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Pre-service education : preparing teachers for english language learners in the classroom

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**PRE-SERVICE EDUCATION: PREPARING TEACHERS FOR ENGLISH
LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN THE CLASSROOM**

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by

Nina Lee
B.A., Ryerson University, 2007

A Major Research Paper
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in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
in the program of
Early Childhood Studies

Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2008

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PRE-SERVICE EDUCATION: PREPARING TEACHERS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN THE CLASSROOM

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Master of Arts
Early Childhood Studies
Ryerson University

ABSTRACT

English language learners (ELLs) in classrooms is becoming a common occurrence with Ontario's escalating immigration trends. This influx pressures teachers who encounter barriers and inadequate training for linguistically diverse needs. Teacher education has the potential to overcome these barriers through effective ELL training. This qualitative study explores current teacher preparation practices through pre-service teachers' (PT) perspectives. This study aims to address a Canadian literature void by exploring how prepared primary-junior PTs are to teach ELLs in Southwestern Ontario. Using a structured interview, six certified graduates shared descriptive experiences, knowledge and beliefs. The findings are organized as; 1) Faculties of Education, 2) PTs' Beliefs, 3) In Future Classrooms and 4) Beyond the Classroom. Although moving towards greater ELL awareness and inclusive mindsets, there is a good indication that well-intentioned teachers lack the competence necessary for effective classroom practice. This exploration is an initial step towards a better understanding of teacher preparation.

Key Words: Teacher Preparation, English Language Learner (ELL), Pre-service Teacher Education, Primary-Junior Pre-service Teachers, Teacher competence, Early Childhood Teacher Education.

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one step at a time.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Overview of the Issues

Ontario is the province of choice for over fifty percent of newcomers to Canada (Chui, Tran & Maheux, 2007; People for Education, 2008). Immigration continues to fuel Ontario's population growth while significantly contributing to linguistic diversity. As immigration increases, the prevalence of English language learners (ELLs) in regular classrooms will become a common occurrence. ELLs are the fastest growing segment of elementary students (Antunez, 2002; Buck, Mast, Ehlers & Franklin, 2005; Harper & de Jong, 2004). This influx pressures teachers who encounter barriers and inadequate training for the engagement of children with diverse needs. This struggle is well documented in worldwide scholarly literature. Pre-service teacher (PT) training has the potential to overcome these inclusion barriers through effective preparation which includes ELLs in the classroom. Since ELLs receive most of their instruction in the regular classroom, it is crucial that PTs are prepared to meet the challenges. If demographic changes are not reflected in the teacher curriculum, ELLs are at risk of having their needs neglected which may ultimately lead to failure in our schools.

The intent of this study is based on the need for all programs to re-examine their core curriculum through the perspective of their graduates to identify gaps in ELL training. These graduates will increasingly become teachers who are solely accountable for the education of ELLs (Barnes, 2006; Buck et al., 2005; Clair, 1995; Meskill, 2005). The purpose of this qualitative study is to address the Canadian context void in the literature by exploring how prepared primary-junior PTs are to teach ELLs in Southwestern Ontario. It is an exploration of the beliefs, attitudes and perceptions held by a group of PT graduates regarding ELLs. This study has been conducted to explore the depth, breadth and needs of teacher preparation.

Research questions. This qualitative study addresses the following central research question: how prepared are primary-junior pre-service teachers to meet the needs of English language learners? This central research question was explored and refined with the following sub-questions:

- a) How do pre-service teachers feel about teaching ELLs in their future classrooms?
- b) How do pre-service teachers perceive their ELL competence?
- c) What is known about ELLs? (Including second language acquisition, myths and the learning needs of linguistically diverse children)
- d) Where and how was ELL information and classroom strategies acquired?

Significance of the Study

The need to better prepare teachers for ELLs is widely recognized (Taylor & Sobel, 2003). As the number of ELLs rapidly escalates, it becomes important to explore whether the Faculties of Education in Southwestern Ontario are effectively revamping their programs to respond to the changing demographics. Faculties of Education are responsible for certifying and preparing teachers who are prepared to meet the needs of linguistically diverse children. The perspectives of recent PT graduates from Southwestern Faculties of Education are explored in this study.

The literature reviewed exemplifies the current and immediate need for this study. With only a single Canadian study conducted on the interrelated topic of PTs and multiculturalism, it is necessary to build on the emerging body of literature focused on PTs and ELLs within the Canadian context. Southwestern Ontario is a prime location containing the greatest numbers of newcomers and thus high levels of linguistic diversity (Chui, Tran & Maheux, 2007). Moreover, since the single Canadian study produced less than promising results it is necessary to explore

other areas of diversity and teaching. This study hopes to shed some light on the status of teacher preparation for teaching ELLs. There is an important need to carefully evaluate PTs' training and preparation prior to claiming that they are professionally equipped to address the learning needs of our changing society (Valentine, 2006).

This study is also significant because the preliminary findings have constructive implications for the Faculties of Education. The results could provide insights into improving teacher preparation programs. The findings may inform curriculum planning (Pappamihel, 2004). The input of graduates is crucial to the ongoing process of improving and updating teaching curriculum. The results from this study are also useful for teacher educators and PTs since they may relate and identify potential weaknesses in their skills or knowledge and may encourage further training in perceived areas of weakness.

This study is also personally significant because of my experiences as a Canadian-born ELL child in Ontario. As I child I endured the negative consequences of educational professionals who lacked knowledge in multilingual acquisition. As a result of my elementary experiences, I lost my heritage language at a young age. It was believed that the simultaneous development of two languages was detrimental to the English language development necessary to academically succeed in Ontario. These personal childhood experiences as well as additional scholarly findings have generated a personal and professional interest in this topic. It is of particular importance to me that these types of situations are no longer occurring in Ontario's education system.

Definition of Terms

Competence

Competence, or more specifically *ELL competence*, is defined as a classroom teacher's ability to carry out multiple roles and responsibilities required to meet the needs of ELL learners. This includes; planning and implementing curriculum standards, accommodations to teaching strategies, inducing meaningful classroom engagement and true assessments or evaluation.

English Language Learner (ELL)

An *English language learner* refers to any child who is; in kindergarten to grade 6, Canadian born or newly arrived, whose first language is not English or is a variety significantly different from that used in Ontario elementary schools and who may require educational language supports to attain English proficiency (Gándara, Maxwell-Jolly & Driscoll, 2005; Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 2005).

Faculty of Education

A *faculty of education* is a Canadian term which is synonymous to the commonly used American terms in the literature; Teacher Education, Pre-service Teacher Education, Teacher Preparation and Teacher Training. Regardless of the title, *Faculties of Education* provide pre-service teachers with the necessary education, experiences and training required for certification and to effectively undertake teaching.

Pre-service Teacher (PT)

Pre-service teachers are often referred to in the literature as student teachers or teacher candidates. PTs are post-degree students enrolled in and attending a faculty of education in pursuit of teacher certification and teacher training.

Teacher Preparation

Teacher preparation is the result of adequate and effective faculty of education programs. For the purpose of this study, the level of preparation is determined by the teacher's knowledge of ELLs, ELL experiences or events and ELL competence (see *competence*).

CHAPTER II

Review of the Literature

Ontario has been the province of choice for more than half of the 1.1 million newcomers to Canada in the past five years (Chui, Tran & Maheux, 2007). In the past few decades, the foreign-born population has tripled with nearly 150 different native languages reported (Chui, Tran & Maheux, 2007; Waxman & Tellez, 2002). With the increase of immigration, ELLs have become the fastest growing population in mainstream elementary classrooms (Antunez, 2002; Buck, Mast, Ehlers & Franklin, 2005; Flynn & Hill, 2005; Harper & de Jong, 2004). This influx in schools has placed pressure on classroom teachers who are not well trained to engage children with diverse needs. This struggle is well documented in scholarly literature across the globe (Alred, 1994; Flynn & Hill, 2005). Teachers require competence, self-belief, and a well-formed education ingrained with ELL training. The curriculum must include realistic placements, faculty and peer support, ELL strategies, reflective practice, and active efforts to confront and remove misconceptions (Barnes, 2006; Buck et al., 2005; Cruz & Patterson, 2005; Giambo & Szecsi, 2005; Mujawamariya & Mahrouse, 2004; Pappamihel, 2004; Siwatu, 2007; Valentine, 2006).

The present review explores current literature concerning the role of PT training for diverse classrooms, diverse children and for teaching ELLs. The objective of this review is to understand the adequacy and efficacy of teacher's ELL preparation from multiple professional perspectives. This literature review identified the following themes; pre-service teacher's ELL competence, common teacher education curriculums, critical learning experiences, gaps re-examining the role of education, and graduation requirements.

Pre-service Teachers' ELL Competence

Many Faculties of Education are responding to the rapidly growing population of ELLs in the classroom. This response includes new pedagogies with the intention of increasing teacher's

competence and confidence to execute practices that meet the needs of all children in the regular classroom. The central goal of teacher education is to produce classroom teachers capable of fulfilling the many roles of the profession. Unfortunately, it is well documented from many perspectives that PTs do not feel that they possess the ability, skills or knowledge necessary to execute successful ELL inclusion. For the purpose of this study, *ELL competence* is defined as the ability to fulfil the multiple roles and responsibilities of a classroom teacher, required to meet ELL learner needs. This includes planning and implementing curriculum standards, accommodations to teaching strategies, and true assessments or evaluation.

PTs graduate without having to develop the strategies necessary to support the academic content development and English language development of ELLs (Buck et al., 2005; Evans, Arnot-Hopffer & Jurich, 2005; Waxman & Tellez, 2002). These teachers enter the field with limited cross-cultural knowledge and lack understanding of classroom challenges (Barnes, 2006; Buck et al., 2005; Dorrington & Ramirez-Smith, 1999; Harper & de Jong, 2004; Taylor & Sobel, 2003). Teachers are taught to understand diversity as mere celebrations and appreciation of differences. With limited knowledge, PTs are susceptible to misinterpreting the capabilities of ELLs (Buck et al., 2005; McLaughlin, 1992). Ineffectual core courses yield low inclusion competence, low levels of ELL sensitivity, lead to premature assumptions and blinders to the assets that ELLs bring to the learning of all children (Pappamihiel, 2004).

Pre-service Teachers' Perspective

PTs' perspectives are crucial indicators of the gains received from their teacher training programs. Pappamihiel (2004) claims that PTs' perceptions of their self-efficacy may be the most accurate predictor of their future classroom behaviours and for this reason it is crucial to investigate. Many PTs feel inadequately prepared to effectively teach ELLs in general classrooms (Dianda, 1992; Flynn & Hill, 2005; Meskill, 2005; Téllez & Waxman, 2005; Youngs & Youngs,

2001). Meskill (2005) found many PTs to be unaware of their responsibilities in educating ELLs due to the lack of emphasis in training. Faculty members play a crucial role in influencing PTs' attitudes towards ELLs. Pappamihel (2004) calls attention to the likelihood of PTs imitating the behaviour of those they deem as competent. Faculty are responsible for transforming PTs into inclusively minded experts dedicated to academic potential and success (Taylor & Sobel, 2003).

Taylor & Sobel (2003) state that 73% of PTs identify student diversity as their greatest teaching challenge. Mujawamariya & Mahrouse (2004) provide deeper insights into this concern as PTs critique their own multicultural education. Many programs opt for a simple 'celebration of difference' paradigm which produce low levels of ELL competence. Although cultural inclusion and respect have been gained, PTs express a need for greater cultural content knowledge, explicit instructions with demonstrations, open discussion, practical teaching styles, problem solving techniques and opportunities to realistically implement theory (Barnes, 2006; Taylor & Sobel, 2003; Valentine, 2006). These components are believed to contribute to ELL competence, yet are not apparent in the curriculum. Without adequate ELL training, PTs remain uncertain of their ability to integrate ELL's needs with the curriculum goals, assessments and supportive teaching (Emporia State University, 1994; Flynn & Hill, 2005; Menken & Antunez, 2001; Valentine, 2006). ELLs will continue to suffer academically with teachers incompetent in these areas.

Based on the perspectives of PTs currently in the literature, the future of ELLs seems problematic. Conversely, optimism exists as it can be seen in the studies of intervention conducted by Barnes, Buck et al. (2006), Meskill (2005) and Pappamihel (2004). These studies contribute to the improvement of education by enhancing competence levels through increasing the depth of knowledge, improving and contributing strategies to enhance practice.

Pre-service Teacher's Attitudes

Few studies have been conducted on attitudes towards ELLs in the classroom (Youngs &

Youngs, Jr. 2001). However, attitudes towards ELLs and their needs influence the learning environment, teaching behaviours and the effectiveness of the academic experiences created thus impacting ELL competence. PTs' attitudes must be explored and confronted since they are essential to future teaching efficacy (Baker & Prys Jones, 1998). Regrettably, attitudes are often neglected in training programs rather than being placed at the forefront of the education process.

Ideally, the exploration of personal attitudes, beliefs and biases would occur prior to field experiences to enhance awareness and sensitivity (Barnes, 2006). It is important to note that this process is more easy to outline than implement. Programs that unknowingly choose to reinforce stereotypes and prejudices negatively affect PTs' attitudes and expectations of ELLs in the classroom (Barnes, 2006; Waxman & Tellez, 2002). ELLs are highly aware of these low expectations which further impound their achievement (Buck et al, 2005; Verdugo & Flores, 2007). More positively, when PTs are exposed to qualified teachers with effective ELL practices they gain positive attitudes and increased competence. Effective role models, increased exposure and training consequently motivate positive ELL-related attitudes (Youngs & Youngs, Jr. 2001).

The creation of a multicultural focus in a program, without the vital components, merely continues the perpetuation of incompetent PTs who have not developed the awareness, values or understanding of inequity required to respond to ELLs' needs (Emporia State University, 1994; Flynn & Hill, 2005; Taylor & Sobel, 2003; Valentine, 2006). Training programs are obligated to fulfil their responsibility of suitably preparing teachers. The Faculties of Education are obligated and expected by society to prepare competent teachers who are able to meet the challenges of educating diverse classroom demographics (Valentine, 2006).

Common Teacher Education Curriculums

Three common teacher education curriculums, including pedagogies and approaches, are explored in the literature. There are positive features that can be taken from each model.

Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) focuses on training for academic success, cultural competence and socio-political consciousness (Barnes, 2006). CRT is also known as culturally congruent/appropriate/compatible instruction or culturally relevant teaching (Pappamihiel, 2004). It is evident that this approach is centred in culturally sensitive practice. Extended placements and courses are focused on realistic settings, family interactions and faculty debriefing (Barnes, 2006; Pappamihiel, 2004). The benefits of CRT are; transforming attitudes/beliefs about diversity, solid cultural knowledge base, reflections on actions and interactions, implementation of ELL skills, and internalizing roles in education (Barnes, 2006; Pappamihiel, 2004). These benefits come with much effort since changing ingrained attitudes and beliefs is a difficult feat. An added complexity involves altering known teaching practices to include ELLs.

Training All Teachers (TAT) is focused on establishing an enhanced understanding of the complex aspects of teaching ELLs (Meskill, 2005). Similar to CRT, TAT stresses the importance of gently confronting ingrained myths associated with the English language and language learning (Meskill, 2005). The major components are; field work, group workshops with follow-up support, peer presentations, explicit teaching of cultural tolerance, and unlearning racism (Meskill, 2005). The benefits include the following; greater understanding of issues experienced by ELLs, increased appreciation of home experiences, practical strategies, cross-cultural empathy and greater respect for differences. Regrettably, the TAT program maintains the lessons of most multicultural initiatives in the acceptance and respect for differences at the surface level.

The Multicultural Education (ME) curriculum is implemented in many Faculties of Education across Canada (Mujawamariya & Mahrouse, 2004). Its major objective is to prepare future teachers with the knowledge necessary to respond to the academic needs of all children. Multiple variations of this objective can be found in each Canadian Faculty of Education. The purpose of this approach is to promote an inclusive and equitable education system. According to

PTs enrolled in Ottawa University's variation of the initiative, the curriculum is perceived as lacking by not specifically targeting ELLs. An ESL course is offered as a special-interest course rather than integrated as an essential component of teacher preparation (Majawamariya & Mahrouse, 2004).

Based on the multicultural-focused curriculums explored, many overlapping similarities and differences are evident. Although each initiative is focused on improving the competence of PTs, none of these effectively meet its objectives. Though many gains were made in training, a shallow understanding of ELL inclusion will continue the trend of unprepared teachers in the field.

Critical Learning Experiences

The following review identifies critical learning experiences crucial to ELL competence. A major similarity of the curriculums explored is the deficiency in preparing teachers for teaching ELLs. However, each curriculum contributes to a body of knowledge required for including ELLs in all aspects of education. The following critical learning experiences were extracted.

Field experiences with ELLs are crucial to personally understanding their needs (Barnes, 2006; Emporia State University, 1994; Pappamihel, 2004; Valentine, 2006). Mastering experiences with professional support is vital to ELL competence. Pappamihel (2004) declares that mastery experiences are the most influential source in the development of self-efficacy. PTs require exposure and opportunities for experience with ELLs (Youngs & Youngs, Jr., 2001). However, for experiences to be valuable they must be followed with faculty or peer debriefing (Barnes, 2006; Meskill, 2005). Through this dialogue, students apply learned theories to their lived experiences which add meaning. Furthermore, as peers share their learning with others, they gain insight into real solutions and consequences to particular behaviours (Meskill, 2005). This

process contributes significantly to their learning and is often overlooked in the curriculum.

Discussion with colleagues is a required skill, as classroom teachers they will most definitely need to collaborate with other professionals to create classrooms conducive to the needs of children, including ELLs (Buck et al., 2005; Emporia State University, 1994).

Reflective practice is also a critical component to effective programs. Reflective practice leads to the reinterpretation of teaching, thinking and interactions with ELLs (Barnes, 2006; Buck et al., 2005; Cruz & Patterson, 2005; Farrell, 2006). This component is oversimplified in many programs as a passive and mindless exercise. With reflective practice, PTs can also explore their effect and role in the education system (Barnes, 2006; Dorrington & Ramirez-Smith, 1999; Farrell, 2006). Through thorough reflections, teachers dismantle their ingrained misconceptions which contribute to the oppression of minorities in education (Meskill, 2005). This process contributes to an increased understanding of the culture and produce cultural sensitivity required by classroom teachers (Pappamihel, 2004).

Many of the PTs interviewed in this study emphasized the need to be taught practical ELL strategies. Strategies include: hands-on activities, methods of encouraging cooperation, incorporating home languages and the interpretation of visuals, gestures and adapted assessments (Barnes, 2006; Buck et al., 2005; Meskill, 2005). Along with explicit instruction and demonstration, PTs require an in-depth understanding of their purpose (Pappamihel, 2004). It is insufficient to provide a list of strategies without an explanation of their necessity. Thus, coursework must be aligned with realism to uphold the professional standards required in education (Taylor & Sobel, 2003).

The above components were identified as necessary for successful training outcomes and to maintain classroom professionalism. With the high demand in ELL competence, teachers must be, and feel, adequately equipped to meet the challenge. Several programs are incorporating

many of the above components. A major flaw recognized by Valentine (2006) is the fact that these pieces are taught in elective courses rather than infused throughout. This must be addressed for teachers to understand their responsibility in teaching ELLs curriculum standards and the English language (Harper & de Jong, 2004). This remains highly improbable for PTs untrained in this area. Elective courses on antiracism, multiculturalism, equity and ESL must become essential requirements in Canadian teacher preparation programs (Mujawamariya & Mahrouse, 2004).

Gaps Re-examining the Role of Education

The low levels of ELL competence, professional insights, and the list of oversimplified learning indicate that programs are struggling to prepare PTs for classroom realities. All programs should re-examine their core curriculum through the perspective of their graduates to identify gaps in ELL training. These graduates will become teachers who are solely accountable for the education of ELLs (Barnes, 2006; Buck et al., 2005; Meskill, 2005).

Reforms focused on better preparing teachers cannot be limited to a single course or left to practicum (Meskill, 2005; Mujawamariya & Mahrouse, 2004; Taylor & Sobel, 2003). Barnes (2006) recommends moving away from the Eurocentric assignment driven to the objective driven approach. Oppressive issues must hold a central role. Optional courses do not provide justice to the issues in education (Barnes, 2006; Mujawamariya & Mahrouse, 2004). A cohesive systematic change including theories of language acquisition, diversity issues and learning needs is required (Barnes, 2006; Buck et al., 2005; Emporia State University, 1994; Giambo & Szecsi, 2005). Programs must urgently append these authentic complexities to claim or teach equity and inclusion (Buck et al., 2005; Meskill, 2005).

