signed into law in January 2002. Title I and Title III of NCLB have direct applications to the education of limited English proficient (LEP) students in local school districts.

NCLB uses the term "limited English proficient" (LEP) to refer to students acquiring English for their education. These students are also known as ESL (English as a second language) students or bilingual students. In recent professional practice, they are most often referred to as ELLs (English language learners).


According to the federal government, an LEP/ELL is an individual:

- (A) who is 3 to 21 years of age; and
- (B) who is enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary or secondary school; and
- (C)(i) who was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English;
 - (ii)(I) who is a Native American or Alaska Native, or a native resident of the outlying areas; and
 - (II) who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual's level of English language proficiency; or
 - (iii) who is migratory, whose native language is a language other than English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; and
- (D) whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual -
 - (i) the ability to meet the State's proficient level of achievement on State assessments described in Section 111 (b)(3);
 - (ii) the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English; or
 - (iii) the opportunity to participate fully in society.

[Public Law 107-110, Title IX, Part A, Sec. 9101, (25)]

Appendix B: PA Department of Education Teacher Evaluation Tool (Act 82)

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania 333 Market St., Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333



CLASSROOM TEACHER RATING TOOL FORM

Last Name _____ First _____ Middle _____
 District/LEA _____ School _____

Rating Date: _____ Evaluation: (Check one) Semi-annual Annual

(A) Teacher Observation and Practice

Domain	Title	*Rating* (A)	Factor (B)	Earned Points (A x B)	Max Points	*Domain Rating Assignment* 0 to 3 Point Scale (A)	
I.	Planning & Preparation		20%		0.60	Rating	Value
II.	Classroom Environment		30%		0.90	Failing	0
III.	Instruction		30%		0.90	Needs Improvement	1
IV.	Professional Responsibilities		20%		0.60	Proficient	2
(1) Teacher Observation & Practice Rating					3.00	Distinguished	3

(B) Student Performance - Building Level Data, Teacher Specific Data, and Elective Data

Building Level Score (0 - 107)	(3) Teacher Specific Rating
(2) Building Level Score Converted to 3 Point Rating	(4) Elective Rating

(C) Final Teacher Effectiveness Rating - All Measures

Measure	Rating (C)	Factor (D)	Earned Points (C x D)	Max Points	Conversion to Performance Rating	
(1) Teacher Observation & Practice Rating		50%		1.50	Total Earned Points	Rating
(2) Building Level Rating		15%		0.45	0.00-0.49	Failing
(3) Teacher Specific Rating		15%		0.45	0.50-1.49	Needs Improvement
(4) Elective Rating		20%		0.60	1.50-2.49	Proficient
Total Earned Points				3.00	2.50-3.00	Distinguished
					Performance Rating	

Rating: Professional Employee, OR Rating: Temporary Professional Employee

I certify that the above-named employee for the period beginning _____ and ending _____ has received a performance rating of: _____
(month/day/year) (month/day/year)

DISTINGUISHED PROFICIENT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT FAILING

resulting in a FINAL rating of:

SATISFACTORY UNSATISFACTORY

A performance rating of Distinguished, Proficient or Needs Improvement shall be considered satisfactory, except that the second Needs Improvement rating issued by the same employer within 10 years of the first final rating of Needs Improvement where the employee is in the same certification shall be considered unsatisfactory. A rating of Failing shall be considered unsatisfactory.

 Date Designated Rater / Position: Date Chief School Administrator

I acknowledge that I have read the report and that I have been given an opportunity to discuss it with the rater.
 My signature does not necessarily mean that I agree with the performance evaluation.