Equally as important are the negative components which require removal since they taint curriculum objectives and teaching standards. Misconceptions, biases and harmful attitudes about teaching ELLs continue to influence the curriculum. These beliefs blame ELLs for not fitting into

the norms created by strict instructional paradigms (Harper & de Jong, 2004; Meskill, 2005). The existing theoretical foundation is packed with notions that limit teachers' abilities to provide environments and lessons for ELLs (Harper & de Jong, 2004). Mere exposure to multiculturalism is substandard. A lack of deeper understanding leads to the misuse of accommodations, modifications and reinforces biases. Education is built on oppressive language and interpretations, with deficits and labels (Buck et al., 2005; Meskill, 2005). ELLs require opportunities for equitable outcomes and unbiased assessments that accurately evaluate learning. Alternative assessments incorporate the use of portfolios, home languages, visuals and gestures to explain concepts. Without practical substitutes, ELLs are integrated without the instructions or feedback required for concept learning and academic language proficiency (Cummins, 2003; Dianda, 1992; Harper & de Jong, 2004; Valentine, 2006).

Graduation Requirements

To ensure teacher quality the graduation requirements from the Faculty of Education must be rigorous. Teacher quality is the most powerful school-related influence on students' academic performance (Barnes, 2006). Graduation requirements must incorporate standards concerning teacher responsibilities in the education system and the capacity to create equal-outcome opportunities (Barnes, 2006). Pappamihel (2004) declares a need for PTs to demonstrate their ability to effectively teach all children prior to graduation. The responsibility of adequately preparing teachers lies with the Faculties of Education (Buck et al., 2005; Giambo & Szecsi, 2005). Without ELL training and corresponding graduation requirements, teachers are unqualified and no longer ensure quality education. Many Canadian Faculties of Education have undergone reform yet may still not meet the demands of the profession. The literature reinforces the need to further investigate the level of ELL preparation and efficacy of PTs. This problem must be investigated in Ontario to ensure that teacher quality is upheld on this robustly diverse province.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

Research Design

The central research question was best addressed using qualitative research since it is exploratory and since no Canadian studies have been conducted on this phenomenon (Creswell, 2003). The qualitative research design allowed for the data to emerge from the participants' responses. The participants were allowed to openly discuss their thoughts, knowledge and ideas regarding many of the interview topics. The primary intent of the qualitative approach was to develop themes, insight and connections from the data collected (Creswell, 2003).

Ethnographic case study is the particular qualitative research design used in this study. This design is the most suitable in describing, analyzing, and interpreting a culture-sharing group (Creswell, 2005). The culture under investigation is the culture of elementary teaching. The participants qualify as a culture-sharing group since they interact, share patterns of behaviour (e.g. ELL strategies implemented in the classroom and the sharing of beliefs, attitudes, truths, myths, misconceptions, and expectations) (Creswell, 2005). These behaviours and beliefs are developed or nurtured over the period of time in pre-service education. The study of a group of PTs from this culture can provide insight onto the larger issue of teacher preparation for teaching ELLs. The case study aspect of the investigation is necessary since this is an in-depth exploration of a bounded system (Creswell, 2005). The Faculties of Education explored are bound by time, activity (education), demographics and physical boundaries (Creswell, 2003; Creswell, 2005).

Protection of Human Participants

The following were potential threats for participants that could have arisen during any phase of this study. These issues were considered to ensure that the study was designed ethically

and to minimize such threats. To protect human participants and research sites, the research plans were reviewed by the Research Ethics Board of Ryerson University (REB). The ethics board also ensured that the protocols, purpose, design and procedures were compliant with high professional standards. Also mandated by the REB were strict structures for participant consent agreements. An REB accepted consent form ensures that the participant's rights have been protected (Creswell, 2003) and that they were aware of what the study entails (*please see Appendix A for the Consent Agreement*).

This study does not use language or words that are biased, against any persons or groups, in any of its communications or written reports. The data collected was specifically described, sensitive and an accurate depiction (Creswell, 2005).

Ensuring Confidentiality

The confidentiality and anonymity of participants was ensured throughout all phases of the study. As Creswell (2003) states, it is part of the ethical code for researchers to protect the privacy of all participants involved in a study. To ensure this ethical code was met, the participants' names were disassociated from their responses during the recording and coding procedures. The use of pseudonyms for individuals and places further protects the identity of all participants (Creswell, 2003).

Recruitment

Primary-junior PT graduates were recruited using purposeful and snowball sampling methods. All participants were recruited based on necessary characteristics that met the requirements of the study, accessibility to the researcher and willingness to be interviewed (Del Baso & Lewis, 2001). This non-random sampling method allowed the researcher to identify PTs on the verge of

graduating from the primary-junior division. The researcher also attempted to recruit individuals who are reflective of a variation of educational choices and experiences to maximize perspectives. These methods best serve the research purpose. Nonetheless, sampling does not interfere with the investigation since the purpose of the procedures is to elicit rich data. Although the results of this sample cannot be generalized, the selected PTs will provide critical insight into the understanding of the central phenomenon of teacher preparation. All participants were recruited using the following script:

Hello, my name is Nina Lee. I am a graduate student at Ryerson University. I would like to invite you to participate in my major research study. The authenticity of my credentials and this study can be validated by Dr. Valeo at Ryerson University. This study is a requirement for a Masters degree in Early Childhood Studies. If you choose to voluntarily participate, I am asking you to participate in a single 60 minute audio-recorded interview that will include the following types of questions: demographic, descriptive, experience, knowledge and feeling questions regarding your education and experiences with particular classroom children. This interview will be confidential and anonymous. I would like to meet with you to review the consent agreement and provide further details about the study, prior to the interview.

If the prospective participant, declined the invitation the following statement was given:

Thank you for listening to my proposed study. I wish you the best in your future endeavours.

If the potential participant, accepts the invitation to partake in the study the following was said;

Thank you for agreeing to meet with me for greater detail and a potential interview. I would like to arrange a meeting time and location that is convenient, private and comfortable for you. If you do not have a preference, I may arrange for an interview location.

Since some of the recruited participants are known to the researcher, potential issues regarding coercion or influence to participate were considered. Carefully considered measures of reviewing and validation were used to mitigate these potential issues and to ensure professionalism during the recruitment and interview process. There were no verbal or physical signs of discomfort or lack of interest from any of the participants. However if these had occurred, the interview would have been ended to maintain credibility. During the recruitment

process, referrals were also solicited for potential participants. To ensure that those referring additional participants had no knowledge of whether or not those they referred actually decided to participate or not, participants passed on the researcher's contact information to others and if interested, contacted the researcher directly.

Participant Demographics

Recent PT graduates were the population chosen since they are newly trained, recently certified and their knowledge is most relevant to the intent of the study. A total of six participants were recruited for this investigation. All participants had recently completed a 2007-08 Southwestern Ontario Faculty of Education program in the primary-junior division. The individuals selected have shared characteristics as well as differing educational choices and experiences.

Participant one: Olivia Stevenson* (pseudonym) had three practicum blocks in her Bachelor of Education program. All of Olivia's experiences were in the Public School Board. Her first practicum experience was in the primary division and consisted of a two-week block. Olivia describes her placement as follows:

...Was diverse in the sense that it has a large immigrant population, there is a diversity of learning needs, it's mono-cultural really... it's all from the South Asian community... it's diverse in needs and language abilities and stuff... There was Arabic, there was Hindi, there was Urdu or Punjabi, they were all very similar so those language were sort of used

Olivia's second and third practicums were in the junior grades and in the same school. The second practicum lasted two-weeks while the third practicum experience consisted of a three-week block. These experiences were situated in a gifted classroom described by Olivia as being in a well established middle class neighbourhood. Olivia completed her Bachelor of Education in a program for Early Childhood Education graduates only. Olivia's definition of the term *English Language Learner* is as follows:

An ELL is somebody who has prior language skills in another language, so it doesn't necessarily mean that English is their second language, it means that they are now learning English. As they have prior knowledge in another language, at least one.

Participant two: Katie Long* (pseudonym) had two practicum blocks and a final internship in her B. Ed. program. Each experience was five-weeks in duration. Katie's first practicum experience and final internship were located in what Katie described as a very affluent private school. Both of her learning experiences in this school were with grade-three children. Katie provided the following response when asked to describe her second practicum experience:

My second was in a grade-four class and this was an inner city school so there were a lot of differences I saw here, a lot of the children they weren't motivated to do any school work, there wasn't very much parent involvement in anything at the school that I saw

Katie described her second placement as being "a very diverse class" with Gujarati and Tamil present in the classroom, whereas the others were not at all diverse and no alternative languages were present. Katie's definition of the term *English Language Learner* was as follows:

...It means someone who, they... they are in the process of earning or building their language skills in the English language, it doesn't mean that they are necessarily, like they don't know any of it but just that they are building on what they do know

Participant three: Mary Densmore* (pseudonym) had two practicums and an internship in her Faculty of Education. Her experiences were in the Public School system. Both practicums began with six Fridays of observation over a month-and-a-half which led into a four-week teaching block. The first practicum was in a grade-one class that was diverse in terms of culture and learning. The following languages were present in the classroom: Vietnamese, Chinese and Spanish. She elaborated on her first practicum with the following detailed description:

...It's an area where there are a lot of ELLs... they didn't have ESL classes, so they were all in the grade one class, not really any issues with them but there were two children in particular that sort of had like... one child had a behavioural issue and was supposed to be in a special needs class and my teacher was trying to send away... this other child had like a learning disability or something... like IEP all it consisted of was learning the first five letters of the alphabet and she couldn't even do that, I was like wow. [An educational

assistant] was shared between the kindergarten room and our room, so she wasn't officially ours, she would only come over if she had time

Mary's second placement was in a grade-four classroom. She found this 'very social' age group and classroom situation to be particularly difficult and challenging to her teaching abilities. Mary described the classroom demographics as mostly European backgrounds and mainly white. Mary's internship was five-weeks long with no assigned observation days prior to the experience. Therefore, the first week of the internship was used for observation while lesson plans were implemented during the second week. The following description of her internship was provided:

...That was a crazy class because she [field educator] was supposed to be a Learning Enrichment Academic Program [LEAP] teacher which is for students who have had a gap in their education but the school used her as an ESL teacher... and because of that... oh she was only supposed to have, teach grade three, four, five but then she is a really nice person so she wanted to help the students who didn't have ESL classes so she took in a grade two kid and she took in the grade six kids so it ranged from grade two to grade six.

Unlike the other participants of this study, Mary faced numerous difficult ELL experiences within her Faculty of Education. Her classroom experiences incorporated the highest percentage of ELLs in comparison to the other PTs. Mary is one of the only PTs who had the opportunity to work with an educational assistant and was the only PT to have had an experience in an ESL/LEAP program. Mary's definition of *English language learner* was as follows:

...A student that is trying to learn the English language and it doesn't matter if, if they were born here in Canada... as long as they are trying to learn the language itself

Participant four: Tina Goodwin* (pseudonym) had two practicum experiences in her Bachelor of Education program. Tina's practicums were both in the Public School system. Tina provided the following description for her first placement:

The first one was at... an affluent school... a grade two placement... the class had twenty kids, only one student was on an IEP... the others were just typically developing and had their own challenges of course and then the second semester I was in a grade five... again a class of 20 except two of them were in the home school program meaning that for language and math they were working below, very below the grade level... so they would get intensive help in the morning... that was in an intercity classroom...

Tina's first practicum was described as "absolutely not" diverse, with only two Asian kids amongst the rest that were "white". The second school was described as "absolutely [diverse]" in terms of visibly diverse and from "all different walks of life". Children in the second school also spoke Patois in the classroom, which Tina defined as, "it's slang... it's like, in Jamaica they have English, it's basically broken English". Children in the classroom would use Patois when speaking amongst themselves, but never during group discussions or main classroom learning.

Tina defines *English language learner* as the following:

Someone who's language, first language is not English. It can be anything, someone who's learning English as something other than their mother tongue.

Participant five: Francis Newman* (pseudonym) had two practicum blocks and an internship in her Bachelor of Education program. For the final internship, PTs were able to choose any area of experience to fulfil the intern requirement. Francis completed her first practicum and final internship in the Catholic School Board, while her second practicum was fulfilled in the Public School system. Francis described her placement as follows:

My first one... was in grade two, the second one was a grade six classroom where I had not one associate teachers but two they were team teaching... and for my internship I chose to do core French...

Francis regarded her first practicum as 'definitely less diverse' while her second was considered to be more racially and linguistically diverse. The difference in diversity was attributed to different city locations. Francis is the only participant who had the opportunity to co-teach with two associate teachers who were team teaching. She is also the only participant who pursued experiences in the Catholic Board and is the only participant with a teachable, French. The following is Francis's definition of *English language learner*:

... To me it means basically someone learning the English language... personally it doesn't mean that the person doesn't already know a lot about the English language, like I think many people are ELLs, but they might be an ELL at a different level...

Participant six: Linda Cornwall* (pseudonym) had three practicum blocks in her Bachelor of Education program. Linda reported the following about her practicums:

My first experience was with a grade five/six split class, and it was with a teacher who... was close to being retired... and my second was in a grade one and I've previously had experience teaching grade one... so I was comfortable... like the teacher was amazing, she was young, so it was easier to get along with her and the class had a few behaviours and special needs... my third placement was with a grade three classroom... it was six weeks... my second placement was a month and my first was three weeks and then a week at the beginning of the school year. I would say the most diverse was my [second]... there were a lot of new immigrants, it was a what's it called, a performance plus school....

When asked about linguistic diversity being present in the classroom, Linda responded with:

I think so, I think in all the classrooms I was in, there were probably students who were from other countries, and there were some, there were some children with ESL yes.

Linda's Faculty of Education is the most Northerly located University in comparison to those of the other participants. Linda defines of the term *English language learner* as follows:

...A student could either be coming from another country and they speak their language at home and then they are, they have to learn like English in the school system or they can speak more than one language... and then are also learning English... and its student who are not... like fluent in the English language and that they need extra help

Although the selected participants have varying experiences and educational choices, there are many shared characteristics among them. All of the research participants were female and eager to participate in this study. None of the participants had any additional certifications related to education besides their recently obtained Bachelor of Education degree and teacher certification from the Ontario College of Teachers. All participants of this study have all successfully completed a 2007-08 pre-service education program and have obtained similar knowledge on what is deemed to be necessary for classroom teacher preparation.

The participants of this study were not technically PTs, but recent graduates from Teacher Education programs. During data collection, they were PTs reflecting back on their learning experiences. By the completion of this study, the PTs had graduated from their training programs.

Data Collection

The primary method of data collection used for this study is face-to-face, individual data collection. All participants were offered refreshments upon arrival. Participants were provided with adequate time to review the consent agreement and the cover letter to the interview (*please see Appendix B for the Cover Letter to Interview*). Data collection procedures began with the interviewer reviewing the research purpose, the type of data collected and its uses, potential risks and benefits, and the voluntary nature of participation. Participants' were also reminded that they would be audio-taped while brief notes were taken and the procedures used to ensure confidentiality were re-emphasized. Participant questions were then invited and answered.

Each interview was conducted in a location that was familiar and comfortable to the PT. Interview locations included secluded locations in cafeterias or cafés, homes and public libraries. Ensuring comfort reduced the potential psychological risk associated with participation. This minimal risk includes feeling intimidated or uncomfortable responding to questions in the researcher's presence. To further manage this risk, efforts were made to establish rapport and a sense of trust and respect prior, during and after the interview. The interviewer administered a 60 minute interview with each participant using a structured interview questionnaire. Immediately after the fieldwork was complete, the audio-recorded interviews were transcribed. Each PT received their interview transcript by email and was asked for comments, clarification and corrections, if necessary. This procedure ensured the accuracy of the information recorded.

Structured Interview Questionnaire

The primary research tool used for this investigation was a structured interview guided by a prepared interview protocol (*please see Appendix C for the Structured Interview Questionnaire for Pre-service Teachers*). The interview protocol includes the following components; a heading, demographic information, pre-interview, key research questions and additional probes, spaces for

recording written comments for analysis and post-interview. The key research questions used consisted of demographic, descriptive, experience, knowledge and feeling questions (Creswell, 2005). The interview method was selected since it provided useful information that cannot be directly observed (i.e. past experiences, educational experiences, attitudes and future practices or teaching behaviours). Interviews allowed each participant to share their interpretation of their education and experiences. Interviews also allowed the researcher control of the direction of the discussion and the use of prompts to elicit detail.

Each participant's interview required a single 60 minute session. The interview process was guided by open-ended, pre-worded questions and predetermined sequence (Creswell, 2005). This interview type helped obtain simple demographic information and quickly established a general level of knowledge based on common ELL myths. All interviewees were asked to respond to the same myths and misconceptions during this portion of the interview. The discussion then proceeded into an interview guide approach where open-ended questions were used to obtain rich detail. With this interview type, the participant has more freedom in their response. The open-ended questions addressed their knowledge related to: ELLs, ELL needs, teaching methods and strategies, personal experiences, teacher education and language acquisition. Overall, this interview sequence was deemed as most logical. To obtain a concrete copy of the necessary information, the interview was audio-recorded while comments and reflexive notes were taken. The reflexive notes included personal thoughts, such as in-field analysis, "speculation, feelings, problems, ideas, hunches, impressions and prejudices" (Creswell, 2003, p. 189). All other notes were recorded under the comments section of the protocol.

Data Analysis

Data analysis procedures began in the field, in the form of reflexive notes during data collection. These pieces of field information began the organization process. Notes regarding the methodology were also considered during the interpretation of the information. During the post-interview, the researcher also verified any initial interpretations made in the field with the participants.

After the completed written transcriptions were also confirmed, the researcher read through the data and searched for regularities, themes and patterns (Creswell, 2003). Words and phrases were noted, rephrased as titles or concepts and assigned a different colour. As new categories emerged, they were included in the coding system. The data collected was then organized using flat coding and further synthesized using hierarchical coding (Creswell, 2003). The synthesized data began to present major links and contradictions in participants' responses. Once the hierarchical coding was established, all data within each category was summarized with extracted descriptive information for each theme. Each summary was then organized for interpretation, reflection and overall meaning based on the researcher's personal lens. The researcher developed interpretive ideas about the findings and began relating them to relevant literature, broad concerns and concepts to support personal ideas (Creswell, 2005).

The study also identified areas of recommendation during the interpretation process and in collaboration with participants. After the interpretation, the researcher developed a visual outline of the ideas to further organize the data for the final report (Creswell, 2005). The outlined categories were then used, expanded and explained in the written report.

Authenticity and Trustworthiness

Credibility (internal validity) was maintained using *respondent validation* to avoid misinterpretations of the collected data. The researcher debriefed with each participant upon the completion of the interview to verify accuracy (Creswell, 2003). Since the data was verified, readers can be assured that good scientific practice occurred (Bryman & Teevan, 2005). The validation process also ensured a good connection between the participants' perspectives, experiences and responses and the researcher's interpretations (Bryman & Teevan, 2005). The participant was also invited to participate in *member checking* within approximately two months time.

Transferability (external validity) is upheld with the incorporation of *rich and thick descriptions* in the findings and recommendations (Bryman & Teevan, 2005). Detailed accounts of the culture, varied viewpoint, participant quotes and demographics provide others with a comprehensive database to make judgements about the transferability of the findings (Bryman & Teevan, 2005). Readers have a sense of the context and details used to derive to interpretations.

Dependability (reliability) was preserved using the *auditing approach* of completing full records of all phases of the study (Bryman & Teevan, 2005). The second method used *external auditors*. To minimize misanalysis or personal biases, two external auditors were used to verify proper procedures and to assess the justification of connected themes (Bryman & Teevan, 2005). The first auditor is the research supervisor who audited the process throughout the study. The supervisor constantly reviewed the document and process to ensure clarity and objectivity. The second auditor was the second reader who reviews the overall major research paper.

Confirm-ability (objectivity) was sustained using the *clarifying researcher bias* method. Since total objectivity is impossible, the researcher stated their past experiences, educational background, personal views and theoretical inclination (Creswell, 2003). This statement provided readers with the lens used to interpret the data. Based on this statement and the presentation of contrary findings, it is apparent that personal values were not allowed to excessively direct the findings (Bryman & Teevan, 2005). Authenticity is also kept through the use of various forms of narratives including text embedded quotes and the participant's original words.

Researcher's Statement

To understand the mindset and lens used for the interpretation of the findings, the researcher's past experiences, educational background, personal views and theoretical inclination are explored. As a graduate of Early Childhood Education (B.A.) I have pursued research in relevant fields as course requirements for my undergraduate degree. I have excelled in both, Research I and Research II, as course requirements in 2005-06 at Ryerson University.

More recently, I have completed CS8929: Linguistic Issues of Minority Language Children, in fall 2007 as an educational elective. I have also recently completed and excelled in CS8901: Research Methods in Early Childhood Studies, winter 2008 semester, as a requirement of the Master of Arts degree in Early Childhood Studies at Ryerson University. Professional development relevant to the topic of this study, include attending; OISE/University of Toronto Symposium: Linguistic and Cultural Diversity in Education: Norwegian and Canadian Research, Programs and Policies [October 22-23, 2007], the 23rd Annual International Conference on Young children with Special Needs and their Families: Crossing New Borders [October 26-27, 2007] and most recently the Symposium on English Language Learners [May 16, 2008]. My post-secondary education has focused on research in educational equity, diversity, inclusion, education, children and families.

CHAPTER IV

Findings and Discussion

Teacher Preparation

Southwestern Ontario's Faculties of Education

There is growing evidence in scholarly literature that classroom teachers are not prepared to effectively educate ELLs in regular classrooms (Flynn & Hill, 2005). Recent literature also suggests that teacher education programs have attempted to respond to the changes in classroom demographics by creating additional courses and programs focused on promoting effective methods of language learning (Montgomery, Roberts & Growe, 2003; Téllez & Waxman, 2005). Teacher educators must emphasize the fact that ELL competence relies heavily on profound commitment, professional and personal development, and active effort on the part of all PTs (Evans, Arnot-Hopffer & Jurich, 2005). National reforms must continue to target efforts at ensuring the ability and quality of all classroom teachers (Menken & Antunez, 2001). Consequently, it is crucial to consistently review and analyze all ELL course content included in teacher education to assure that it is the most current information and relevant.

Courses and Content Pertaining to ELLs

Teacher preparation consists of fundamental and intertwined, yet necessary components. The breadth and depth of preparation programs must be explored through the perspective of graduates to make certain that programs are effectively building on all of the fundamental components necessary for high quality primary-junior teachers. Among the obvious components is knowledge of Ontario's standardized curriculum and the competence or skill-set necessary to transfer such knowledge to all young learners in the classroom. However, in many cases little attention is given to the diverse learners themselves, in particular the linguistically diverse. This

poses an issue since young children in Southwestern Ontario are increasingly from diverse linguistic backgrounds due to the increase and reliance on immigration (Marx, 2000). It is naive for any classroom teacher to believe that they can evade encountering such linguistic diversity in any future teaching situation. Effective teacher preparation adequately prepares teachers for all learners in the classroom regardless of their English language proficiency. PTs should be prepared for the “typical” school day routine and content, but they must also be prepared to encounter and conquer the probable population as demographics constantly change. All teachers who are adequately and effectively prepared are equipped for the linguistically diverse.

It is commonly misconceived that ELL-related knowledge is reserved for ESL/ELL specialists, yet such knowledge has become necessary for all teachers who plan on successfully educating children within Southwestern Ontario. With a growing multilingual population, every teacher will have the opportunity to work with ELLs and thus must be prepared (Antunez, 2002; Dianda, 1992; Evans, Arnot-Hopffer & Jurich, 2005). In order to understand how prepared these teaching candidates feel about their readiness to teach ELLs upon graduation, the participants were asked to provide their perspective on their Faculty of Education’s courses and content related to ELLs and English as a second language. When asked to elaborate on ELL or ESL related courses and course content, these participants responded as follows:

We touched upon it on a course... so there was a one-day lecture, like a one day period, spent on talking about ELL needs and a... we did workshops and it talked about ELLs again. We learned about, well we went through the stages of language development and... they figured that, they assumed that we already have some background in theory so we talked about strategies and ways to adapt and a little bit where to get resources from. My professor... actually showed us quite valuable techniques, strategies that he would use in Reading Recovery that could be applicable to a ELL (Olivia)

...We learned different strategies on how to be inclusive, what teachers can do to encourage students, to motivate... and how we can help parents to build trust in teachers, students as well in that case (Katie believes that her elective ELL course was in-depth)

None. We only had like two classes where a teacher came in to talk to us about ESL kids... In terms of course content: "This book that's provided by the government it's called... Many Roots, Many Voices... they gave that to us and then we had to go through it and look at what are the strategies that you can use with ELLs and how a majority of our students are ELL learners so... these strategies should apply to all of them (Mary)

Oh none. Well we had language class, but again, it was just maybe one, three-hour session was spent on ELLs... In terms of course content: "just basically how... how learning the letters and learning the phonetics and the rules is difficult because... English is so complex. And just different strategies for helping them learn language the same way you would for a child who was developmentally like delayed in language (Tina)

We had a... seminar basically where they took random, very random days to talk about ESL or ELL so I didn't have one particular course that addressed it, it was maybe over the course of the year, maybe four or five, three-hour classes were dedicated to discussing that, there was an ELL course that was offered as your extra curricular course but I didn't take that one. In terms of course content: We learned a lot about ways to accommodate them in the classroom but it was very broad... and we did activities... and learning about information, and learning techniques such as including visuals, or hand gestures, very basic ... if I had to sit down and work with a group of ELLs, I don't know if I would know a lot about it (Francis)

We did a course, not that I remember any of it, it was like a diversity like learners course and I guess that would relate the most... I would probably say that [my undergraduate program] taught me more than I learned there. Course content: I just remember reading articles just about how to break things down I guess and... allowing them to have that language in the classroom and not forbidding them to speak that or write in that language if that helps them to formulate their thoughts, like they can write in both... and then we can just talk about it together, and it's important not to like shun who they are and where they come from 'cause then they won't want to learn at all... (Linda)

Overall, there were no mandatory courses based on ELLs, instead there were sessions or lectures rooted in ELL content which were embedded in mandatory courses. The only ELL course available was an elective which was mentioned by two graduates. All of the participants who experienced the periodic sessions and lectures unanimously agreed that the content was undoubtedly an overview as opposed to an in-depth exploration. PTs would have liked to receive greater detailed content to enhance their ELL competence. This finding is congruent with Waxman & Tellez's (2002) study which also recognizes the need for more information regarding

helping ELLs meet high academic standards. Mary's comment below reinforces the need to consider the depth of learning involved:

Overview, definitely overview... we didn't go into depth at all and then when we had to read the [ELL-related] documents, we had to read them ourselves and then we weren't even given enough time to read it or go through it in detail... (Mary)

PTs in this study describe their ELL sessions as what is deemed to be a 'typical introductory ELL workshop' for professionals outside of the ESL/ELL "specialization" (Harper & de Jong, 2004). In introductory workshops, the theoretical foundation necessary for ELL preparation is overly simplified while emphasizing the overlap between first and second language learning and ignoring the important differences (Dianda, 1992; Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 2000; Harper & de Jong, 2004). The complex components of English language learning are condensed to the most basic pieces of point-form information.

When crucial ELL preparation information is condensed to such minimalism, many teachers falsely feel at ease believing that they will be able to learn what they need in the field with minimal groundwork. Graduates with this mentality are under the misconception that learning English may occur by exposure (Dianda, 1992; Harper & de Jong, 2004). Four of the participants agreed that exposure would enhance the pace and ability to learn English. The following is Tina's comment reflecting this belief:

Exposure and... because its an active process so not just assuming that by sitting in a classroom that the students are going to pick it up but by... making accommodations to lessons to... assist the language learners in the classroom so lets say, you know, you're doing a lesson... have things labelled so that they are seeing the word, they are hearing the word, and then, you know ensuring that you know spelling, spelling is a part of your, of your literacy program, and that... (Tina)

The remaining two participants refuted the exposure claim with consideration for the child's comprehension of the language, learning context, possibilities of culture-shock, and readiness to learn the language. Francis noted:

... Really depends on the child and it also depends on the context of where they are, I am trying to think of an example... for whatever reason it might even be cult-, maybe a culture shock that they are not ready... to learn the language but they have been placed in a situation where they need it... (Francis)

Exposure to the English language must be paired with motivation, purpose and the explicit teaching of the functions, genres, phonological, grammatical, and morphological aspects of English (Harper & de Jong, 2004). Exposure without interaction, feedback, and opportunities to respond; is simply insufficient for language learning. However, it is apparent in this study and the literature at large, that teacher preparation still lacks enough focus on the topics of English language learning and teaching, resulting in graduates with a lack of ELL expertise and competence (Dorrington & Ramirez-Smith, 1999; Gandara Maxwell-Jolly & Driscoll, 2005). Teachers require deep subject-matter pertaining to ELLs so as to assist them in achieving the grade-level standards (Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly & Driscoll, 2005; Menken & Antunez, 2001). Without explicit instruction, PTs are unaware and do not possess the pedagogy necessary to enable access to the academic knowledge and skills ingrained in the curriculum (Menken & Antunez, 2001; Montgomery, Roberts & Growe, 2003). PTs also lack a thorough understanding of language acquisition processes which limits their comprehension of needs and overall efficacy.

Two of the PTs in this study are relying on receiving inservice professional development for ELLs if need be, in future teaching environments. This expectation is not surprising as Dorrington & Ramirez-Smith (1999) also found that many respondents expected their employers to provide training once employed, rather than being responsible for their own professional development prior to encountering the situation. To further exploit this issue, Menken & Antunez (2001) and Montgomery, Roberts & Growe (2003) found these types of inservice workshops to be short-term and to only superficially expose teachers to ELL-related concepts without providing the in-depth knowledge or connections necessary for lasting effects on teaching practice. In

reality, there is no quick-fix solution to this complex situation, comprehensive training is required (Clair, 1995).

Currently, pre-service and inservice training focus heavily on establishing English proficiency and classroom strategies rather than the who, how and why of English language teaching and learning (Cruz & Patterson, 2005; Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 2000; Montgomery, Roberts & Growe, 2003). The fact that PTs rely on inservice development uncovers their assumptions about what is deemed ‘important preparation’ (Evans, Arnot-Hopffer & Jurich, 2005).

Lessons Learned Through the Elective ELL Course

According to the PT who chose the elective ELL course, there are essential components to ELL teaching that she feels other graduates lack. She feels that other PTs are without ELL strategies and generally don’t know what to do with ELLs because they chose not to take this course. Katie felt that this course was “very valuable” to her training because of the increasing prevalence of ELLs in Ontario schools. To better illustrate the number of ‘unequipped’ certified teachers, within Katie’s B. Ed. cohort of 65 PTs, only two chose to enrol in this course. Katie comments:

It’s just very important for teacher going into the field to actually know what to do in the classroom situation... the teacher I worked with would not speak to the parents because she was afraid of their accent and that she wouldn’t be able to understand what the parents are saying, she is in the teaching situation and was actually afraid to talk to parents and caregivers (Katie)

Everyday classroom situations may become extremely difficult or addressed inappropriately due to lack of training. These types of situations should be addressed in teacher preparation to ensure that teachers know how to react, both effectively and professionally. Katie believes that the 63

PTs who did not take the course may experience negative repercussions in the classroom due to their lack of information. Again, Katie notes:

I don't think that they will be able to build a strong relationship or a strong rapport with a child from, or who speaks a different language, I think it's harder to build a rapport with family members as well in that situation, I think that... the teachers they won't be able to implement certain activities in a certain way, they might just teach all children at the same level using the same strategy even though that child may not understand what's going on so it will be harder for them to change that (Katie)

Although the single course on ELLs is more effective than no course at all, having several topics contained within a single three-hour half-semester course can only realistically provide a cursory examination of the more detailed topics (Menken & Antunez, 2001). According to Katie, none of the pre-service programs in Southwestern Ontario are providing enough information to all of their PTs which raises significant concerns regarding prospective teacher's ELL competence.

Multicultural Education: Is Cultural Sensitivity Enough?

All of the participants agreed that diversity topics were infused and focused on throughout all mandatory courses. A range of diversity issues were discussed, including gender stereotypes, colour, homophobia, upper and middle class biases, family background, and family units. However, even with a wide-range of diversity emphasized in the multicultural education focus, the literature notes that teacher education programs are not preparing future teachers to deal with the linguistic diversity in classrooms (Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 2000; Reiff & Cannella, 1992).

Cultural sensitivity is definitely inadequate to allow prospective teachers to work effectively with ELLs (Dorrington & Ramirez-Smith, 1999). Two participants criticized the lack of ELL content in their mandatory courses on 'societies'. The exclusion of ELL content was

disappointing to these PTs and they questioned the reasoning for its absence. Although the literature suggests that preparation programs recognize the importance and need of incorporating ELL preparation for all prospective teachers (Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 2000), based on the findings of this study, it is evident that minimal actions have been taken.

In addition, the participants in this study appeared unsure of the approximate number of hours spent on ELL-related topics. This led to most responses beginning with “maybe”, “wasn’t much”, “not very much”, “less then”, and “very basic”. The following validates such instances:

Maybe two (Tina)

Less then six hours. (Mary)

The same, not very much (Katie)

On average four hours were spent on learning about second language acquisition while between “*maybe 2 hours*” and 10 hours were spent on learning about practical ELL strategies. Most participants felt that less-than-six hours were spent on learning about practical ELL strategies. Katie, who took a course dedicated to ELL preparation, approximated only three hours being dedicated to ELL strategies. When it came to ‘classroom learning needs for linguistically diverse children’, two participants claimed that zero hours were spent on that topic. Another three made comments of “*I don’t think it was much*”, “*not very much*” and “*very basic*”. These comments indicate a lack of thoroughness and depth to the discussions regarding this topic. On average three hours were spent on this very important topic.

Although little time was spent on the knowledge of linguistics and linguistic diversity, all classroom teachers need to understand the basic constructs of bilingualism, the structure of the English language, multilingual development, language proficiency, the role of the first language and culture in learning and education, and the demands that Ontario’s curriculum places on ELLs (Alfred, 1994; Dianda, 1992; Evans, Arnot-Hopffer & Jurich, 2005; Gonzalez & Darling-

Hammond, 2000; Menken & Antunez, 2001; Montgomery, Roberts & Growe, 2003; Waxman & Tellez, 2002). Effective classroom instruction is dependent upon a thorough understanding of language and its structure (Menken & Antunez, 2001). Teachers must understand their students not only as cultural beings, but also linguistic beings. Deep content knowledge significantly influences a teacher's effectiveness in the classroom (Menken & Antunez, 2001; Youngs & Youngs, 2001). Therefore, it would appear imperative that teacher preparation programs expose all future teachers to the different components of language knowledge, methodologies, and effective methods for promoting student success in English and academic content (Menken & Antunez, 2001).

The aim of multicultural education must extend beyond a 'celebration of difference' or an increase in cultural sensitivity and appreciation (Dianda, 1992; Menken & Antunez, 2001). A common criticism of multicultural education is the focus on types of diversity rather than how to teach, facilitate and empower diverse students (Dianda, 1992; Reiff & Cannella, 1992). Even compassionate and dedicated teachers who do not have ELL competence, perpetuate existing biases, myths and misconceptions; making it difficult to create a beneficial difference for ELLs (Evans, Arnot-Hopffer & Jurich, 2005). Beginning teacher's first ELLs will have a sub-standard educational experience in their classrooms until their teachers establish ELL competence through the trial-and-error of children's education.

Placement

Placements provide PTs with a practical component where they can translate course content into practice. Field experiences also provide learning opportunities through observing successful and unsuccessful teachers in the field. PTs with successful role models have the chance to observe the implementation of effective teaching strategies, experiment with their own

strategies whilst being provided with constructive feedback (Cruz & Patterson, 2005; Dorrington & Ramirez-Smith, 1999; Menken & Antunez, 2001; Romi & Leyser, 2006). Effective programs will also debrief placement experiences to allow peers to learn from each other's unique experiences and to further explore their own. Colleagues can also offer additional support, resources, classroom ideas and immediate feedback (Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 2000). It is evident in the following statement that Olivia would have benefited from a whole group debriefing:

... I felt that at my placement, because there was the ESL support through a resource teacher I really didn't have to modify as much because she came into the classroom... so I feel that I don't have as much experience with that, because there was so much support in the school that I was at (Olivia)

PTs require realistic classroom experiences with linguistically diverse individuals.

Linguistic differences and intercultural communications are intimidating and uncomfortable to those who have not had the opportunity to encounter these experiences either first or second hand (Dorrington & Ramirez-Smith, 1999; Evans, Arnot-Hopffer & Jurich, 2005; Reiff & Cannella, 1992; Youngs & Youngs, 2001). Facilities of Education have the ability to increase positive attitudes by establishing contact with ELLs with guidance and support from experienced teachers and faculty (Cruz & Patterson, 2005; Youngs & Youngs, 2001). It is particularly important to establish this level of comfort prior to graduation. Francis and Linda comment on their desire to "know more" before graduating:

I took initiative... it wasn't something that was told to you, like I, it was more I had to test things out, and see what worked with this child but... it was helpful in that sense, but it wasn't like my associate teacher sat me down and said ok this is how you are going to do this, and it was a lot of testing and seeing what worked (Francis)

...What would be great is have a placement where you have to be in a situation where you were working with someone... that correlates specifically to what to do in these situations when you are dealing with ELLs... I think it would be beneficial, but... each classroom I was in especially now... in Ontario you will encounter it and I did even... where it was predominately white and English speaking... I think probably every classroom will so...

but I think it, it's mandatory to speak about it and to... make sure the teacher understand that they can't leave those students behind, they need to have extra support just like it was a special need because in a way it is (Linda)

A practicum experience in a realistic environment is an essential component to any preparation program (Cruz & Patterson, 2005; Evans, Arnot-Hopffer & Jurich, 2005; Menken & Antunez, 2001). Mary felt that some of the ELL knowledge would not have been acquired without her ELL placement. She states:

I would say now more confident then I was before had my internship because I learned a lot from this teacher she was really good... she integrated like subjects linked to curriculum expectations... for ELL learners so I was really shocked that she was able to do that... (Mary)

Practical experiences allow PTs to explore theories, models, strategies, research findings, policies as well as classroom issues; under experienced supervision. Teachers must understand that ELLs have academic and language needs that are different from most classroom children. Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly & Driscoll (2005) reassert that teachers cannot be given all the credit or blame for ELL academic achievement, however it is evident that they play a crucial role in their education. Therefore, the quality and extent of professional placements is critical and must be reassessed for effectiveness in preparing prospective teachers for meeting the needs of ELL children (Emporia State University, 1994; Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly & Driscoll, 2005).

Pre-service Teachers' Beliefs

PTs' beliefs are complex and understanding them is essential to appreciating the efficacy of teacher education and to improving future programs (Romi & Leyser, 2006). PTs' perspectives on their education, certification programs, knowledge and experience are also measures of their effectiveness in the classroom with ELLs (Menken & Antunez, 2001). It has been suggested that self-efficacy beliefs be evaluated and explored throughout training programs to monitor learning (Romi & Leyser, 2006). All PTs come to teacher education with prior beliefs, knowledge and experiences about learning and teaching in the classroom. These beliefs are used as a lens in which they view and filter the information received during the training (Farrell, 2006). PTs need to learn to identify their beliefs and take them into consideration as they learn new knowledge that may compete and replace their existing beliefs and theories (Farrell, 2006; Torok & Aguilar, 2000). Beliefs tend to be resistant to change and require confrontation, discomfort and active efforts. The process of examining beliefs cannot be trivialized or oversimplified (Evans, Arnot-Hopffer & Jurich, 2005). Ingrained beliefs are not usually consciously articulated without some assistance and effort. Regardless of the effort required; these beliefs must be made explicit, analyzed and critically reflected upon (Cruz & Patterson, 2005; Dorrington & Ramirez-Smith, 1999; Farrell, 2006). Unfortunately, there is an indication that if PTs' beliefs are not adequately challenged, naively held generalizations and prejudices will continue to dominate PTs' perspectives (Torok & Aguilar, 2000).