Appendix C

Consortia Developing Tests Aligned to Common Core Standards

There are six groups currently developing assessments for Common Core. These six different groups include (Center for K-12 Assessment and Performance Management at Education Testing Service, 2014):

1. Assessment Services Supporting English-Language Learners (ELLs) Through Technology (See <http://www.assets.wcemw.org/>): This consortium involves 35 states and is funded through a federal Enhanced Assessment Grant. It is developing screeners, formative, interim, and summative online assessments for ELLs to determine eligibility for ELL services and program placement within those services. The assessments will also describe the course of language development of students, Pre-K through Grade 12, and will address both academic and social English.
2. National Center and State Collaborative (see <http://www.ncscpartners.org/>): This project is led by 5 centers and 24 states to develop alternate assessments for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The system includes formative assessment tools and strategies for teachers, professional development on appropriate interim uses of data for progress monitoring, and management systems to ease administration. The online summative assessments will include multiple-choice and constructed-response questions that will be stage adapted and depend on student performance.
3. Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (see <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/>): Involving 22 states and funded by Race to the Top funds, this consortium offers interim and summative assessments using computer-adaptive testing (i.e., the questions students receive vary based on earlier answers). The consortium will also provide formative tools and resources that help teachers differentiate instruction and online tailored reporting systems that provide information about student progress toward college and career readiness.
4. Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment Consortium (see <http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/>): This consortium of education departments in 18 states is developing assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities. The assessments use items and tasks that are embedded in day-to-day instruction and address English/ language arts and math over the course of a school year. An end of the year summative test is also available to states if needed.
5. Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (see <https://www.parcconline.org/>): This consortium is funded by federal Race to the Top involves 19 states and the District of Columbia. They are developing diagnostic, mid-year, end-of-year online, and performance-based assessments in English/literacy, writing, and mathematics. They have also developed a variety of resources for educators, parents, and the public.
6. TESOL English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century Consortium (ELPA21; see http://www.k12center.org/publications/english_language_proficiency.html/): The consortium of 11 states focuses on assessments for ELLs and is developing a screener to assess baseline English-language proficiency as they progress through their K-12 education and summative assessments for each grade band to be administered near the end of the academic year. They will also develop supporting professional development resources, recommendations on formative assessment practices, a secure item bank, and a cooperative data reporting system.

Reference: Consortia Develop Tests Aligned to Common Core Standards. (2014). Gifted Child Today, 37(3), 135-136. doi:10.1177/1076217514533273.

Appendix D
Teacher Survey-Questionnaire



2014 Teacher Instructional Practices, Attitudes, and Preparedness Survey-Questionnaire
Relative to
PA Common Core English Language Arts (ELA) and English Language Learner (ELL) Literacy

Directions: This teacher survey is designed for K-12 teachers to gather information about your (teacher) understandings, attitudes, and instructional practices and preparation related to PA Common Core (PA Core) ELA literacy as it pertains to English Language Learners (ELLs).

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this survey of teacher attitudes, understandings, instructional practices and preparation for ELLs relative to PA Common Core (PA Core) ELA literacy. This survey is part of a research study that should provide valuable information to better inform future instructional practices of educators relative to ELL PA Common Core (PA Core) ELA Literacy.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary. As such, your identity will not be revealed and your personal demographic information will remain strictly confidential. Individual respondents are never identified in any report of results. Furthermore, information that could be used to identify you or connect you to individual results will not be shared with staff in your school, your district, or your state. The questionnaire poses no risk to you and there is not penalty for refusal to participate. In keeping with professional research, all survey data will be destroyed five years after publication of the results of this research study.

If you have any questions regarding this survey you may contact Kimberly A. Hite, doctoral student at Robert Morris University, via e-mail at: kahst160@mail.rmu.edu.

Thanks for your cooperation in participating in this survey.

Kimberly A. Hite

Doctoral Student, Robert Morris University

****PLEASE SIGN, DATE, AND GIVE THIS FIRST PAGE TO THE SURVEYOR BEFORE TAKING THE SURVEY. THIS ENSURES YOUR NAME IS NOT ASSOCIATED WITH YOUR RESPONSES. BY SIGNING, YOU UNDERSTAND THE AFOREMENTIONED.**

First Name _____ Middle Initial _____ Last Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Participant ID:

Background Information

T1 Gender:	Ethnicity:			
<input type="checkbox"/> a. Male	<input type="checkbox"/> b. Female	<input type="checkbox"/> a. White/Caucasian	<input type="checkbox"/> c. Asian	<input type="checkbox"/> e. Other _____
		<input type="checkbox"/> b. Hispanic/Latino	<input type="checkbox"/> d. African American	

T2

a. What is your highest degree earned?

a. Bachelors b. Masters c. Ph.D./Doctorate

b. Including this school year, how many years have you taught? (Write the number of years in the boxes below.)