Menken & Antunez (2001) further emphasize the importance of exploring PT beliefs by stating that a teacher's expertise in teaching is the 'single most important factor' in predicting student achievement. Too many PTs are unaware of their own biases and beliefs that may hinder their teaching practice. Dorrington & Ramirez-Smith (1999) stated that PTs do not indicate a need to even examine their biases or beliefs about teaching and learning in diverse classrooms.

Preparation faculty must specifically address issues related to teacher's harmful beliefs, attitudes and perceptions of ELLs prior to graduation and teacher certification (Waxman & Tellez, 2002).

Pre-service teachers' beliefs regarding self-efficacy were also topics of discussion for the participants of this study.

Self-Efficacy

When teachers are highly prepared for the profession, there is a high level of confidence in their teaching skills and abilities. The more competent teachers feel after preparation, the more successful they will be in the classroom (Dorrington & Ramirez-Smith, 1999; Farrell, 2006; Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly & Driscoll, 2005; Verdugo & Flores, 2007). As Farrell (2006) states, attitude is the foundation for all other success. Attitudes of self-efficacy can have more influence on future teaching methods than any information they received during preparation (Farrell, 2006).

This idea is reinforced by Katie's and Tina's comments:

If you have a teacher who teaches something that they themselves are not comfortable with that plays a major role in the child being able to learn something (Katie)

... A lot of what it is, is narrow mindedness and it is really hard to change someone's narrow minded thinking... I think that it should have to be seen... like your course instructor would have to... observe you... incorporating language into your program because its one thing if during an interview you say, oh yah its really important and you say oh yah I will definitely make an attempt, cause you could say anything... (Tina)

Attitudes are a powerful predictor of classroom practice and affect what ELLs learn (Alfred, 1994; Youngs & Youngs, 2001). Negative attitudes lead to expected behaviours.

Whether the teacher is aware or not, they are communicating messages to their students and negatively affecting the learning process (Youngs & Youngs, 2001). The depth and quality of teacher education contributes greatly to overall teacher quality. Therefore, if PTs have doubtful responses about their abilities, it is a good indication that there is a lack of adequate preparation.

The PTs in this study did not hesitate to express their concerns regarding particular areas of weakness in their programs. Lack of information and preparation regarding the assessment of ELLs was a particular concern. Other concerns included a lack of confidence regarding whether a teacher could meet all of the responsibilities required. But overall, the PTs in this study felt confident. The following remarks illustrate this confidence in their abilities to fulfil the multiple roles and responsibilities of the classroom teacher:

I feel, confident, enough that... if... I have some knowledge right now... when I start, when I have my own classroom, I will know where to go to get support... (Olivia)

In terms of assessments or evaluations that's my weak point... I need more practice in that, so I'm not very confident in that... and we should have had more class hours for.... We only had like maybe two classes on assessment... that was it (Mary)

I think that I am getting there, I would say that I am maybe at like a 50 to 60 percent, preparation percentage but if I was really in, if I was in it... like instantaneously my brain would be going and thinking about ok well what do they need, how do I prepare, who do I talk to, and then it would slowly increase. And yah, then I'd be more prepared (Tina).

I am not sure, I don't know... it would definitely be a challenge, definitely be a challenge. Would I be able to do it? I think, I think yes. It would, I would probably rely a lot on resources, and rely a lot on people within my school, community. But I think in the end, I would be able to do it, maybe not perfectly the first time, but... eventually through experiencing it and pooling all my resources around me, I think it would be good (Francis)

Francis also identified concerns regarding issues of fairness and exclusion due to the attention she may have to give one group over another, in order to meet their needs. She notes:

.... there is so much to accommodate to, I'd be afraid that if I am accommodating too much to one child, that I would be missing something from another child, or if I am spending time on one, it's like spending time on one curriculum you are missing a part of the other curriculum, like it's so broad that. I think that b-, maybe not a barrier but a challenge would be to, to do it consistently and effectively (Francis)

This is a common concern that was also discussed in Dorrington & Ramierez-Smiths's (1999) article. Téllez & Waxman (2005) and Youngs & Youngs (2001) state that one of the greatest educational challenges is that teachers of ELLs do not feel that they are prepared for ELL's

needs. Although it is difficult to foresee all future difficulties, it is unmistakable that PTs do foresee some challenges. Therefore, PTs need to be given more opportunities to explore areas of concern to resolve fears and enhance self-efficacy beliefs (Alfred, 1994). There is a good indication that many PTs have not reached a comfort level that enables them to feel confident in their abilities to work with ELLs in the same way as other classroom children (Dorrington & Ramirez-Smith, 1999; Flynn & Hill, 2005). As a professional preparation program, it must ensure that all certified teachers are experts in their trained field. The following statement by Menken & Antunez (2001) is the goal we should strive for, for all of our certified teachers:

“Cultivating one new teacher to perform to high standards through effective preparation impacts every student that teacher encounters during his or her career” (pg. 16)

Assessment. Current assessment methods are exceedingly monocultural. The content used in standardized assessments may present messages that are culturally biased which elicit negative feelings (Reiff & Cannella, 1992; Youngs & Youngs, 2001). Without exposure to alternatives and content insensitivity; teachers maintain a cycle of inaccurate assessments. Teacher education needs to provide the knowledge, understanding and practice necessary to adapt assessments to meet individual needs (Emporia State University, 1994; Menken & Antunez, 2001; Téllez & Waxman, 2005; Verdugo & Flores, 2007). It is imperative that teachers know how to appropriately adapt assessments without a reliance on surrounding professionals, since they are not always available or knowledgeable. Teachers themselves are obligated to record progress and to know if they are meeting a child’s language and educational needs (Verdugo & Flores, 2007).

In this study, the lack of confidence in assessment practices is echoed by Tina and Francis:

I hate giving my kids a grade, assessment is one of my, my biggest things, I am, I’m terrified of giving a kid a mark on their report card and I’m going to have a parent knocking on my door saying my kid doesn’t deserve this mark or you know and then having to sit there and justify it and even if I have work samples and even if I have you

know objectives for the grade given well, like what if that's not good enough? Like what do I do? That's one thing that I'm really worried about, I'm worried about assessment... I'm really worried about sitting across from a parent and, and then having them want to hear that their kid is doing fantastically... what do I say to the parent whose kid is struggling? Like... how do I... how do I start that conversation obviously you always begin with strengths of what's going well... what do I do after that? Like how do I say you know, my concerns are... and what if they yell at me, like what do I do? (Tina)

Oh [assessments for ELLs], that is a good one, you know what, I don't know.... (Francis)

Assessment is a common concern that emerged from the majority of participants. Several issues arise with the assessment of ELL's language proficiency and curriculum knowledge. With the current emphasis on testing and standardized testing in the schools, ELL assessment is a valid concern. Standardized tests are normed using native English speakers and Canadian-content. These tests are inaccurate and culturally inappropriate for ELLs. It may be impossible to determine whether an ELL's scores are the result of limited language, low content knowledge or both (Coelho, 2007; Verdugo & Flores, 2007). All teachers ought to possess an awareness of alternative, formal and informal, assessments. Teachers must also understand that accommodations may complicate test results and thus must know how to make English a non-factor without altering the assessment (Verdugo & Flores, 2007). Faculties of Education should require PTs to demonstrate their ability to adapt assessments and use assessment data to plan further instruction, prior to graduation (Emporia State University, 1994). Assessments are crucial to guiding academic progress, thus it is a central concern when PTs are not explicitly taught how to modify assessments for ELLs, and this was noted by the participants in this study:

The most challenging part for me is going to be assessments, is assessing students work and learning and... although we, we are required to do some of that in our practicum, its not our own classroom, school or children, we're not with them every day, those families we don't know very well so I think that's the biggest challenge and, and apparently for my colleagues and, and teachers that I work with right now they, they have felt similar like that, that's, that's something that you have to really work hard at and have a variety of assessment tools and be able to justify the grades and the levels and what you do in your classroom, so I think that, I don't feel that I'm... I'm confident enough that I will

be... I know that, that will be a challenge for me and that I will definitely need to seek support from fellow staff to, to help me do that better (Olivia)

Didn't... really go in-depth into it... and it just, it wasn't enough for me... Burns/Roe One it's informal reading inventory and it basically assess what level they are at, so I think if I had an ELL student I would start with that... I was looking through it... it seemed more for like a Canadian, like it had stories that, like stories we read about in our childhood and I don't, think it would be appropriate for ELLs, so I went on the internet and saw some reviews and they gave it like three out of five or two or one but like my teacher says its really good, so I'm like I don't know... (Mary)

What are some other forms of assessment other then rubrics? I've only ever really seen the rubric... like what else besides a rubric... and ok yah I can use a checklist but what the hell kind of checklist can I be using in math? You know (Tina)

Preparation programs are responsible for thoroughly instructing future teachers on the nature and implications of assessment (Menken & Antunez, 2001). Teacher education must help all classroom teachers to be able to readily identify and assess students' knowledge and address student differences (Waxman & Tellez, 2002). Providing the Ministry of Education's resource document *Many Roots, Many Voices: Supporting English Language Learners in Every Classroom* (Ontario Ministry of Education) is an inadequate solution to this issue since it only provides general suggestions on initial assessments (Coelho, 2007). Although the Ministry has attempted to assist teachers with publications on responsive teaching, these are ineffective if they are not utilized in preparation programs or mandated in schools (Coelho, 2007). Too many certified teachers are still questioning how to teach children with diverse linguistic backgrounds. As a society that prides itself on its multicultural mosaic, this is not a minor issue. This creates significant concern for our future as the presence of ELLs continues to grow with the consistently increasing flow of immigrants that essentially shapes Ontario's population growth (Chui, Tran & Maheux, 2007; Gándara, Maxwell-Jolly & Driscoll, 2005; Verdugo & Flores, 2007).

Graduating Peers

Five PTs believe that their graduating peers do not know enough about ELLs to work effectively with them in the classroom. These participants feel that their peers are unprepared for ELLs due to a lack of ELL related preparation and information. They comment:

I think as for the faculty training, everything we learned was really an overview because it was in, it was a nine month program I think that those who had experience in practicum that had many ELLs may be more prepared then others, but I cant, I cant quite say (Olivia)

No I don't, out of my cohort... I think only two of us out of a group of 65 took that course on ELLs and yah that just surprised me knowing that a lot of us graduates now we don't really know what to do like we talked a bit in class and we think we know but that class would have been needed (Katie)

[Immediate response of] No. I would definitely say not unless, unless they've had previous experience like through practicum or whatever but like no I think this is something that, that you really need to be taught direct instruction and direct strategies and... given lots of examples of how to do it, which we didn't get (Mary)

I think the ones who are an English language learners are. Are much better prepared then I am... but no, everybody isn't, there's a lot of people who aren't. And a lot of people who don't care enough to become really good at that because they know that they are going to be working in a board or they know that they are going to be working in an area where it's not really a concern. And that's scary... [I know some people don't care] because... you can... just because the things that they've said, things you can see in the class... some people skip, don't say, don't ever say anything, don't contribute and... it just doesn't appear that they're willing to broaden their horizons and learn something new. Just personal observation. (Tina)

...there are a lot of people who just coast... and a lot of people who just get by because they've done the bare minimum and that's all that they think is required of them... those are the people that worry me because... for half the people in my program, if my kid were in their classroom, I would pull them out right away. Simply because I don't think that they are ready... What you put into a program, how hard you work, and what you understand say a lot about who you are as a teacher, and... as a person... (Tina)

No I don't feel that they know enough about it. But I think it will come with experience. I, I, we've got basic, basic information, it would be realistic, realistically better to have more... I am not sure why it is [that everyone graduates], but... classes and assignments weren't taken seriously, it was kind of like, if you did it, you passed, what you did, didn't matter, just as long as you did it. So who is to say that, that person learned something out of it? So there just needs to be more accountability (Francis)

I don't know, I'm going to say... maybe not... I don't know if someone coming from a background in like English, Science or Law would have... as much experience as I have with children in the schools before I went to teachers college... so I, I don't. But... I don't know if anyone even could fully run their own classroom this year (laughs) after seen what, well like it was a good program but it... just having that I don't know how, like a lot of people struggled a lot... especially if you took English or something... then, and then just now you are a teacher, not only are you learning information that may be new to you, but you have to learn how to teach it, and teach it so all the children in the class understand, its quite a tough situation (Linda)

These types of responses are from newly certified teachers who are ready to enter the teaching profession. Clearly, it is necessary for the certification requirements to be reanalyzed. Authorities granting the certification necessary to teach in our schools must be held accountable for the quality of teachers in our schools (Clair, 1995). As an act of accountability, teacher education programs may regulate high standards through the restoration of an exiting exam required for all classroom teachers. Tina further emphasizes this point:

We had a big debate in our class... about the teacher test that was removed, cause there used to be a te-, a test that you had to take at the end of the program in order to like exit... and it was taken away, and there was this huge thing and I remember being on the side of yah we should have a test because... and my argument was are you going to let a doctor leave med school without testing what they know and what they understand about the medical profession? Yet we are going to take care of hundreds upon thousands of children's lives and their future academic career and we are not going to be tested to see whether or not we are capable of doing that? So I was one of the only ones who was fighting for testing... it shouldn't be the be all end all but I think a test definitely needs to be and is an integral part along with performance... and someone can see really what kind of teacher you are, are you the kind of teacher that coasts or are you the kind that puts in everything that they have (Tina)

Currently, teacher certification does not require any type of preparation in the area of ELLs despite the significant proportion of ELLs in our classrooms. This indicates a severe disconnect between preparation and the field of teaching. Today's teacher preparation must go above and beyond the training required for English-only classrooms (Emporia State University, 1994; Menken & Antunez, 2001; Verdugo & Flores, 2007). All teachers will have the opportunity to work with ELLs and must be prepared to do so confidently and effectively.

Myths and Misconceptions

It is undeniable that all of the PTs interviewed are well-intentioned when it comes to the education and inclusion of ELLs. However, much of their education and knowledge is rooted in common misconceptions and myths regarding the English language, ELLs and learning English. These misconceptions and myths determine many of their decisions and actions as teachers and can have implications in the classroom (Genesse, 2007). These beliefs may result in avoidance, a misunderstanding of communication patterns, impoverished learning environments, undervaluing diverse life experiences and background knowledge, and create a false need for lowered expectations (Evans, Arnot-Hopffer & Jurich, 2005; Genesee, 2007).

Ingrained beliefs and attitudes are constructed over the PTs' lifetime as a result of school and community experiences, education, and personal life (Marx, 2000; Youngs & Youngs, 2001). All prospective teachers must analyze their own social beliefs and conditions of schooling (Reiff & Cannella, 1992). When myths are confronted, PTs become open to the many value systems that exist, recognize the multidimensionality of learning and the positive impact of diversity (Dianda, 1992; Reiff & Cannella, 1992). All certified teachers must be able to recognize and develop these strengths in all people (Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 2000). Common myths and misconceptions touch on the ease with which children learn languages, the relationship between conversational and academic skills, and cultural and individual differences in language learning styles (McLaughlin, 1992). Faculties of Education cannot rely on teachers to use their intuitive assumptions since they are often incorrect, unrealistic and can harm ELLs through inaccurate understandings of the language learning process (McLaughlin, 1992). Through an exploration of beliefs, it was revealed that each PT in this study agreed with more than half of the commonly held false myths and misconceptions. The following myths are further explored in detail.

Myth 1: Children learn second languages quickly and easily (McLaughlin, 1992).

Myth 2: The younger the child, the more skilled in acquiring a second language (Genesee, 2007; McLaughlin, 1992; Sorace, 2007).

Five participants agreed with each of these statements. Interestingly, four participants found these statements to be similar while the others stated true for one and false for the other. The participants comment:

... Definitely yah... it's true because there's... I do know that there is a certain span where children can biologically acquire multiple languages quicker... (Olivia)

Yah I suppose so, yah... because... they always say start young and that they are exposed to different languages at a young age... I think they will learn it faster (Mary)

True. I am just going off the basic assumption that has been told to me that younger children learn languages quicker then, older children would... it was mentioned in school, I think I'd heard it earlier then that but it was said in school (Francis)

[True] because language, they are not set in their ways... They haven't forgotten rules, cause you know how all kids are born with the ability to say certain sounds and to, like, be receptive to certain like words and things and I think that as they are building their repertoire of words, that it is easier to accommodate another word for chair when you are younger and still learning what a chair is as opposed to when you are older and already have solidified chair, that's always a chair and all that you call it (Tina)

I guess I would say true, well I'm kind of in the middle because it depends a lot on... how young they are I think and how early they started learning the second language and how... and how well it was being taught to them really like it really is about a lot of different factors but I think it, it is easy for a student to learn as long as they have support and it would have to come from the family as well as the teacher... the first five years, six years of life it is easiest to learn another language... (Linda)

These responses signify how deeply ingrained these beliefs truly are as PTs believed and proclaimed with conviction that they had witnessed or experienced such myths themselves.

Participants who identified these statements as false did so because they believed that learning environments and opportunities for practice have major impacts on language learning. Yet research has shown that an early language start, between 2-3 years, is only necessary to attain the same pronunciation results as native speakers (Sorace, 2007). Language acquisition can be an equally frustrating and difficult experience for both adults and children, although there is a

widespread belief that children easily learn languages most likely due to the ‘critical period hypothesis’ (Genesee, 2007; McLaughlin, 1992). This theory remains controversial since there are many interfering factors such as motivation, incentive, and social or individual differences (McLaughlin, 1992). Children may learn English faster because of eagerness to communicate with peers and establish friendships, whereas adults may get by with common phrases (McLaughlin, 1992). Therefore, it is the incentive and motivation for learning English which differs for these two age groups, rather than biological ability. Research comparing children and adults learning second languages as immigrants, does not support the idea that children are more efficient (McLaughlin, 1992).

Based on the literature, teachers should expect that learning English is an extremely difficult task for all people. Language learning for children may actually be more difficult since they do not have the memory techniques or other learning strategies that older learners have already acquired and may utilize to learn vocabulary and grammatical rules (McLaughlin, 1992). Also, children from some cultures are extremely anxious and embarrassed when called upon to perform in a language they are in the process of learning (McLaughlin, 1992). Aside from native accents, empirical research does not support these commonly held beliefs. Younger children do not have an advantage due to their cognitive and experiential limitation (McLaughlin, 1992).

Myth 3: Children soak up new languages like sponges (Genesee, 2007).

Four participants agreed with this statement. This myth refers to children being able to acquire languages with limited or no instruction. The reality is that English syntax and phonology are extremely difficult to learn. Difficult enough that many ELLs do not achieve age-appropriate competence in English which leads to low academic performance (Genesee, 2007). This does not occur because these children cannot learn English, it happens because their teachers don’t know how to teach English and have false beliefs about how they learn languages. Olivia notes:

... I think they do absorb the language if they're immersed in it for a continuous period of time. And if they're children, as in... elementary, school-aged, yah (Olivia)

Many classroom teachers do not know that children require 5-7 years to catch up to their grade level peers in academic language skills. Therefore, language instruction and support for ELLs must be in place for many years. PTs need to know about the later stages of language acquisition as well as the beginning. Most PTs commented on newly arrived students rather than students that may have been in the country for 4 or more years and still require support.

Myth 4: Proficiency in oral English is a prerequisite for academic instruction (Genesee, 2007).

Four participants agreed with this myth. However, one of the participants did not agree with this because she had witnessed a teacher effectively scaffold an ELL by providing one-on-one instructions, ensuring understanding, and supporting the child to help them succeed. This participant believed that teaching efficacy depended on the amount of effort the teacher is willing to give because all children can succeed with the right support. A second participant believed this statement to be false because math and science are universal languages that do not require any knowledge of English to understand the concepts being taught. Because of the belief in English acquisition as a necessary prerequisite for academic instruction, many teachers rely heavily on ESL supports to teach English quickly in order for them, the classroom teacher, to take care of the rest of the child's education (Genesee, 2007). The following comments mirror this belief:

I think so, yes... because... or at least they need to comprehend oral English, if not speak oral English, because if they're giving a child instruction. Although they can use aids like pictures, and symbols. The language part of it is extremely valuable and they may not be able to articulate what they want to back, but it's comprehending that oral language, I think, is important, yah (Olivia)

... True, again just because other languages aren't taught [or used in the classroom] (Katie)

... For academic success you would either need to know the language very well or have the assistance there to get them through (Francis)

True, like if they can speak and understand then it would be easier for them to learn (Linda)

In reality, ELLs are just as able to learn as any other child in the classroom as long as their language learning needs are addressed effectively (Genesee, 2007). All teachers, both classroom and ESL, are responsible for teaching language skills. Classroom teachers can teach ELLs academic content as long as they utilize effective ELL strategies to support the child.

Myth 5: Children have a limited capacity for language. Learning two languages at once can result in delays, incomplete mastery or even impairment in one of the languages (Genesee, 2007; Sorace, 2007).

Myth 6: Bilingualism leads to linguistic confusion. E.g. children who switch between two languages (Sorace, 2007).

Three participants agreed with each of these statements. They comment as follows:

...It's when parents or teachers intermix between the two that that's when the confusion results... and that delays it... (Tina)

I guess that could be true. I guess that could be confusing but I guess its just when you are learning new languages it is important to do that so even if it might be hard to understand for teachers, its something they need to... deal with I guess. I would say that is true just from an experience that I've had... (Linda)

... It depends on how the child is understanding what's being taught (Katie)

When children switch between languages, known as code-switching, they do so deliberately (Sorace, 2007). Teachers and families alike interpret code-switching as a sign of confusion and begin to believe that additional languages should be introduced only when one has already been well-established (Sorace, 2007). This belief deprives the child of valuable input (Sorace, 2007).

Multilingual children actually have many cognitive advantages due to their multilingual abilities, including an earlier awareness of others perspectives and better performance in certain aspects of literacy based metalinguistic awareness (Genesee, 2007; Sorace, 2007). Children with better developed literacy skills in their first language acquire English skills more easily and to a greater extent (Genesee, 2007). When teachers believe that children have a limited capacity for language, they tend to discourage first language maintenance and children do not reap the

benefits of multilingualism. Effective teachers draw on native language competence and prior knowledge while encouraging its continued use (Genesee, 2007).

Unless teacher preparation programs have PTs address the myths and misconceptions that exist, their instruction, teaching strategies, feedback and assessment practices will be limited and only partially meet the needs of ELLs by superficially including them in the classroom (Emporia State University, 1994; Harper & de Jong, 2004). Much of the PT education process is about ‘unlearning’ what we have been taught through prior experiences both inside and outside of the classroom (McLaughlin, 1992; Torok & Aguilar, 2000). PTs may unlearn their false beliefs by becoming consciously aware of their beliefs and their sources (Torok & Aguilar, 2000). PTs must be exposed to diverse viewpoints and beliefs expressed by their peers and professionals in order to further their understanding of myths and misconceptions and their effects on young learners. Alternative perspectives may also be explored using simulations, readings, videos, and speakers.

After exploring commonly held myths and misconceptions, PTs may begin to look at teaching more critically and begin to identify the many educational inequities that exist (Torok & Aguilar, 2000). These findings are a good indication that PTs require more information about how language learning and language teaching works in reality.

Mandatory Course Versus Infusion

All of the PTs believe that a mandatory course on ELL teaching would be valuable. Parallel to the literature, the majority of participants believe that a large authentic experience along with the course content would be the most effective method of enhancing ELL competence in teacher preparation programs (Dorrington & Ramirez-Smith, 1999; Montgomery, Roberts & Grove, 2003). The following comments illustrate this belief:

I definitely think that it would be, it would be... valuable however if you don't have practical experience working with children who are ELLs I feel like that course would be less valuable because when you are reading strategies out of textbook and you've never tried them, its great, I mean they are still valuable, and you are gaining valuable information and knowledge but if you cannot try them at all, put them to practice then when you get into the field you are going to have to learn it all over again. So I think that it would be valuable if it had a large practical component to it (Olivia)

That would be extremely valuable... I would have liked to have... a whole course on that but unfortunately we didn't... was just a few hours which I thought was ridiculous... just give us more direct instructions... in terms of how to teach them and how to assess them and because what we do with English language learners can be applied to all students... so we really should have like a whole, one whole course on it (Mary)

Really valuable... I was lucky that in my placement it wasn't really an issue and I say lucky because I don't think I would have really been prepared... we haven't really learned enough to know what to do, and if I was to be in [a school] where 90% of the kids in that school are ELLs, I'd be screwed! We definitely need a mandatory course in education... I'm concerned that I, right now, that I wouldn't be prepared enough, I mean I could, I would definitely be able to begin but I wouldn't necessarily be able to maintain... so I would have enough to begin but I would definitely need support from everyone else to be able to best help that child learn what they need to learn (Tina)

I think it would be really valuable because I feel like... I don't know anything... I think I would just want the experience actually working one-on-one and learning the techniques, rather than just being told... I want to see it, and I want to be able to do it... So if it was... a course where it... gave me information but at the same time had a practical component, I think that would be... great (Francis)

Definitely important especially because we live in Ontario and it is a growing diverse community, probably one of the largest in Canada so we will encounter in all of our classrooms someone who speaks a different language so... definitely important (Linda)

Overall all participants agree that there needs to be more ELL content within their preparation and that a single elective course on ELLs or dismissing the content all together is ineffective. However, there was a variance in responses regarding appropriate methods of addressing the issue. While some participants believe that infusing throughout all of the existing courses is better, some believe that a mandatory course is better while the remaining believe that implementing both simultaneously would be best.

According to the literature, infusing content into existing courses alone is just not enough to prepare PTs for ELLs in the classroom. Romi & Leyser (2006) found that many universities

worldwide have begun to infuse content; regarding children with special needs, yet the addition of 'some' content is not effective. The infused content must be in-depth and also requires a practical component for optimal effectiveness (Romi & Leyser, 2006). The participants in this study had strong comments on this issue and many noted the superficiality of the infusion model.

They note:

I think that infusing it through... to have more of a component... I think equally with ELL as with special needs, I think throughout... I really feel that there was an effort made to, to always bring in modifications and accommodations to lesson plans and to course, to, when we're talking about strategies and best practice, so I can't say that wasn't done but I think to further do it would be valuable... Because you are not teaching ELLs in isolation... you are still using the government curriculum and the content to teach your class... it would be different if you were working one-on-one with these children and that's what you would do as an ESL teacher... And you would get your additional qualifications to do that, so I feel that it should definitely be integrated through everything that we are learning about teaching curriculum because that's what we're actually going to be doing but I do still think that somewhere in there, there should still be a practical component (Olivia)

...Just focusing on it throughout all subjects, which they did a little bit but just making sure that... the students, the teachers are understanding that, how to respond to someone who is an English language learner, in all different areas (Linda)

I think a mandatory course would be more beneficial because the classes didn't even talk about ELLs as much as that one [elective], and we learned so much about what we can do... my friends and I were talking about it as well, how it should be mandatory (Katie)

I think that a lot of the time it gets lost when it gets infused... separate, just like they need separate time to learn English, we need separate time of how to teach. Basically I would want... So that you know 'kay well a student coming from another country who is starting right away... you can expect x, y and z, sort of... what are things that you can do to help bring them forward so if they have not have one word, for two weeks straight, ok well what do I do? How do I get this kid speaking in my classroom? How do I encourage them and say ok speak... what do I do? And so I think a case by case scenario which would be helpful, and then have like tools for us not only to help set up our classroom... What do you do when language is a barrier also? So it would be really good to have some strategies... Practical experience definitely important because that gives you opportunity to apply what it is you learned... if you don't have a chance to apply it, you are not going to know what that looks like in real life (Tina)

Many of the graduates believed that a mandatory course would be more effective in teaching the necessary knowledge for ELL competence. Participants believe that a mandatory course would be more in-depth and provide more linguistic knowledge than if it were infused

‘lightly’ throughout. Interestingly, one PT believes that the course would be better because she is concerned with professors’ ability to infuse the content. Despite these responses, according to Farrell (2006) a single course is not enough for effective ELL preparation. When this information is isolated from other knowledge, the new information is minimal amongst other well established beliefs (Farrell, 2006). Overall, a greater ELL focus is required for a well rounded program.

Participants also believe that the course professor would have a facilitator rather than a lecturer that delivers information by ‘talking at’ PTs for three-hours (Cruz & Patterson, 2005; Torok & Aguilar, 2000). If information is heavily lectured, the likelihood of such information being retained is minimal. Tina comments:

... You need to structure your classroom the way... you want children to learn so sitting and talking at me for three hours... is not beneficial to the way I learn and like what did I retain? Pretty much nothing. What I learned and what I still understand all came from... hands on, because we weren’t talked at for three hours... (Tina)

The sole participant, who exclusively believed that both should be implemented without leniency towards either, stated the following:

I think both should be done and that’s how I felt it was done in my program where that discussion topic was brought up throughout the science, the gym, the language, everything. Because there won’t only be... it be yah, it’ll, they will be in all your subjects right so you have to deal with it depending on what you are teaching (Linda)

It is evident in this statement that Linda is highly aware of the prevalence of ELLs in the classroom and all academic subjects. In accordance to the literature, all possible actions should be taken in teacher education programs to enhance ELL competence and high quality teaching. Since the literature suggests that neither alone is effective, yet each has its benefits, this is a good indication that both should be actively pursued in teacher education.

In Future Classrooms

As demographics diversify, ELLs spend most of their day in regular classrooms. Even with common ESL “pull-out” programs, ELLs are removed for a minimal portion in the day and then returned to the classroom with teachers that have no ELL training (Clair, 1995; Dianda, 1992). All teachers need to recognize the many challenges ELLs encounter and know how to ease their transition into a predominantly English academic environment (Alfred, 1994; Téllez & Waxman, 2005). Classroom teachers need to have a range of research-based instructional practices that are found to be effective for ELLs, before entering any teaching situation (Waxman & Tellez, 2002).

Self-Reported Future Practices: Strategies

Teachers of ELLs have to address the ‘double demand’ of teaching the English language and curriculum contents (Dianda, 1992; Evans, Arnot-Hopffer & Jurich, 2005; Flynn & Hill, 2005; Waxman & Tellez, 2002). Classroom teachers require an array of effective ELL classroom strategies to meet the needs of ELLs and provide them access to the curriculum content. A unique combination of strategies will be necessary to respond to the number of native languages represented and the unique individuals who speak them (Dianda, 1992; Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 2000; Menken & Antunez, 2001; Montgomery, Roberts & Gowe, 2003; Verdugo & Flores, 2007; Waxman & Tellez, 2002). Effective instruction for ELLs goes beyond non-verbal supports, same native-speaking peers, relying on inservice development or experienced teachers that are in short supply (Dianda, 1992). In reality, many veteran teachers are also learning how to teach ELLs, alongside beginning colleagues (Dianda, 1992). Teachers must also understand that common strategies will not work for all children since they learn in different ways and different

rates. So what strategies do the participants in this study believe they will need in their future classrooms? and where would they find them? Olivia, Mary and Francis comment as follows:

I couldn't list off strategies until I sort of knew the child and worked with the resource teacher, but I know I'd get those strategies through... books and really through talking to my colleagues about what works and what doesn't and the level of the child... (Olivia)

... They sort of just like it would apply to any grade, but were are some things I know that you can't do with older kids and that you can't do with younger kids... so that was ridiculous... but it was better then nothing... I guess... Yes, nothing was done in detail (Mary)

...I expected more understanding of the basic tools... and I think expected... more experience dealing with it, like I mean I was in a practicum where I had the... ELL support worker... was my teacher and we barely talked about it... or I just expected it to be part of the... important information of the program, and it really wasn't... a lot of the ELL things that we learned were for children who were just beginning to learn the language, but it goes on, so I think it would have been beneficial to talk about how to... keep encouraging language development even if it is four or five years later... that is one thing that I noticed, there was a lot of focus on younger, or newcomers to Canada... To make sure that the students are ready, and have the tools, not just the basic tools, and have extensive understanding of the tools... (Francis)

There is no one right way to educate ELLs. Teachers should possess the skills of differentiated instruction to understand when their strategies are effective or ineffective for individual children (Coelho, 2007; Flynn & Hill, 2005; Verdugo & Flores, 2007). Tina appears to be aware of this idea and she states:

They're writing a piece about what they read, you are not going to correct the grammar, you are not going to correct the spelling, you're gonna look at what it, it, what the core of what they said (Tina)

Table 1 displays a list of strategies believed to be effective by PT graduates (*see page 57 for Table 1: Strategies Mentioned by Pre-Service Teachers & the Frequency of Reference*). This table should not be interpreted as prescribed best practices, but instead a highlight of a number of practices that are identified as effective by the PTs through experience, research, courses and education.

Table 1:

Strategies Mentioned by Pre-service Teachers & the Frequency of Reference

Strategy	Frequency of Reference
1) Accommodations and Modifications	2
2) Considering Learning Styles	2
3) Draw pictures in journals	2
4) Dual Language Books	1
5) Encouragement to Socialize (Intentional Friendship Building)	1
-----	-----
6) Guided Reading	2
7) Hand Gestures	1
8) Informal Reading Inventory (Burns/Roe One)	1
9) Labelling Everything	3
10) Looking for Content (focusing on content)	1
-----	-----
11) Magnetic Letters	1
12) Media Literacy	1
13) Modeling (reading, writing, oral language)	1
14) Oral assessment of information	4
15) Peer Pairing (Share Native Language)	6
-----	-----
16) Pictures (Visual Cues/Aids)	4
17) Posters	2
18) Real Experiences	1
19) Scribe	2
20) Small Groups	1
-----	-----
21) The Arts (creative arts, music, drama)	1
22) Translators	6
23) Using a few key/common phrases in the Child's L1	6
24) Work with Names	1
25) Word Walls (bilingual/trilingual, if possible)	1

According to the literature, all of these strategies are found to be effective (Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 2005). However, an overreliance on a single or small set of strategies is likely to be ineffective. It cannot be emphasized enough that each unique child requires a combination of strategies that is effective for their learning needs. The PTs in this study most frequently commented on external supports within the school, changes to the classroom setting and materials, and teaching approaches. If PTs were given opportunities to share strategies, the 19 strategies with minimal frequency may have been better circulated.

Through the use of varying materials, instructional approaches, lessons and strategies, teachers may provide ELLs access to the curriculum without watering down the knowledge or expectations (Dianda, 1992; Montgomery, Roberts & Growe, 2003). With lowered expectations, ELLs are presented with a disservice that affects them even long after they leave an individual teacher's classroom (Montgomery, Roberts & Growe, 2003). Innovative and creative strategies may be implemented to better support ELLs, relieve struggles related to understanding instructions, participation in activities and the completion of classroom tasks (Evans, Arnot-Hopffer & Jurich, 2005).

One of the most common strategies found to be effective includes providing *contextual support* such as visual materials, body language, gestures, thematic units, demonstrations, dual language books, written materials and visual arts. Contextual supports capture the symbolic nature of oral and written languages (Waxman & Tellez, 2002). Modeling examples of finished assignments as well as demonstrations of the process are effective contextual strategies used with ELLs (Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 2000). Contextual support limits the confusion caused by limited language proficiency. Other unmentioned contextual supports include concrete and auditory materials such as physical objects, films, graphic organizers and hands-on experiences (Dianda, 1992; Montgomery, Roberts & Growe, 2003; Waxman & Tellez, 2002). Although rarely mentioned, media sources and technology-related strategies can also make classroom instruction more accessible for particular groups of children. The use of multilingual programs will empower students to also utilize their own thinking skills and self-help, rather than total reliance on the classroom teacher (Waxman & Tellez, 2002).

The *Buddy System* also known as peer pairing was a strategy recommended by all of the participants. The buddy system pairs the ELL with a fluent English-speaking student whose first language is the same as the ELL's (Dianda, 1992; Evans, Arnot-Hopffer & Jurich, 2005). The

purpose of this pairing is to have the fluent student assist the ELL with both language and understanding in the classroom (Dianda, 1992). Equally as important is *varied grouping* since same-language buddies are not always available or willing to be paired with an ELL for all classroom activities. It cannot be assumed that there will always be access to a classroom buddy. Varied groupings include pairs, triads and cooperative learning to provide opportunities of hearing and speaking English (Dianda, 1992). Deliberately planned group activities and learning allow children to have social interactions which drive language learning, social cooperation and collaborative learning (Flynn & Hill, 2005; Waxman & Tellez, 2002). Tina noted some of the difficulties that may be involved with the use of a buddy system:

I think a lot of times kids are put off a little bit, you know distant by kids who don't speak the language that they speak so making sure that you foster a community of learners you know where everyone is welcome... so that... this, that student feels a part of that classroom and can take risks and attempt to say words and not be afraid that they are going to you know be made fun of or whatever (Tina)

When groups of children are given ample speaking time they establish relationships, take verbal risks and productive talk often emerges (Flynn & Hill, 2005). Conversation in many instances will be the means of learning for ELLs, therefore engagement them in academic conversations with their peers is best. The teacher in all cases should act as only one language model of the many available in the classroom (Waxman & Tellez, 2002),

Additional strategies that were not mentioned by PTs, but are highly emphasized in the literature as effective with ELLs include the use of visualization, recombination, questioning, read aloud, interactive journals, literature logs, instructional conversations, thinking aloud during explanations, breaking down the task into sequential and manageable segments, summarizing, key study skills (taking notes and preparing for tests), bilingual dictionaries, clarifying tasks, pre-lessons with key vocabulary and task previews, metacognitive strategies, large group discussions,

and building on cultural and linguistic knowledge (Dianda, 1992; Montgomery, Roberts & Growe, 2003; Waxman & Tellez, 2002).

Strategies such as colouring in pictures or cutting out shapes actually repress, discourage, discriminate, and disenfranchise some individuals from participating in the classroom (Reiff & Cannella, 1992). Children who are asked to do basic types of passive activities are not learning any academic content or English language and therefore it is not conducive to their learning or time in the classroom. Individual instructional activities should be limited in the classroom since children learn through interaction and conversation (Dianda, 1992). These activities can be very off-putting particularly if classroom peers are not doing a similar un-academic task. This situation emphasizes the importance of understanding instruction effectiveness and appropriate expectations for all students (Emporia State University, 1994; Waxman & Tellez, 2002). All children in the classroom, including ELLs, should complete activities that require higher cognitive processes (Dianda, 1992). Children often interpret these basic activities as the teacher having low expectations of them (Waxman & Tellez, 2002). ELLs internalize these messages and begin to see themselves as incompetent; these feelings lead to 'learned helplessness' and may have lasting effects on the way ELLs continue through their education (Waxman & Tellez, 2002). All students require a balance of basic and complex skills which allows them to be challenged but also successful in their schooling (Verdugo & Flores, 2007).