T3

Including this school year, how many years have you taught at your current school? (Write the number of years in the boxes below.)

T4a. What grade levels do you currently teach? (Check all that apply.)

<input type="checkbox"/> a. Kindergarten	<input type="checkbox"/> g. 5 th grade	<input type="checkbox"/> i. 10 th grade
<input type="checkbox"/> b. 1 st grade	<input type="checkbox"/> h. 6 th grade	<input type="checkbox"/> m. 11 th grade
<input type="checkbox"/> c. 2 nd grade	<input type="checkbox"/> j. 7 th grade	<input type="checkbox"/> n. 12 th grade
<input type="checkbox"/> d. 3 rd grade	<input type="checkbox"/> k. 8 th grade	<input type="checkbox"/> o. Other (i.e., Gifted teacher)
<input type="checkbox"/> f. 4 th grade	<input type="checkbox"/> l. 9 th grade	

T4b. In any of the schools in your district, PreK-12, do your classrooms contain students who are English Language Learners?

a. Yes b. No c. Unsure/Don't know

T4c. Do you currently teach a class, or have you taught a class in the past, that contains(ed) students who are English Language Learners where you are or were responsible for their instruction?

a. Yes b. No c. Unsure/Don't know

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T5		
Which subject(s) do you teach? (Check all that apply.)		
<input type="checkbox"/> g. General Elementary (all subjects)	<input type="checkbox"/> f. The Arts (Music, Art, Chorus, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> k. ESL
<input type="checkbox"/> b. Mathematics	<input type="checkbox"/> g. Foreign Languages	<input type="checkbox"/> l. Technology
<input type="checkbox"/> c. Science	<input type="checkbox"/> h. PE/Health	<input type="checkbox"/> m. Other: Specify _____
<input type="checkbox"/> d. English Language Arts (ELA)/English	<input type="checkbox"/> i. Special Ed.	
<input type="checkbox"/> e. History/Social Sciences/Social Studies	<input type="checkbox"/> j. Gifted and Talented Coordinator/Teacher	

T6
How many courses, college or otherwise, have you had in your teaching career that support the teaching of English Language Learners? (Write in number of courses in the boxes below.)
<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>

T7
Over the past year, how much time, in hours, have you spent engaged in professional development activities focused on how to teach English Language Learners. (Write in number of estimated hours in boxes below.)
<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>

INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES, STRATEGIES, AND LITERACY TERMS



T8 With reference to English Language Learner literacy, how many of the instructional practices, strategies, and terms are you familiar with or currently using? (Check all that apply.)		
<input type="checkbox"/> a. Sheltered Instructional Observational Protocol (SIOP)	<input type="checkbox"/> h. BICS/CALPS	<input type="checkbox"/> o. Responsive Classroom Practices
<input type="checkbox"/> b. Systematic Monitoring	<input type="checkbox"/> i. Assistive technology for ELLs	<input type="checkbox"/> p. Writing Strategies for English Language Learners
<input type="checkbox"/> c. Two-Way Content Based Instruction	<input type="checkbox"/> j. Guided Discourse	<input type="checkbox"/> q. Comprehension Restitution
<input type="checkbox"/> d. Inquiry-based Practices	<input type="checkbox"/> k. Pennsylvania ELL Literacy Overlays	<input type="checkbox"/> r. Scaffolding
<input type="checkbox"/> e. Proficiency Levels of English Language Learners	<input type="checkbox"/> l. Response to Intervention (RTI)	<input type="checkbox"/> s. Second Language Acquisition
<input type="checkbox"/> f. Interactive Modeling	<input type="checkbox"/> m. WIDA	<input type="checkbox"/> t. Input-Based Incremental Vocabulary instruction
<input type="checkbox"/> g. PA State Standards for the ELL/ESL/LEP/ELD	<input type="checkbox"/> n. Making Texts Accessible for English Language Learners	<input type="checkbox"/> u. Reading Intervention Strategies for English Language Learners

TEACHER ATTITUDES AND UNDERSTANDINGS: Questions T9 through T16 pertain to teacher attitudes and understandings about English Language Learner Literacy relative to PA Common Core. Please place a check (✓) in the box (□) that best indicates your level of agreement with the following statements.