Efficacy of strategies. Many of the strategies implemented by teachers should be found by research to be effective for ELLs (Waxman & Tellez, 2002). Unfortunately many beginning classroom teachers rely on colleagues in the field to provide a list of strategies in which they may implement in their own classrooms. The use of colleague's strategies will not always yield favourable outcomes for the ELLs in the classroom. In order to understand the effectiveness of

strategies, PTs require opportunities to research their effects, test, experiment, practice and discuss strategies with peers and experts to evaluate and build a repertoire, prior to implementing them with ELLs (Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 2000). While some PTs of this study believed strategies learned from personal experiences, workshops, undergraduate programs, and readings about particular theorists would be effective, others blatantly stated that they didn't know, as the following comment from Tina shows:

I think that you don't know if they are going to be effective you have to, its trial and error, you have to work with what you've learned is an effective strategy and it may, it might not work with this particular child so then you would have to take that cue and say ok well... and try different things at that point to see ok well what does work, what does stick, and then branch off that and build from there (Tina)

Where the strategies were learned. Participants noted that many of their strategies were acquired from undergraduate programs, resource lists, workshops, conferences, course readings and discussions, personal experience and placement. *Many Roots, Many Voices* and *Roots of Empathy* are resources created by the Ministry of Education that were mentioned by the participants. Overall, textbooks were found to be the least effective method of acquiring and retaining new strategies. Several participants commented:

The name of the workshop, I don't remember... that was where I learned some of these strategies... maybe an hour or something, on my own time. I wanted a certificate (Mary)

Personal [teaching] experience mostly... also... abroad, I went to Australia [...being in a different environment really showed me what its like for them] that personal experience stands out as one that really will help in the future... its common sense... you have to put yourself in someone else's shoes of, someone who doesn't understand a word of English, what would you need? And what would you want... and how would the classroom look to you if you were trying your very best to pick up a new language... a lot of it comes from the ECE background in learning how to foster language with children who are typically developing from Canada, a lot of the strategies that you use are the same just more geared towards the appropriate age level and the appropriate grade level.... (Tina)

Other places... my parents are teachers so, I think I saw a lot of that kind of stuff as I was growing up and I was in the classroom with them, so... that's one place I might have picked some ideas up... but overall it was mostly at school, discussing it (Francis)

I've learned many strategies in [a] placement with special needs children (Linda)

Looking further ahead, PTs plan to search for additional strategies on the internet where they can search for “what’s new and what’s worked for other teachers.” Websites will also provide different exercises and activities for all levels of English language proficiency. PTs also plan to consult with parents and ESL teachers who have more experience, scholarly research, Ministry documents, and Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) books. Olivia notes:

Well I would use the [ESL] curriculum... that would, that would be the first place I would start, because those would be where I would get my objectives and some of the strategies and the background of, the theory that I might not remember or even know myself, and I would use resources, I would go to the resource room at my school, or speak to the, the ESL resource teacher, if there wasn't one I would, I would speak to another staff member whose... whose been, whose had ELL English language learning students in their classrooms so I could hear about practical strategies that a person actually did not only read in a book. And also I have friends who were English language learners, and to even know what their experience was as children what they can remember and what frustrated them, I think that is an important place (Olivia)

Communication

Teachers with high-quality preparation are more likely to ensure that ELLs receive comprehensible communication (Dianda, 1992; Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly & Driscoll, 2005; Montgomery, Roberts & Growe, 2003). These teachers communicate easily, understand needs, have a repertoire of strategies and resources, and are able to recognize when ELLs are not learning (Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly & Driscoll, 2005). All classroom teachers who are prepared to teach ELLs have all of these skills when they graduate. Francis appears to be aware of the need to have the skills in any event:

...I've never, I've never worked in a group of all children who are learning English as a second language but... I think I would definitely need the resources (Francis)

When communicating with ELLs who have limited or no English proficiency, there are many language strategies that may be used for successful communication. Dianda (1992) highlights many strategies used by successful teachers of language minority students. In the beginning stages of communication and English use, teachers must focus on the child's use of language for function and content rather than on grammatical form (Dianda, 1992; Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 2000). When children are spoken to in the classroom, the English used must be functional and purposeful. Children want to learn words that are useful and meaningful to them (Dianda, 1992). These are the words that children will quickly acquire and use frequently. Students must be able to understand the words in order to learn them (Dianda, 1992). Linda appeared to be aware of this basic approach to communication when she commented as follows:

What I did with one student was we labelled a lot of things, like we'd do one day in the classroom, one day in the kitchen, one day... and we labelled everything and they coloured it... and that worked out really well... (Linda)

With limited English proficiency, children require moments of *modified speech* in the classroom instruction. Children require clarity, simplified language and slower speech in order for them to have the time necessary to process the input (Dianda, 1992; Flynn & Hill, 2005; Verdugo & Flores, 2007). Effective teachers will frequently check for comprehension as they speak to ELLs. Although this type of attention is not always possible, it is crucial to monitor comprehension and provide frequent opportunities to hear and use the English language. ELLs require opportunities to transition into the English language without pressure, stress or any force. Like all other learners, ELLs require attention, praise, consideration, encouragement and support from their classroom teacher (Coelho, 2007). Students must be encouraged to speak English whenever possible, without any demands on their performance. ELLs also require appropriate background knowledge and extra time to interact with peers (Alfred, 1994; Flynn & Hill, 2005; Verdugo & Flores, 2007). Language learning does not occur without conversations and thus

children require opportunities to generate output and process input (Alfred, 1994). Allow ELLs to try, use, manipulate and practice the language and its sounds (Verdugo & Flores, 2007).

Speaking should be the first milestone for ELLs in the classroom and can be achieved through verbal scaffolding, high frequency words, modeling, questioning and instruction (Flynn & Hill, 2005). Explicit instruction with letter sounds and recognition should be embedded in interesting literature rather than through isolated drills and repetition (Flynn & Hill, 2005; Verdugo & Flores, 2007). At this stage of English learning, ELLs should be read to daily to provide vocabulary building opportunities, make predictions, book concepts and sequencing (Flynn & Hill, 2005). These concepts and skills are crucial to any student's academic success.

Once a minimal level of oral competence is established, the teacher can transition into reading and writing (Dianda, 1992; Menken & Antunez, 2001). Although acquiring everyday English is relatively easy, ELLs will have more difficulty grasping the academic English which is highly connected to educational success (Flynn & Hill, 2005; Verdugo & Flores, 2007). For a successful transition into reading and writing, children must also feel that they are ready to face the new challenge and must be given high interest reading material (Dianda, 1992; Flynn & Hill, 2005). According to Verdugo & Flores (2007) ELLs also require opportunities for discussion before, during and after reading the text to assist with comprehension.

Recent graduates appear to have limited understanding of the process of teaching English and communicating with ELLs in the classroom. Their responses are good indications of Faculties of Education requiring a greater emphasis on the stages of English language acquisition. Many of the PTs have again turned to outside professional and other support for effective communication with ELLs. They comment:

I think the translator is really the biggest, biggest way to, to communicate (Olivia)

I would see if there's any other individual in the school who knows the language... or I would have translators if the school doesn't already have them (Katie)

If there's children in the class that speak their language, I will definitely pair them up because that will be much more helpful to the student and myself and if not I would try to find maybe other students in other classes or teachers who can speak their language... and really if no one I'll just teach them really slow and go step by step, repeat things a lot... and label everything in their language and English if I can (Mary)

... And then I mean if need really be, going to the board and having a translator come into your classroom for a certain portion of the day to help foster that connection at the very beginning, so yah, translator... (Tina)

Dorrington & Ramirez-Smith (1999) found PTs to stress the need and importance for ELLs to understand the teachers as opposed to the need for teachers to learn how to communicate with their linguistically diverse students. However, participants of this study demonstrated more of an understanding about communicating with ELLs, as they intend to incorporate some key phrases in the learner's home language. They comment:

... If there... was another child in the room who spoke that child's first language, then I think it would be... applicable to, for them to be able to use that, like their first language... really... quite often in the beginning for giving instructions, for explaining things but I cant really say I would find a subject that would always be, that I'd always... have the children use their first language... (Olivia)

Yes, I will... language arts for sure, drama, social studies, there is a lot of history in different cultures you could bring that into language as well... yup (Katie)

If it's beneficial to the students, they can write their like work out if their first language and then translate it later and then have someone like proof read it... which subjects would I allow them to use their first language? I think it depends on their level... so... if they are really, really low ELL learners it would be basically any subject... (Mary)

Yes in all subjects. Well because it gives you a chance to learn what, what someone else calls something... whatever the other language is, it has its place throughout everything you do, its not isolated just in language or just in math, its in a single part of everything so using the verbal word using the written word I mean you cant label everything and you cant say everything in the other language but making an attempt to get a part of it (Tina)

Oh I love that, I love doing that stuff even, music, I think it is really important to bring different music into the classroom, so music that incorporates different languages I think it's is really fun to do, even having a board of the hello in all languages I think it just enhances the sense of acceptance of all differences, rather than pointing out the differences it is accepting them, and understanding them and respecting them (Francis)

... Right from the beginning when they come into the school they have support from... there's ESL programs, so they'll be like taken for core subjects... and that actually really speeds up the process, there is also a program called reading recovery... and that program helps with language acquisition as well, English language (Linda)

Children's home languages should be an important factor of teaching and learning in all multicultural schools considering the wide array of benefits. The incorporation of children's first language in the classrooms validates children's culture, beliefs, lifestyles and experiences. Children's native literature, music, art and expertise should be incorporated into classroom activities and the process of English acquisition. We need to further connect theory and practice in integrated ways that build on students' language, culture and experiences (Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 2000). It is important for classroom teachers to find ways to translate important documents for children's families; this demonstrates meaningful efforts at communicating in a professional manner (Dianda, 1992; Flynn & Hill, 2005).

IT appears that the participants of this study recognize the importance of reciprocal understanding. However in spite of this, the use of home languages is often short-lived and is simply used for the purpose of establishing a comfortable atmosphere and trustworthy learning environment until they acquire the English language. For that reason, the language strategies mentioned, 'used' the students' linguistic diversity rather than embracing it in all aspects of learning. Including children's home language on a continuous basis will actually increase student achievement, validate and build self-esteem, enhance their sense of their culture, and broaden world views (Alfred, 1994; Dianda, 1992; Menken & Antunez, 2001).

Children have a unique connection to their heritage language; this connection should be explored in teacher education as a tool for teaching. Research consistently shows the link between increased student achievement with teachers who are inclusive of children's home

languages and cultures while teaching curriculum standards (Alfred, 1994; Menken & Antunez, 2001). Teachers must be linguistically responsive to students as well as culturally responsive.

Special Needs: Modifications and Accommodations

Although many classroom strategies may successfully transfer from one need to another, it is a common assumption that the needs of an ELL do not differ significantly from those of other learners. However, strategies established for children with special needs are not always appropriate for ELLs and ELLs are too often lumped with the broad grouping of children with special needs. ELLs have different linguistic and academic needs from children with special needs, just as they do from the mainstream population (Antunez, 2002). Well prepared teachers are able to recognize the difference between diverse needs and the methods required to address them (Antunez, 2002; Emporia State University, 1994). Teacher education is obligated to prepare classroom teachers for the gifted to low functioning, special needs, learning styles, culturally diverse and must also include the linguistically diverse (Emporia State University, 1994). The teacher is responsible for the academic and social competence of all their classroom children (Emporia State University, 1994). The certification requirements should necessitate PTs to understand and differentiate between children with special needs and ELLs to ensure teacher quality in all Ontario classrooms.

There is an unmistakable influence towards the confusion of ELLs as children with special needs in teacher education. PTs indicate that the topic of ELLs would most often arise during discussions of articles regarding children with special needs, and modifications and accommodations for special needs. A discussion regarding practices for children with special needs does not go hand-in-hand with discussions of effective ELL practice. Linda highlights the misguided link between ELLs and special needs in the following:

Even with special needs we know that, that works really well and in some ways not knowing English is one type of special need so I'd say that pictures would definitely work, that's something that they can recognize cause they, they have, probably have seen it before, they have it in their, their home country as well... (Linda)

ELLs are not the same as children who have “challenges in language” because of the associated cultural piece and other major factors. ELLs must be accommodated, monitored and assessed as individuals with unique circumstances. Unlike some children with special needs, ELLs do not require modifications in the classroom unless the content is culturally biased. Academic instruction is understandable and accessible if language demands are reduced through accommodations unique to each ELL. However, accommodations may also be used as a tool for academic language development (Alfred, 1994; Harper & de Jong, 2004). Accommodations must go beyond helping ELLs to ‘get around’ academic language. Teachers must know how to provide appropriately scaffolded opportunities for ELLs to learn to use the language of the curriculum. Accommodations should consider student’s strengths, prior knowledge, skills, culture and needs.

Building Relationships

Establishing a relationship with a child who speaks limited or no English, may have experienced trauma, and may be experiencing culture shock is different then establishing a relationship with any other child. PTs need explicit lessons on interpersonal relationships with diverse children who have varying and difficult life experiences. Before graduating, teacher education should require all PTs to demonstrate competence in the processes needed to establish both ELL-teacher and ELL-peer interpersonal relationships (Emporia State University, 1994). PTs should demonstrate cultural, social and affective knowledge as well as an understanding of other variables that may affect interpersonal relationships in the learning environment (Emporia State University, 1994). Classroom teachers need to understand appropriate and effective

assertiveness, gentleness and nonverbal communication in order to increase the self-control and self-esteem of classroom children (Emporia State University, 1994). The need to establish a relationship with the parents is evident in the following comments:

I would develop a relationship first... by, one of the, the members on the ESL team, if there is an ESL team, it depending on the school does intake with the parents and gets background knowledge about the sort of if their, their recent to the country and what languages they speak and that sort of thing... make that extra effort to make them feel comfortable that they are open to learning and they know that they can trust you (Olivia)

I would definitely speak to the parents... I would make sure that my classroom is inclusive so it has you know, like books and games that are from different cultures, posters, just representing that people from different countries... for sure integrating language into the classroom somehow so if there are a few children who speak the language from a different county, integrating that into the classroom so just, if you sing like the good morning song or something they could say good morning in their own language and then children start learning that as well (Katie)

... Reflect their culture in the classroom and not only on like a superficial basis where its just like they're in their traditional clothes or something but books that you know are written by Canadians of that, of that culture (Mary)

I will try to learn a few of the key phrases in their language because that helps you develop a connection between them and if they see that you are making an effort to learn at least something of what they bring with them to the classroom then they are more likely to, in return make an attempt to speak and learn English words so... (Tina)

... In terms of comfort in whole class in general I, I would probably set up some activities to encourage community building in the classroom to involve that child in it, in a way that they would understand if their English was not there... (Francis)

The PTs in this study seem to understand the need to build relationships.

Comfort in the Classroom: Tokenism

Many teachers understand diversity at a superficial surface level. It is essential that programs prepare PTs with a deeper understanding and commitment to diversity issues and the social injustices that exist in education. Creating comfort in the classroom goes further than the learning materials and publications. Teachers must reconsider their perspectives and examples, use learner-centred approaches, post children's work and communicate with families (Coelho,

2007; Dianda, 1992). Valuing diversity and inclusion, goes past the outside changes that most people think of when it comes to classroom comfort. Changing posters, pictures and alphabets in the classroom is inadequate to establishing a genuine sense of comfort and security.

The ability to create comfort in a multicultural or predominantly white classroom is the same. All teachers require a deep understanding and ability to establish such a comfort since multilingualism is a Canadian reality (Coelho, 2007). Creating a sense of support and comfort in the classroom consists of changing beliefs and attitudes towards ELLs and about ELLs (Torok & Aguilar, 2000). When classroom peers and the teacher have an inclusive mindset and welcoming attitude, the classroom becomes a safe and comfortable place to take safe-risks and ask questions (Flynn & Hill, 2005; Torok & Aguilar, 2000). This level of comfort will improve the acquisition and retention of new knowledge and language, improve self-confidence and self-esteem, and increases the transfer between the classroom and out-of-school (Waxman & Tellez, 2002). The following participants' comments indicate a good understanding of the need to build in comfort and support in the classroom structures themselves. They comment:

...Label different parts of the room in that child's home language... I think just to, to set up the room so that the child is still interacting with other children so that, that you know, if, if for some reason the teacher decides to have her kids in rows that are individual desks, to at least to put the child beside somebody, to set up that, that person, that child is not alone in the room and, to definitely use a lot more visuals... (Olivia)

... Allow that child to, if like written assignments are given out to allow that child to write in his or her home language which can be translated...just making sure to read books that incorporate the child's cultural background, having like... parent nights for parents to come in and maybe share something from their own culture with the children (Katie)

Just like making sure you say hello to them in the morning when they come in, you know asking them did you have a good lunch, making sure that they know that they are apart of the classroom cause if they are new to the country or new to the city or whatever, they are not going to have the social connection that the students have had with each other from when they, you know like kindergarten, grade one,... grade four, so making them understand that they are equally as much apart of the classroom (Tina)

If I have a student who doesn't speak English, that would be a huge barrier, especially even in the very, basic things such as routine, something like if they wanted to go get a drink of water, I, I'm afraid that I wouldn't be able to understand, so very basic things like that... and then you don't feel comfortable in the environment because you don't know the language, like you... it's shocking, like they wouldn't feel comfortable basically, I think that, that would be the basic barrier is a comfort factor (Francis)

... It depends on the age group, but like doing like a cultural day, and like having like everyone bring in something, and kind of get to know each other and from different cultures... not like centering the student out of course, like he is different from everyone else you know, it would have to be like a whole class thing (Linda)

There is an indication that many participants are assuming that students have specific or unique experiences based on their local culture (Montgomery, Roberts & Growe, 2003). Utilizing cultural artefacts and cultural celebrations may be offensive or uncomfortable to some individuals. Teachers must understand that they need to proceed with caution and must get to know their students, families and their experiences prior to changing the classroom environment. It is more important to build on what the child already knows, rather than focusing only on past experiences and what they are familiar with. Connect the curriculum content to children's personal experiences rather than their culture or background (Montgomery, Roberts & Growe, 2003). Using their authentic experiences is an effective method of establishing comfort in the classroom, connecting with classmates while stimulating learning (Montgomery, Roberts & Growe, 2003).

School environment and administration. A supportive school environment is necessary to create positive school experiences and to enhance academic achievement. Exceptional schools are nurturing, inspiring, inclusive and caring environments with high attainable expectations for all children (Dianda, 1992; Verdugo & Flores, 2007). All individuals, young and old, within the school setting are seen in the same light. Although differences are recognized, they are accepted as important and no better or worse than any others (Evans, Arnot-Hopffer & Jurich, 2005).

Strong educational leadership and positive attitudes are crucial to effective ELL education within the school system (Dorrington & Ramirez-Smith, 1999; Flynn & Hill, 2005). All of the professionals must be committed to equitable education even if it requires personal investments and rising above frustrations (Dorrington & Ramirez-Smith, 1999; Waxman & Tellez, 2002). The school atmosphere and the professionals within it must come together to create a larger inclusive community with shared goals and responsibilities, high levels of dedication and mutual respect.

The following comments identify the need for administrative support:

If the school isn't supportive of the program... there wont be this program and students wont be able to learn it at... so it really depends on administration... in terms of funding my teacher got half of the funding that other classes got which was entirely unfair, so in that case it shows that the school wasn't, it really wasn't supportive at all... (Mary)

... Its important to have other members of the staff team to support you, I'd like to say that all schools are like that, but its not, the school community and atmosphere of within the staff, I'm hoping its going to be very positive and supportive... that is a fear that I have that I'm in a school that isn't willing to support a new teacher (Olivia)

I guess also... what I've seen is just, if you don't have a supporting staff or principal who had that mindset of diversity and inclusion... it becomes harder (Linda)

It is clear these PTs look to professional development in the schools.

ESL supports and educational assistants. Many PTs feel unprepared to collaborate with ESL professionals or Educational Assistants for the education of ELLs. In most cases, these feelings are caused by a lack of knowledge regarding the role of the support in comparison to their own role. PTs' responses indicate that they believe ELL supports are supposed to remove the child from the classroom. This may be an indication that they would rather have the students withdrawn than have to teach them, which is consistent with the literature of unprepared teachers (Alfred, 1994). The responsibility of teaching English is largely the responsibility of a professional other than themselves, although they recognize that they are not totally removed from the process. They comment:

Depending on, what level the child is at when they come, programs are built around the child and usually they are taken out of the class for... first it would be the alphabet and then it would be reading and that program is working really, really well in Canada... to get students up to grade standards or Ontario standards... oh gee I thought of another one to say... oh and with ESL classes students are usually taken out for math, science and English because it's a smaller group and more one-on-one it tends to, it does tend to work really well and generally those subjects will be graded by that teacher so like report cards and again with that language (Linda)

... When I was in school I used to see a lot of teachers that would be designated to a specific student, that would help that student learn English, I don't really know what would happen in that class but the student would be pulled out for a specific period of time and then... either they would work on the school work that's being taught in the class but obviously they would go much slower then the class would be going but the student would be able to have that sufficient amount of time to work, so I think this is a teacher that's able to provide that much time (Katie)

It's frustrating because some schools don't have ESL supports... and like what the hell are you supposed to do? So my expectation if there was no ESL teacher onsite would be for the board to have somebody extra, who comes into the school to, specifically to work with that student, it would be my expectation that they wouldn't say well, sorry no ESL teacher at this school, no ESL support for that kid... but to have somebody brought in... and... and making sure that they didn't slip through the cracks and like I would make sure of that too as the classroom teacher. [If there was an ESL support, they would] give me strategies of like things that they've done that work, things that I can incorporate on a day-to-day and to really do like an intensive... like an intensive programming time just for that student one-on-one... or whatever their ratio would need to be... so that they are getting exposure to language in a small group 'cause that's really important too (Tina)

Faculties of Education need to teach PTs the role of ESL supports for effective professional collaboration. PTs also need to know what to do should support be weak. Too many PTs have the false notion that children labelled as ELL are the concern of an alternative professional (Evans, Arnot-Hopffer & Jurich, 2005).