Teacher Attitudes and Understandings: Common Core ELL Literacy	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
T9. I believe it is important for all teachers to understand PA Common Core literacy as it applies to English Language Learners.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T10. I believe English Language Learners can successfully meet the demands of PA Common Core literacy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T11. In order to be an effective teacher, one needs to be aware of cultural differences in the classroom.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T12. As a content area teacher, it is important that I understand literacy practices for English Language Learners relative to PA Common Core.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T13. My academic expectations for PA Common Core Literacy are the same for all students, regardless of their English language abilities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T14. English language learner literacy is important to me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T15. I support the PA Common Core goals of multicultural-multilingual literacy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T16. All teachers are responsible for the literacy of English Language Learners.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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TEACHER PREPAREDNESS: Questions T17 through T24 pertain to teacher preparation about English Language Learner literacy relative to PA Common Core. Please place a check (✓) in the box (□) which best indicates your level of agreement with the following statements.

T17-T24 Teacher Preparedness: Common Core ELL Literacy	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
T17. Our district provides opportunities to prepare teachers to meet the PA ELA Common Core standards for teaching English Language Learners.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T18. Based on my educational training and experience, I feel I can successfully prepare lessons that meet the needs of teaching English Language Learners relative to PA ELA Common Core State Standards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T19. I feel adequately prepared to successfully meet the academic needs of English Language Learners.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T20. ESL teachers and content area teachers share course content and confer daily in our school to align course content and make texts accessible for English Language Learners.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T21. In preparing lessons for all students, I understand this includes preparing lessons for English Language Learners, to make content accessible to them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T22. Based on my current experience and training in education, I feel comfortable implementing interventions for English language learners with learning disabilities to assist them in meeting Common Core literacy standards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T23. Presently, I have adequate PA Common Core curriculum materials to prepare me to work with English Language Learners.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T24. I am prepared to teach lessons that support the PA Common Core goals of multicultural-multilingual literacy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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TEACHING STRATEGIES, LITERACY INTERVENTIONS, AND ASSESSMENT METHODS:

Questions T25 through T27 pertain to teacher preparation about English Language Learner literacy relative to PA Common Core. Please place a check (✓) in the box (□) which best indicates your level of agreement with the following statements.

T25-T27 Teaching Strategies, Literacy Interventions, and Assessment Methods	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
T25. Based on my current teacher preparation, I feel I can successfully introduce <u>teaching strategies and protocols</u> into the classroom to meet the needs of English language learners relative to PA Common Core ELA literacy.	□	□	□	□	□
T26. Based on my current teacher preparation, I feel I can successfully introduce <u>reading, writing, listening, and speaking interventions</u> into instruction to assist in meeting the needs of English language learners relative to PA Common Core ELA literacy.	□	□	□	□	□
T27. Based on my current teacher preparation, I feel I can successfully develop <u>assessments</u> that meet the needs of English language learners relative to Common Core ELA literacy.	□	□	□	□	□

TEACHER PREPAREDNESS: Questions T28 through T32 pertain to your teacher preparation about English Language Learner Literacy relative to Common Core. Please place a check (✓) in the box (□) which best indicates your level of agreement with the following statements.

T28-32 For items 28-32, please indicate how well your preparation:	Not Well Prepared	Somewhat Prepared	Well Prepared	Very Well Prepared
T28. <u>provides</u> instruction that supports PA academic content standards for English Language Learners relative to PA Common Core.	○	○	○	○
T29. <u>prepares</u> you to teach English Language Learners with cognitive and learning disabilities.	○	○	○	○
T30. <u>integrates content specific</u> academic language development practices in the areas of reading, writing, speaking, and listening, for of English Language Learners <u>within your content area</u> .	○	○	○	○
T31. <u>provides</u> research-based literacy interventions for speaking, reading, writing, and listening for English Language Learners.	○	○	○	○
T32. <u>provides</u> research-based assessments for English Language Learners.	○	○	○	○

33. What areas do you feel you have the best understanding about literacy as it relates to English Language Learners?

34. What areas do you feel you have the best understanding about literacy as it relates to English Language Learners?

THANK YOU!

You have successfully completed the survey.

Appendix E

ESL Specialist Interview Protocol

Interview Questions for Semi-Structured Interview of PA ESL Specialists*ESL Specialist Semi-Structured Interview Questions:*

1. Explain to me your role as an ESL Specialist.
2. What do you feel is the greatest challenge confronting ELLs relative to PA Core ELA literacy?
3. How has PA Core ELA literacy impacted the role of the ESL teacher? or question # 6
4. How has PA Core ELA literacy impacted the role of the content teacher?
5. Do you see any changes in the roles of teachers relative to this new shift?
6. How do you see as your role as an ESL teacher impacted, considering this paradigm shift (PA Core) in education?
7. What do you feel is the greatest challenge confronting teachers of ELLs relative to ELA PA Core literacy?
If not previously answered I will ask...
8. How do you see PA Core ELA literacy impacting instruction for ELLs?
9. How do you see PA Core ELA literacy impacting assessment for ELLs?
10. How do you see PA Core for ELA literacy impacting preparation for ELLs?
11. Last, what suggestions or thoughts do you have for content teachers and teachers of ELLs?
12. Is there anything else you would like me to know regarding ELLs and PA Core ELA literacy?

Appendix F

Permission to Conduct Survey Letter

Date:

RE: Permission to Conduct Survey

Dear _____:

I am writing to request permission to survey teachers at _____. I am currently enrolled in the Doctoral Program of Instructional Management and Leadership at Robert Morris University.

The survey-questionnaire will require teacher participants to complete a 10-15 minute survey about PA Common Core literacy as it pertains to English language learners. The participants will take the survey either on-line, in the classroom, or in a paper-and-pencil format, at any other quiet setting, at their convenience, on the school site, or a site deems acceptable. No costs will be incurred by your school or the individual participants.

If you agree, kindly sign below, indicating your permission for me to conduct this survey.

Sincerely,

Kimberly A. Hite

Doctoral Student

Robert Morris University

cc: Dr. George Semich, Research Advisor and Director of PhD IML Program

Approved by:

Administrator Name: _____

Position: _____

District or Univeristy: _____

Signature: _____

Appendix G
ESL Specialist Interview Consent Form

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. This form details the purpose of this interview, a description of the involvement required, and your rights as a participant.

The purpose of this study is:

- To gain insight into your life as an ESL Specialist.

The benefits of the research will be:

- To better understand your life as an ESL Specialist.
- To identify significant components and themes that could help in development of a future study.

The methods that will be used to meet this purpose include:

- One-on-one interview

Our discussion will be audio taped to help me accurately capture your insights in your own words. The tapes will only be heard by me for the purpose of this interview. You also have the right to withdraw from the interview at any time. In the event you choose to withdraw from the interview, all information you provide (including tapes) will be destroyed and omitted from the final paper. Insights gathered by you and other participants will be used in writing a qualitative report, and coded for emerging themes.

Though direct quotes from you may be used in the paper, your name and other identifying information will be kept anonymous.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me, Kimberly Hite, or my research advisor, Dr. George Semich, at Robert Morris University, using the information on the card provided.

By signing this consent form, I certify that I, _____, understand the aforementioned.

(Participant Signature)

(Date)

(Researcher Signature)

(Date)

Appendix H

ESL Specialist Background Information Form

Interview Participant Demographics

Participant # _____

PA Certifications: (Please list.)

Highest Degree Earned: (Place an "X" next highest level of degree earned.)

Bachelors _____ Masters _____ Masters + _____ credits Doctorate _____

Number of Years Teaching _____

Number of Years Teaching ESL _____

Number of Courses in ESL _____

Race/Origin _____

Location of School District: (Please check one.)