The participants of this study have pre-established notions of the roles and responsibilities of ESL support workers. However, uncertainty is evident with their use of "I think". Based on the participants' comments it appears that their beliefs are rooted in non-training related experiences. This inference is drawn from the lack of confidence in their responses and the fact that teacher education was never mentioned. The following portray the reliance on 'specialist knowledge' for the bulk of English language teaching and uncertainty:

... I think that persons there to provide you support and resources and to give you strategies to use in your room with your students and to, and to be a resource for you so I think that they have the expertise, the extra qualifications in this and classroom teachers may not, have it, have that background (Olivia)

... Well I think their ultimate goal is to get the students integrated into mainstream classrooms with enough of an English language background to help them and... if the student needs support during that transition period then the teacher even though she's not the ESL teacher for that kid anymore she should provide that support and help him out during you know... after school or whenever... when I went to the homeroom of one of my classes I was so shocked to see that all of the ELL students were sitting at the back of the classroom in a row and I'm wondering, yes I know she has like thirty kids but... I'm just wondering what she does to help out these students during like when they are learning about language and I think it should be the homeroom teachers responsibility, like they should work together with the ESL teacher, so... even though the primary responsibility [of teaching the English language] is the ESL teacher, it, it, it really should be both. Both teacher's responsibilities (Mary)

To be honest, I have never been shown... what exactly they do, I have just been, the kids will leave for an hour a day and I have no idea what they do in that room, and I don't know, I'm sure the teachers know, but they, they haven't shared the information so my expectations of them... well overall, I, I would want them to help the students learn English and help them eventually, obviously not right away, but eventually reach their grade expectations in order to succeed in the future... but I don't think it is just the responsibility of the support teacher, I think it is also the responsibility of the classroom teacher to take some of those techniques and that is why they should be working together (Francis)

Although the participants of this study claim that they will seek out professional support, the literature contradicts this finding. Evans, Arnot-Hopffer & Jurich (2005) found that the knowledge ESL supports is often not valued or sought after and in some cases classroom teachers went as far as resenting supports in their school. Despite these findings, it is important for the classroom teacher and ESL support to work in partnership for ELLs. Both professionals are integral to language programs and responsible for the documentation of English development, monitoring progress and updating information (Coelho, 2007; Dianda, 1992; Evans, Arnot-Hopffer & Jurich, 2005).

The consequences of dividing educators as 'general' and 'specialist' plays out in tensions and disturbing ways as teachers fulfil only the roles they deem to be their own (Evans, Arnot-Hopffer & Jurich, 2005; Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 2000). This illusionary division of

responsibilities has major implications for ELLs. ELLs are left with classroom teachers who lack competence, embrace biases and misconceptions, and hold falsely justified social distance from ELLs and professional team teaching (Dorrington & Ramirez-Smith, 1999; Evans, Arnot-Hopffer & Jurich, 2005; Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 2000).

The assumption that classroom teachers do not need any ELL preparation is clearly incorrect and unacceptable. Classroom teachers, in reality, spend more time with ELLs than any type of additional specialist that may supplement the classroom program. Teachers require much of the same information about ELLs that support teachers require (Evans, Arnot-Hopffer & Jurich, 2005; People for Education, 2008). With or without ESL professionals, the classroom teacher must continue the English language development support in the classroom and must be ready and knowledgeable to do so effectively (Evans, Arnot-Hopffer & Jurich, 2005; People for Education, 2008).

Beyond the Classroom: The Value of English

In Canada, it is evident that a high value is associated with the English language. English is viewed as a prestigious language. Thus, English is a language that many individuals are highly motivated to learn. Nevertheless, with all of the excitement of learning English many linguistically diverse individuals lose sight of home language maintenance and the value attached to it. Many teachers also encourage the use of English while unknowingly neglecting the importance of maintaining heritage languages. Rather than empowering students, promoting equity and embracing diversity, children are assimilated into the Canadian culture and norms. In Faculties of Education, the value of English is not explicitly taught but instead is implied in many hidden messages. The idea of English being at the top of a language hierarchy is evident in the responses of the participants:

... In my experiences I haven't seen a lot of different languages being taught or children being motivated to even speak their own languages in the classroom so I think English is very important (Katie)

... It is also important for them [parents] to speak, to learn some English too I guess, if they don't, because, if they are living here they are going to need to know English, (laughs) so that goes both ways (Linda)

In reality, the opposite is true as students are enriched by their multilingualism and benefit from vast cognitive and social advantages (Dianda, 1992). Children are very sensitive to people's attitudes and are aware when their language is considered unvalued (Sorace, 2007). It is important for children to feel that all of their languages are valued and that they can all be used in Canadian life, present and future. Given that additional language acquisition takes time, children require continued support in their first language to ensure that they do not fall behind in content learning (McLaughlin, 1992). Competence in a heritage language can support the development of English academic language skills (Genesee, 2007). Native language skills and content knowledge

can be transferred from one language to another if appropriately encouraged, supported and guided.

Benefits of Multilingualism

Language provides more than economic benefits to multilingual speakers. Language is much more than the mere translation or understanding of words from one language to another.

Many of the participants in this study are aware of this benefit:

... There are benefits for employment, for, for even just supporting peers and colleagues who have the same language and are still ELLs... (Olivia)

Oh yah there's lots of benefits. I think there's a lot of jobs out there that being bilingual, trilingual can really help out a lot in this society especially with the number of newcomers coming to Canada (Katie)

...Like I was telling my kids when you grow up its really helpful in terms of jobs so like even though they don't know English now they know their own first language... it will help them when they grow up... when they... go... and find jobs, they can do like translations and people will want to hire them more... then the person that can't, that is only unilingual so... Just in terms of translating, like helping the teachers translate, we use the kids a lot to help translate for the newer students that didn't speak English at all for the teachers, and then they can help to translate for parents (Mary)

... More and more everyday is it becoming apparent that having more then one language gives you a one up, not only socially in our multicultural city but also in commerce, in business, you will, if you have two candidates who are the exact same on paper and one speaks another language that person has one leg up on everybody else (Tina)

Language is a form of expression, relationships, culture and identity (Torok & Aguilar, 2000).

There are many non-linguistic advantages of multilingualism that are unknown by teachers due to their lack of education in multilingualism. For example, Sorace (2007) found that bilinguals are better at coordinating different types of information and at ignoring irrelevant input. There is also scholarly evidence that suggests that bilingualism may protect its speakers against deterioration of cognitive abilities in old age (Sorace, 2007). These are two of the non-economic benefits of

multilingualism and also two more important reasons to encourage first language maintenance.

Again, Francis and Linda comment:

First of all, I think it's just interesting, and I think kids find it interesting... going to benefit me in the future because it is job opportunities, you are able to communicate with certain people in everyday situations or even at a job and in Canada, when there is so much diversity I think it is really important to be able to communicate with people who may not speak English (Francis)

... It would definitely help you in the workforce... I guess still keeping that link to their culture... is important... have that tie with their family as well (Linda)

Multilingualism in the classroom is beneficial to all of the classroom children. When children are exposed to multilingualism in a supportive environment, all children in the classroom develop a respect for diverse languages and cultures. Multilinguals in the classroom can help other children to become further aware of the diversity that exists in this world, their communities and their classrooms (Torok & Aguilar, 2000). This was noted by Tina:

It gives them a window into someone else's culture, someone else's life and sort of opens up the thinking from a very box like fashion into an understanding that they are part of a global, like they are apart of something global... and... that their world exists beyond the classroom, beyond the city that they live in, into different countries and they otherwise wouldn't have that exposure to have first hand exposure is something... like so much more beneficial then watching a video on Japan or whatever (Tina)

Encouraging English in Homes

Many people believe that being in an environment where you are exposed constantly to English will make you learn English quicker. It is believed that the more English children hear, the quicker their own skills may develop (McLaughlin, 1992). Conversely, research evidence suggests that this is not necessarily true. The only skills being acquired are conversational skills used for communication whereas academic proficiency is not being developed (McLaughlin, 1992). Therefore, teachers should not recommend English use at home because more English does not equal greater proficiency. On the contrary, this is a disservice to children since their

home language enables them to continue acquiring the knowledge and academic content required for educational success. A strong negative message is given when families are asked to relinquish their heritage languages for English. The participants in this study, however, appeared to believe that English should be practiced at home contrary to what the literature states. They comment:

I would [encourage English in the home], because first of all I think that if the parents don't speak English it is important for them to know some key phrases as well, and the student could... teach them in that sense and it could be kind of a family challenge, and that would make it... a little bit easier for them to communicate with the school if they had an issue or with the teacher if they had a concern, and it's practice (Francis)

I would encourage the use of English language at home over the summer holidays, definitely... I would... support the parents reading to the child in English (Olivia)

The urgency of having ELLs learn and understand English is understood by all educators. Language is clearly critical to the learning process since it is the medium of instruction (Flynn & Hill, 2005). Yet, when families are encouraged to use English in their homes it merely provides extra practice in conversational English at the expense of their native language proficiency. Language loss is an extremely disturbing issue and an additional struggle for ELLs and their families. When family members are encouraged to use English in the home, they are risking losing a part of their identity. Children's native languages should be an asset to their learning.

Research has consistently shown that children who continue to develop their home language while learning English attain higher levels of literacy and academic achievement compared to children who begin to lose their first language when learning English (Coelho, 2007; Genesee, 2007; Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 2000). Based on this fact, all teachers should be encouraging multilingual families to nurture their heritage languages and avoid detrimental losses. Teacher education should teach the importance of encouraging and incorporating heritage languages into English language development in any and every way possible. All teachers must recognize the uniqueness and invaluable nature of home languages for the speakers of that

language (Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 2000). However, two of the participants did recognize the importance of maintaining the home language. They noted:

I wouldn't... really tell parents to, to focus more on one language than the other but because I know my parents didn't do that with us but we still learned Punjabi and English, we spoke Punjabi at home all the time because parents don't want their children to lose their home cultures so I don't think I would really ask parents to do that (Katie)

Yes but not forced like I don't think it's a necessary thing you have to speak language at home in order for you to develop it in school but I think it's beneficial for the student to sort of help teach the parents also because a lot of times what will happen, the student then becomes a translator between home and the school, that's a lot of stress and a lot of pressure on anybody let alone a kid so if they are constantly having to go home and explain everything that they did you know in another language or you know read a letter or you know like whatever the case may be that puts a lot of stress on the kid so if they're slowly introducing new words to their parents at home, while maintaining their home language I think is very important to maintain their home language also and it just alleviates a little bit of stress and a little bit of anxiety for the kid (Tina)

Heritage language proficiency has a direct positive relationship to the acquisition and proficiency of additional languages (Genesee, 2007; Verdugo & Flores, 2007). As a classroom teacher of ELLs, it is necessary to understand the concept of transferability (Flynn & Hill, 2005; Genesee, 2007; Verdugo & Flores, 2007). Flynn & Hill (2005) and Dianda (1992) recommend that teachers actively pursue ways to support the child's continued development of their primary language at home since reading and academic knowledge may be transferred. The first language may be used as a tool in learning, by clarifying and enhancing a child's understanding of academic content in the classroom. An effective language strategy is for classroom teachers to encourage children to get assistance at home in their first language from siblings, parents, extended family members or friends (Dianda, 1992). Linda comments as follows:

I think I would encourage the use, and it would... have to work with the family as well, I guess we'd hope that there is someone in the family that can speak a little bit of English to be able to help with that... yes so I think it is important to have that go on because if not, they won't learn as quickly, eventually they will learn but it won't happen as quickly if they don't have the support (Linda)

Rather than encouraging families to incorporate the English language into their homes, it is more effective and beneficial for the student to bring their 'home' into the classroom. Teachers should make a genuine effort to know their classrooms student's language, culture and history (Flynn & Hill, 2005; Verdugo & Flores, 2007). It is well known that a family's use of English in the home does not necessarily promote English for academic purposes (Genesee, 2007). With this knowledge, teachers should instead make attempts to utilize the child's prior knowledge and experiences as important to the child's learning process. Teachers need not worry about the first language impeding on the development of English since children will usually do better in the language spoken in the community (Sorace, 2007). In most cases, it is the home language that is threatened and in need of any concern.

CHAPTER V: GENERAL DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

General Discussion and Recommendations

This exploratory study highlights essential issues and changes that need to take place. Southwestern Ontario Faculties of Education are lagging behind the changes in classroom demographics. Although ELL knowledge is essential for all classroom teachers, this does not appear to be reflected in professional teacher education programs.

This is particularly obvious when PTs themselves realize that they lack the necessary ELL training, desire more linguistic knowledge and claim a lack of preparation. Too many PTs feel unconfident in their abilities to fulfil the multiple roles and responsibilities of a classroom teacher for ELLs in their future classrooms. However, PTs feel that they can overcome this issue in the future through inservice development, experience, trial-and-error or support from experienced teachers. The reality is that no certified teachers should feel or perceive their ELL competence as being low. Unfortunately, in this investigation PTs did recognize their ELL competence as low in most cases and also perceived their peer graduates as unprepared for ELLs in the classroom.

The lack of ELL content within education programs has resulted in ill-prepared teachers; teachers who still embrace ingrained myths and misconceptions regarding ELLs, English learning and the English language. ELL knowledge has been dismissed as the responsibility of ESL ‘specialists’ or the knowledge of ‘specialized’ professionals. As ELLs appear in all classrooms, this knowledge is no longer reserved for ‘specialization’, rather this knowledge is essential to all classroom teachers for the effective education of ELLs. PTs require a greater extent of mandatory information regarding second language acquisition, bilingualism, and the needs of linguistically diverse children. Along with this information, PTs require strategies and guided practical experiences with ELLs in realistic settings.

Professional preparation programs must be reassessed to ensure that they are comprehensive and thorough in their training and certification. Teacher education programs are largely responsible for this current condition of unpreparedness. Education programs continue to overlook the importance of preparing classroom teachers for linguistic diversity and the importance of validating and encouraging native languages, inside and outside of the classroom (Téllez & Waxman, 2005). Based on the preliminary findings in this study, there is a good indication that primary-junior PTs are not adequately prepared to meet the needs of ELLs in the classroom.

If high ELL standards were in place at the teacher preparation level, certification programs would be addressing the interests and needs of ELLs in the classroom. It is evident that the minimal mention of ELLs is a slight effort which moves towards an equitable education system, yet it is still inadequate for the frequency of ELLs present in the classroom. It is indisputably evident that Ontario's education system is still promoting a monolingual learning environment and academic experience that highly values English as its language of preference in all regards. Although educational equity may never be established in its purest sense for ELLs in the classroom, all educators must continue to strive for educational excellence, high quality teaching and learning, and the highest of standards for our future generations (Gándara, Maxwell-Jolly & Driscoll, 2005; Montgomery, Roberts & Growe, 2003).

Greater action needs to be taken to prepare teachers and enhance ELL competence. Faculties of Education, the Boards of Education and the Ministry of Education must revive their efforts of providing quality and equitable education to all students. The underachievement or under-teaching of any student cannot be tolerated by any individuals, inside or outside of the classroom. This is especially true for a country that prides itself on multiculturalism and depends on immigration.

The following recommendations and professional development needs were established based on the preliminary findings of this study and in collaboration with the participants to ensure applicability to actual graduates of Southwestern Ontario's Faculties of Education.

Recommendation 1: It is recommended that the current graduation requirements and certification criteria are revised to include ELL preparation and competence.

The current graduation requirements do not certify that teachers have the breadth and depth necessary to teach ELLs with the high standards expected. The current graduation requirements and method of certification is an inadequate means of measuring knowledge, ability, and teaching skills. Teacher certification requires a rigorous and meticulous process to ensure teacher quality. The mandated requirements must incorporate linguistic knowledge areas to declare a professional level of teacher competence. Professional training for teaching ELLs should be given a higher priority in preparation programs. The province's certification criteria must include more of an explicit focus on ELL's education (Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly & Driscoll, 2005). There is a serious and immediate issue when teacher preparation programs do not require that their PTs are prepared to teach the ELLs in their classrooms. It is suggested that PTs be required to demonstrate their abilities, to ensure they have acquired ELL competence, prior to graduation. Graduation requirements must explicit state the expectations of high-quality teachers.

Teacher certification criteria also determine the effect of preparation since courses are typically prepared based on the exiting requirements. If policy makers change the certification requirements for classroom teachers, Faculties of Education would have no choice but to comply with the mandated policies (Menken & Antunez, 2001). We must set high demands of Ontario's teacher candidates to ensure that the highest calibre of classroom teachers is maintained.

Recommendation 2: It is recommended that all Faculties of Education incorporate a mandatory ELL course and an explicit focus or infusion of ELL course content.

With the addition of a mandatory ELL course and content, teachers may begin to possess the knowledge, skills, understanding and practice necessary to enable their ELLs to access the same rigorous academic content as their peers (Menken & Antunez, 2001). The addition of a mandatory course will ensure that all PTs obtain at least a minimum level of ELL competence. All graduating teachers must be able to effectively teach ELLs due to their prevalence in Ontario classrooms. High-quality teachers must continue to be the aim of all professional teacher training programs.

Recommendation 3: It is recommended that the Faculties of Education consider extending the duration of Pre-service Teacher Education to thoroughly prepare, explore areas and for adequate time to process all the newly acquired knowledge.

Many participants feel that their programs should be extended to incorporate all of the necessary components of teacher preparation. Programs may be lengthened by additional courses, practicum experiences and practical pieces related to course contents. This recommendation stems from the belief that no teacher should enter the classroom feeling unprepared to do so. Faculties of Education are required to train competent teachers who are confident in facing classroom challenges, yet it is questionable whether our aims are realistic in a restrictive time. Participants recommended that the teacher education program be extended to a minimum of 18 months and a maximum of 3 years.

Although many PTs were in favour of extending the pre-service programs to ensure a thorough preparation, PTs also recommended the removal of particular courses if an extension were not possible. The purpose of removing a current course would be to insert a mandatory course regarding ELLs or ELL-related topics.

Recommendation 4: It is recommended that there be more direct instruction, discussion, observation and greater understanding of ELLs classroom needs.

More time on ELL-related topics would have allowed PTs to collaborate with their colleagues about effective teaching strategies, what not to do in the classroom, methods of establishing a rapport with the child and their family, and other materials or tools that can be included in the classroom. PTs recommend additional opportunities for intensive discussions on materials, assessments and language acquisition. Parallel to the Evans, Arnot-Hopffer & Jurich (2005) study, PTs were upset with the lack of time, in any of their Bachelor of Education courses, devoted to direct instructions or discussions regarding how to teach English to ELLs.

Policy makers, the Ministry of Education, education and inclusion experts, and classroom teachers of ELLs must convene to identify the current needs of teacher preparation, teacher responsibilities and ELL competencies necessary for classroom efficacy. The purpose of this assembly is to chart a course of action to make the necessary changes and incorporate high quality instruction for all prospective teachers (Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly & Driscoll, 2005).

Recommendation 5: It is recommended that Faculties of Education take more accountability for the certification of Ontario teachers.

PTs recommended active efforts to change teacher's attitudes into inclusive attitudes with the aim of ensuring that teachers are sincere in their commitments to effectively teach all children. It is recommended that Faculties of Education or the Ontario Ministry of Education develop an ELL program/resource evaluation tool to evaluate the quality of teacher training programs for ELLs and identify areas in need of improvement (Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly & Driscoll, 2005). Cultivating and fostering an inclusive mindset along with these program tools will enhance the accountability of Faculties of Education for the quality of teachers they prepare.

Recommendation 6: It is recommended that amendments be made to the existing structure of mandated placements and practical learning experiences.

In correspondence to Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly & Driscoll's (2005) results, the participants of this study expressed a need to observe or collaborate with a successful classroom teacher of ELLs. This observation or collaboration period must also be ongoing rather than a superficial one-time experience since educators can be effective some days and less effective on others. The participants would have liked the opportunity to encompass more placements as a requirement of the Bachelor of Education to diversify their experiences in the classroom. Many of the PTs would like their programs to try and place students in at least one situation with ELLs in the classroom.

Recommendation 7: It is recommended that the following linguistic knowledge be incorporated in one or more of the B. Ed. courses, since it is deemed necessary for all classroom teachers.