Suburban _____ Urban _____ Rural _____

Appendix I

Open-ended Responses for Survey Questionnaire with Demographic Data

Participant ID (Gender)	Level Taught	Grade/Subject	Total Years Teaching	Open-ended Responses Question #33	Open-ended Responses Question #34
2 (F)	Elementary	ECD	2	N/A	N/A
3 (M)	Elementary	4 (All)	30	None	All areas. This makes no sense. As a veteran teacher, you must want to make us look bad, especially #8, never heard of any.
4 (F)	Elementary	2 (All)	3	Very little	All areas.
5 (F)	Middle	7,8 (Math)	6	Not many	None.
6 (F)	Elementary	1 (All)	2	Implemented by the IU	All areas
7 (M)	Elementary	4 (All)	10	Providing the right level of scaffolding to ensure development without frustration.	Developmental curricular objectives, how to assess if students are progressing as needed and expected.
8 (F)	Elementary	3 (All)	4	N/A	N/A
9 (F)	Elementary	5(All)	5	Not many	Many areas.
11 (F)	Elementary	ECE	2	N/A	NA
12 (F)	Elementary	3 (All)	2	Because of my lack of training, I do not feel I have any understanding.	Again, very little.
16 (F)	Middle	Science	2	Decoding longer passages into meaningful snippets to get the main idea.	I am not familiar with expectations for PA Core for ELLs.
17 (F)	High	10,11 ,12 (Math)	2	N/A	All!
18 (M)	Middle	6,7,8 (Social Studies)	1	N/A	NA
22 (M)	Middle	7,8 (Social Studies)	2	Learning Strategies/Differentiated Instruction	The stages and process
24 (M)	Elementary	5 (Math)	10	No training on ELL	All. I have had no training.
25 (F)	Middle	5-8 (Special Ed-LSS)	8	All students learn differently-- accommodations and modifications are necessary	Specific Ways to meet needs. I have very basic general understanding.
26 (M)	High	10-12 (History, Special Ed.)	15	Scaffolding--there are different levels of proficiency and we must adjust accordingly.	Technology
27 (F)	Middle/High	9, 12 (History)	12	None.	All areas.

32 (F)	Middle	6,7,8 (BCIT)	35	None.	N/A
33 (M)	High	10 (Foreign Language)	10	I need better understanding.	Need additional training.
36 (F)	Elementary	3 (General)	10	Understanding that 'literacy' is contextual and ELLs come from diverse backgrounds that must be instrumental in teaching English Language.	Assessments
37(F)	Elementary	1-5(G.A.T.E. Coordinator)	28	I don't have a good understanding of this.	All areas!
39 (F)	Middle	8 (ELA)	5	Making adaptations.	Interventions
43(F)	Elementary	2 (All)	3	RTI	Second Language Acquisition
49(F)	Middle	7 (Math)	3	Providing supplements	PA Core Standard Expectations for ELLs
50 (F)	Middle	7 (Social Studies)	21	Ability to produce modified work with assistance	Regulations and Specific Strategies
51 (F)	Middle	6 (Math/Reading)	12	using students background knowledge to teach vocabulary and concepts in a way that is concrete, pulling key information for students (paraphrase) using pictures to aid in the comprehension of text that is not on the students instructional level. Think-alouds to aid in what good readers do in their minds...	Adapting text so much that the rigor is not the same.
52 (M)	Middle	6 (Social Studies)	13	I feel that I have been able to modify curriculum appropriately for ELLs. Also, we are able/willing to be flexible in adjusting assignments and tasks.	Changes that will/could occur with PA Core.
55(F)	Middle/High	7-12(ELA)	5	Content	
57 (M)	Middle	6 (Science)	12	Teaching Strategies	Literacy interventions, understandings for Common Core for ELL
59 (F)	Middle/High	8-12 (Foreign Language)	7	I feel I must understand obstacles in understanding spoken English.	Where do we start?
60 (F)	Middle/High	8-12(Foreign Language)	12	I know at what level and ELL understands certain things.	In general I feel that teachers are not prepared to take on ELLs. There is not enough education of the faculty about ESL. Teachers do not understand or even know the laws.
61(F)	Middle/High	8, 11(Foreign Language, ELA)	26	It requires more focus on nonfiction and the supplements from other reading sources.	Scaffolding and integration of the other disciplines needs to be addressed.
67(M)	Middle	8 (History)	4 months	Accommodations and modifications	Lesson Plans, Instruction, and Assessments

68 (F)	Middle	6 (ELA, Special Ed.)	New Teacher	Integrating writing/speaking	PA Common Core
69 (F)	Elementary	1 (All)	4	The only 'learning' I have completed was through my grad program. My district has never mentioned ELLs to us.	I have never had an ELL on my roster, so I am unsure about my school's specific abilities and protocol on instructing and assessing.
70 (F)	Elementary	2 (All)	4	Various strategies to use and the difference between academic and content area language	How to modify assessments to meet their needs.
71 (F)	High	9-12(Math)	32	I do not feel I have a good understanding of literacy based on the fact that I have had little or no experience in this area.	In most areas.
74 (M)	High	9-11 (English)	10	Comprehension	Writing
76 (M)	Middle	7-9 (History, G.A.T.E, Special Ed.)	35	Some content areas-the need to adapt to meet the individual needs of the student	Need to adapt to meet the individual needs of the student.
79 (F)	Elementary	2 (All)	6	Reading, Phonemic Awareness	Math and Science
81 (F)	Elementary	3 (All)	20	None.	No experience with ELLs
82 (F)	Middle	8 (Special Ed, ELA, Math)	12	None.	Strategies to teach ELLs
83 (F)	High	9-12 (Librarian)	3	Assistive Technology Resources	Common Core
84 (F)	High	10-12(Foreign Language)	5	Language acquisition but need Common Core help.	Common Core for PA
85 (F)	Middle	7(ELA)	15	Language acquisition is related to sentence construction.	Cultural barriers that create barriers to language acquisition
86 (F)	Elementary	K-6 (Music)	12	I am an ESL Program Specialist!	
87 (F)	Middle	8 (History)	6	Currently I do not have any in my grade level.	
94 (M)	High	9, 11 (Social Sciences)	8	None.	All
100 (F)	Middle	8 (ELA)	7	None.	I have no background other than hearing a presentation by our school's ELL teacher. We have a very small population of ELL students, none of whom have been in my class.
Other: 2 Participants	Middle/High	Physical Education	32, 10	N/A	N/A

Appendix J

Prevalence of Categories in Open Coding for Participant Interviews

Category	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4	Participant 5	Participant 6	Total
Accountability			4		1	1	6
Alignment	8	4	4	3	2	2	23
Assessments: Teacher/Student	13	8	3	9	4	6	43
Attainability		2	3	1		1	7
Change/ Transition	3	8	2	6	5	1	25
Collaborations Connections Partnerships Relationships	5	9	17	25	5	1	62
Common Core Literature/Texts/ Content	9	6	5	5	7	3	25
Culture		2	3	4			9
Curriculum	4	5	4		1	2	16
Diversity/Differences Differentiation/ Disability	5	12	6	17	5	2	47
Effort: Teacher	1	2	5	5	2		15
ESL/ELL Expectations/Rigor/ Difficulty	27	10	3	5		3	48
ESL Academic Educational Background/ Family Educational History	1	2	1	2		1	7
Equity/Fairness	1	1	3	2		1	8
Isolation/Outsider		1		3			4

Leadership/ Organizational Structure/ Master Schedule		1	2	8		2	13
Instructional Strategies/Methods of Instruction	15	23	7	8	9	1	63
Resources (Funding, Textbooks, Other)	3	4	7	4	2	2	22
Knowledge/Expertise: Teacher	6	6	4	9	2	2	29
Knowledge/Expertise: ESL Specialist	8	9	12	7	3	3	42
Policy/Law/Standards		9	8	3	4	2	26
Professional Development		7	3	3	1	3	17
Priorities		1	1	2	2		6
Support (Personnel)	5	4	3	8	2	2	24
Teacher Expectations		3	3	2	2	1	11
Teacher Time/ Preparation/Planning	10	6	1	7	1	1	26
Teacher Attitudes	1		2	2	1		6

Appendix K

Screen Capture of Researcher Website: www.elliteracycentral.com