Researchers and classroom teachers have agreed that teachers of ELLs need at least the following knowledge and skills in order to effectively meet the needs of their students; a basic understanding of bilingualism and multilingual development, fundamentals of linguistics (basic psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics), knowledge of current literature regarding ELLs, levels of language proficiency, structure and grammar of English, role of languages and culture on learning, demands that education place on diverse learners, methods of making academic content accessible to diverse learners, ability to integrate language development with academic instruction, respect for diverse languages, incorporation of native languages in instruction, needs and characteristics of ELLs, needs and characteristics of children who've had limited schooling experience, defragmenting myths and misconceptions regarding ELLs, and belief in students as individuals (Alfred, 1994; Antunez, 2002; Dianda, 1992; Evans, Arnot-Hopffer & Jurich, 2005; Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 2000; Menken & Antunez, 2001; Montgomery, Roberts & Growe, 2003; Waxman & Tellez, 2002).

The content mentioned above is, beyond doubt, necessary for teachers to effectively assist students in the process of English language and academic content learning. The current lack of deep linguistics knowledge poses a threat to the quality of teachers certified in Southwestern Ontario. Linguistics and the process of language learning are fundamental knowledge pieces that teachers require as certified experts in education. It is important to ensure that prospective teachers are equally knowledgeable in cultural diversity and linguistic diversity since both are required in multicultural Canada.

Implications

There is some indication that the Faculties of Education in Southwestern Ontario offer teacher certification while doing little to ready their PTs to work effectively with linguistically diverse children. Teachers are not receiving the preparation necessary for them to fulfil their roles as an educator. If PTs' beliefs can be altered by more knowledge about issues and needs, the quality, structure, and content of preparation courses must be evaluated and scrutinized. Teachers of ELLs require additional training, skills, knowledge and practice in order to effectively meet the needs of multilingual children. Based on the preliminary findings of this study, Faculties of Education are not requiring PTs to prepare for our changing classroom demographics. The reality is that all teachers must anticipate teaching at least one ELL during their teaching careers. An educational reform must occur to ensure that teacher preparation programs are taking obligatory actions to ensure high standards in education and optimal teacher quality in all classrooms. These issues are in serious need of attention or ELLs may continue to be neglected, mistreated, misinterpreted, undereducated and detrimentally impacted in our elementary classrooms.

Based on this exploratory study, it is believed that teacher education in Southwestern Ontario requires a thorough investigation of their efficacy. In the meantime, it is necessary to incorporate the immediate addition of ELL-topics into the existing course content. All Faculties of Education must strive to maintain high standards and equity in education.

Limitations to the Study

Due to the nature of exploratory research, this study has particular limitations. Since the sample was non-randomly chosen the results may not be generalized to the whole population. The results of this study will only apply to the sample of individuals used. Even so, the findings are a useful indication of the effectiveness of the central phenomenon, teacher preparation, under

investigation. A relatively small sample was used because qualitative research standards rely on the quality of data collected rather than quantity. I was able to elicit large pieces of descriptive information from a small group of motivated volunteers interested in the study. These participants were eager to share their in-depth opinions, experiences and thoughts. These participants provided the richness of detail that was sought in this study.

The participant depictions and contributions that emerged are inconsistent in their level of detail. This may be the result of my rapport with some participants and also due to particular personality traits. Some participants were more revealing than others in their interview responses and therefore were utilized more in the final report. A few participants were more narrowly focused in their interpretations of the interview questions and also in their provided responses.

The quality of data collected and the interpretation of results are greatly dependant on the skills and experience of the researcher. During the data collection process, the researcher may have influenced the quantity and quality of information elicited from participants. The skills of the researcher also influence how well the data is summarized and analyzed for the final report. The insights of this study are based on the researcher's personal and professional lens. It is understood by the researcher that alternative perspectives and interpretations may exist.

This paper is an initial exploration of teacher preparation for ELLs in Southwestern Ontario, from the PTs' perspective. These preliminary findings indicate the attitude, knowledge, skills, abilities and competence levels they are taking with them into their first classrooms where their fears and the unknown will be played out, confronted, challenged and hopefully overcome.

Direction for Further Research

It is hoped that this exploratory study is seen as an initial step towards a better understanding of teacher preparation in Ontario. It is evident that there are still areas of ELL preparation that need further investigation. These preliminary findings aim to draw more attention to the impact certified teachers have on ELLs when they are unprepared to educate them. Without this attention, our future Canadians may face challenges in education and language learning. Only limited progress has been made in the form of course electives and minimal mention of ELLs. To sustain progress, further advocacy and research must be conducted (Waxman & Tellez, 2002).

Based on these initial findings, there is an indication for a rigorous large scale study. Based on my analysis of this investigation, there is a good indication that the Faculties of Education may be largely responsible for ineffectively preparing teachers for ELLs in the classroom. This phenomenon requires a deeper investigation to determine the exact areas of disconnect and lack of preparation. There are still many pieces of the inefficacy equation that remain unknown, yet are crucial to the education and academic success of linguistically diverse learners. Teacher education is principally responsible for the efficacy of classroom teachers.

Further investigation should also explore the various methods of preparing PTs by examining the growing literature base. Although the overall number of empirical studies is limited on this phenomenon, there is some knowledge of the components necessary in teacher preparation for the successful education of ELLs in the classroom. This data can be subtracted from the qualitative studies and paired with expert opinions regarding the preparation of teachers for ELLs in mainstream classrooms (Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly & Driscoll, 2005). A deep and repeated investigation of PT graduates beliefs is also required to continue the evaluation of teacher education's overall efficacy, linguistics knowledge and ELL competence.

A second investigation may involve a long-term study focused on following the PT graduates into their first years of teaching. It is necessary to evaluate the accuracy of their responses. Teachers may respond to challenges differently than indicated by their response. This study may also explore what the PTs realized they were not prepared for, once in the profession. There are several variables that may be considered in this future investigation. The school environment, ESL support staff and the number of ELLs, are a few examples of variables which may affect the results of future classroom practices and teacher efficacy. For that reason, it is crucial to implement a deeper qualitative investigation with rich detailed responses from teachers.

A third investigation may include the exploration of PTs with Early Childhood Education (ECE) backgrounds in comparison to PTs with alternative undergraduate backgrounds. A number of references were given to ECE graduates which are good indications of a need for in-depth investigation on this topic. If individuals believe that ECE graduates are better prepared to educate children in the classroom, an important research question to explore whether undergraduate majors affect teacher preparation or the level of competence a teacher has. If so, should PTs in the primary-junior division be admitted only from particular programs? This is a necessary investigation given that our future deserves the best education possible. If ECE better prepares teachers, then Faculties of Education should give a higher preference or priority to ECE graduates for the primary-junior division.

CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION

Relatively little research has focused directly on ELLs in the classroom or on pre-service training and ELLs, in comparison to the extensive literature on ESL (Youngs & Youngs, 2001). Based on these exploratory findings, it is evident that PTs graduating from Southwestern Ontario's Faculties of Education are struggling with inadequate preparation for ELLs in the classroom. There is a lack of preparedness for classroom teachers to work with students who reflect realistic classroom demographics. As immigration continues to increase, the perceived challenge of ELLs in the classroom will become more evident and severe. Without the skills necessary to face these challenges, teachers are left astray to fend for themselves in anyway they deem appropriate. Without adequate ELL competence and training, teachers in the field will not have the courage, confidence or knowledge necessary to accommodate these children. The trial-and-error process, that many classroom teachers will likely use, may significantly harm the ELLs in their care. The Faculties of Education may largely be responsible for the consequences of certified teacher's ineffective classroom instructional behaviours with these children.

Chances are that ELLs will be taught by a teacher who has received little to no training on how to teach ELLs. Classroom teachers appear to lack knowledge regarding English-language development strategies, methods of integrating English language development with academic objectives, strategies of providing primary language support and effective accommodations. Classroom teachers must be inclusively minded and highly committed to the success of all their children. Our society and academic future relies on teacher education's ability to certify competent teachers who engage all students while providing access to the curriculum despite English language proficiency.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Consent Agreement

SCHOOL OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
FACULTY OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

Master of Arts in Early Childhood Studies

**Ryerson University
Major Research Paper
Consent Agreement**

Title: *Pre-service Training: Preparing Teachers for English Language Learners in the Classroom*

You are being asked to participate in a research study. Before you give your consent to be a volunteer, it is important that you read the following information and ask as many questions as necessary to be sure you understand what you will be asked to do.

Investigator:

Principle Investigator/ Study Coordinator

Master of Early Childhood Studies: Ryerson Graduate Student: Nina Lee, B.A.

Email: n3lee@ryerson.ca

Telephone: (647) 345-5732

Master of Early Childhood Studies Instructor: Ryerson University

Major Research Paper Supervisor: Dr. Angela Valeo, B.Sc., B.Ed., M.Ed, Ph.D., (OTC)

Email: avaleo@ryerson.ca

Office Telephone Number: (416) -979-5000 ext. 7696

Purpose of the Study:

The Major Research Paper is a graduation requirement of the Master of Arts in Early Childhood Studies graduate program in the School of Early Childhood Education at Ryerson University.

Working directly with graduating pre-service teachers will help me understand their perspective of past experiences, recent educational experiences, attitudes, future practices and teaching behaviours in regards to English language learners (ELLs). A total of six participants will be recruited to deeply explore the topic of teacher preparation for ELLs in Southwestern Ontario's Faculties of Education. The eligibility criteria used for prospective participants consists of; on the verge of graduating from the primary/junior division of a faculty of education and no more than two participants with the same undergraduate degree. The researcher will also attempt to select individuals who are reflective of varied course choices and experiences to encompass several perspectives and reduce overlap.

Description of the Study:

The researcher will investigate six pre-service teachers in Southwestern Ontario to investigate the effectiveness of the Faculties of Education, primary/junior division, in preparing teachers for ELLs in the classroom. A single interview with the participant will be audio recorded and will include the following types of questions: demographic, descriptive, experience, knowledge and feeling questions. The following topics will be included in the questioning: demographic information and knowledge related to; ELLs, ELL needs, learned teaching methods and strategies, personal experiences, teacher education and second language acquisition.

Location

Each interview will be conducted in a location that is familiar and comfortable to the pre-service teacher participant. This location may include a secluded location in their school cafeteria or café, family home, public library, the researcher's accommodations lobby/common area or any other room which will allow for privacy. All of the interview questions will explore the pre-service teacher's attitudes, knowledge, concerns and education related to English language learners. The expected duration of the interview is 60 minutes.

What is Experimental in this Study?

None of the procedures or interview questions used in this study is experimental in nature. The only experimental aspect of this study is the gathering of information for the purpose of analysis.

Risks or Discomforts:

The only risks or discomforts associated with the research study are that the participant may, during the interview, exhibit unwillingness to proceed. In the event that a participant exhibits discomfort following the presentation of a specific question during the interview, they will be reminded that the question can remain unanswered.

Benefits of the Study:

Potential benefits of the interviews will be the discussion of a topic, which is of concern to educators, as they plan and program for English language learners. It cannot be guaranteed, however, that participants will receive any benefits from participating in the study.

Confidentiality:

The data (audio recordings of the interviews and written comments) will be used to prepare the Major Research Paper written report. The data collected will be stored in a securely locked location with highly-restricted access. Only the primary investigator will have access to the tape recordings. Participants may review transcribed interviews, to ensure accuracy, prior to analysis and publication.

During data collection confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained using pseudonyms. Codes will also be used to eliminate any chance of identifying participants or Faculties of Education (research sites) in the final written report.

In April 2010, all tapes will be erased and all field notes will be destroyed (shredded).

Incentives to Participate: The participant will not be paid to participate in the studies.

Costs and/or Compensation for Participation: There are no costs associated with participation.

Voluntary Nature of Participation:

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your choice of whether or not to participate will not influence your future relations with Ryerson University. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and to stop your participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are allowed.

At any particular point in the study, you may refuse to answer any particular question or stop participation altogether.

Questions about the Study: If you have any questions about the research now, please ask. If you have questions later about the research, you may contact.

Principle Investigator/Study coordinator
Nina Lee, B.A.
Early Childhood Studies (M.A.) Graduate Student
School of Early Childhood Education
Ryerson University
Email: n3lee@ryerson.ca

If you have questions regarding your rights as a human subject and participant in this study, you may contact the Ryerson University Research Ethics Board for information.

Research Ethics Board
c/o Office of the Vice President, Research and Innovation
Ryerson University
350 Victoria Street
Toronto, ON M5B 2K3
416-979-5042

Agreement:

Your signature below indicates that you have read the information in this agreement and have had a chance to ask any questions you have about the study. Your signature also indicates that you agree to be in the study and have been told that you can change your mind and withdraw your consent to participate at any time. You have been given a copy of this agreement.

You have been told that by signing this consent agreement you are not giving up any of your legal rights.

Name of Participant (please print)

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Investigator

Date

Appendix B: Cover Letter to Interview

Ryerson University
350 Victoria Street
Toronto, ON M5B 2K3

Dear Pre-service Teacher Graduates,

My name is Nina Lee and I am a Masters candidate at Ryerson University in the Early Childhood Studies program. As a program requirement, I am conducting a Major Research Paper (MRP). I would like to invite you to participate in this study I am conducting which is designed to explore the perspectives of 2007-08 pre-service teachers, primary/junior division, on issues concerning teacher preparation for the education of English Language Learners (ELLs). As a recent graduate from a Southwestern Ontario Faculty of Education and future classroom teacher whose classes may some day enrol ELLs, your input will provide valuable insight into this exploratory study.

I would like to ask you to participate in this study by completing a tape-recorded interview which should take approximately 1 hour to complete. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. Additionally, please feel free to skip any question that may make you feel uncomfortable or withdraw from participation at any time. Although results from this Major Research Paper may be published or used professionally, this interview is anonymous and responses will not be linked to you in any way.

Please keep this letter for your records and feel free to contact me with any questions or comments you may have by email (n3lee@ryerson.ca). Thank you for taking your time to read this letter and participate in my study.

Sincerely,

Nina Lee
M.A. Candidate
Early Childhood Studies
Ryerson University

Appendix C: Structured Interview Questionnaire: Pre-Service Teacher Graduates

Study: Pre-service Training: Preparing Teachers for English Language Learners in the Classroom

Time of Interview (Start Time): _____ (End Time): _____

Interviewer: _____ Date: _____

Interviewee (Pseudonym): _____

Faculty of Education (Pseudonym): _____

Pre-Interview:

- Set-up interview location and offer a refreshment to the participant.
- Introduce self.
- Provide participant with the consent agreement to sign.
- Thank the participant for agreeing to take part in the study.
- Review the research purpose, the type of data that will be collected and what it will be used for.
- Remind the participant that they will be audio-taped and that brief notes will be taken.
- Remind participant of the procedures that will be taken to ensure confidentiality.
- Remind participant of their right to stop the interview or skip questions at any point.
- Invite questions.
- Provide the participant with the estimated time duration for the interview.

Interview Questions:

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. In what program did you receive your undergraduate degree? Do you have any additional certifications related to education?

Comments:	Reflective Notes:
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2. How many practicum blocks did you have? Tell me about your practicum experiences.
- Probes: How long was each placement block?
- Would you describe the classroom as diverse?
 - Were there different languages present in the classroom?

Comments:	Reflective Notes:
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3. What does the term “*English Language Learner*” mean to you? [Please define.]

Comments:	Reflective Notes:
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4. Which faculty of education courses were related to English language learners or ESL? Were these courses mandatory or elective? What, in relation to ELLs/ESL, did you learn about?
- Overview of the topics or in-depth?

Comments:	Reflective Notes:
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5. In total, how many hours of the program would you estimate were spent on learning about:
- Practical ELL strategies
 - Classroom learning needs for linguistically diverse children
 - Diversity issues
 - Second language acquisition

Comments:	Reflective Notes:
-----------	-------------------

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION (quick measure of knowledge)

6. For the following statements, state whether they are true or false and elaborate on your choice.

6.1. *Children learn second languages quickly and easily.*

Comments:	Reflective Notes:
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6.2. *The younger the child, the more skilled in acquiring a second language.*

- Reworded: *The earlier, the better in learning a second language*

Comments:	Reflective Notes:
-----------	-------------------

6.3. *The more time a student spends in a 2nd language context, the quicker they learn the language.*

Comments:	Reflective Notes:
-----------	-------------------

6.4. *Children have acquired a second language once they can speak it.*

- Reworded: *The ability to use English in day-to-day situations is enough to do well in school.*

Comments:	Reflective Notes:
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6.5. *All children learn a second language in the same way.*

- Reworded: *There is one "magic" method or "one size fits all"*

Comments:	Reflective Notes:
-----------	-------------------

6.6. *Children soak up new languages like sponges.*

Comments:	Reflective Notes:
-----------	-------------------

6.7. *Proficiency in oral English is a prerequisite for academic instruction.*

Comments:	Reflective Notes:
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6.8. *Children have a limited capacity for language. Learning two languages at once can result in delays, incomplete mastery or even impairment in one of the languages.*

- Reworded: *Bilingualism leads to cognitive and linguistic delays*

Comments:	Reflective Notes:
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6.9. *Bilingualism leads to linguistic confusion. Ex. Children who switch between two languages.*

Comments:	Reflective Notes:
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6.10. Overall, what are the key components necessary for English Language Learning?

Comments:	Reflective Notes:
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ELLS IN THE CLASSROOM: WHERE THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION STANDS

7. Are there any benefits to having a first language other than English in Canada?
Probes: What are some of the benefits for the child? How does this benefit all children?

Comments:	Reflective Notes:
-----------	-------------------

8. How would you develop a relationship with a newly arrived ELL in your future classroom?
Probes: What types of strategies or methods would you use?
▪ How will you make this child feel comfortable in the learning environment?

Comments:	Reflective Notes:
-----------	-------------------

9. How will you communicate with ELLs who have no or limited English proficiency?

Probes: Will you make use of the home language?

9.10. In what ways and what subjects?

9.11. Would you encourage the use of the English language at home? Why?

Comments:	Reflective Notes:
-----------	-------------------

10. What ELL classroom strategies do you plan to use with ELLs in the future? And Why?

Probes: Ex. assessment strategies? How do you know these strategies are effective?

- Where were these strategies learned? (Book titles, B.Ed. program, resource lists, workshops, conferences, placement/personal experience)

Comments:	Reflective Notes:
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11. What other ELL tools or resources would you use? Why and where did you learn these from?

Probe: Book titles, resource lists, workshops, conferences, placement/personal experience

Comments:	Reflective Notes:
-----------	-------------------

12. What are your expectations of school ESL supports and what are their responsibilities?

Probe: What are your responsibilities in relation to these professionals and services?

Comments:	Reflective Notes:
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13. How valuable would a mandatory course on ELL teaching be?

Probe: Would this be more effective then infusing the topic of ELLs though out existing courses?

Comments:	Reflective Notes:
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14. What kind of classroom barriers do you anticipate in future teaching?

Probes: What is your greatest concern?

- Ex. cultural differences, language barriers, time constraints, parents...

Comments:	Reflective Notes:
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15. Do you feel that all of your graduating peers know enough about ELLs and working with ELLs to be an effective educator with them in the classroom?
- Probes: Why or why not? Please elaborate.
- How could this situation be changed? (if necessary)

Comments:	Reflective Notes:
-----------	-------------------

16. Do you feel confident in your own abilities to fulfil the multiple roles and responsibilities of the classroom teacher for ELLs?
- Probes: This includes; planning and implementing curriculum standards, accommodations to teaching strategies, inducing meaningful classroom engagement and true assessments or evaluation.

Comments:	Reflective Notes:
-----------	-------------------

17. What recommendations do you have for your faculty of education program, with regards to ELLs?
- Probes: Is there anything in particular that you expected to be taught?
- Is there anything you think should be taught but isn't?
 - Is there anything you wish they taught you?

Comments:	Reflective Notes:
-----------	-------------------

Post-Interview:

- Ask the participant if they have any questions. Offer refreshments.
 - Remind the participant again that steps have been taken to ensure confidentiality.
 - Review any in-field interpretations to ensure accuracy.
 - Ask the participant if it would be possible to contact them if necessary to verify and confirm the data collected is accurate and reflective of their personal perspectives.
☐ Yes ☐ No
- Best method of communication _____
- Ask the participant if they would be willing to read over the analysis, findings, interpretations and conclusion at a later date to ensure accuracy (in approx. 2 months).
☐ Yes ☐ No
 - Thank the participant again for their time and willingness to participate.

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Glossary

Competence

Competence, or more specifically *ELL competence*, is defined as a classroom teacher's ability to carry out multiple roles and responsibilities required to meet the needs of ELL learners. This includes; planning and implementing curriculum standards, accommodations to teaching strategies, inducing meaningful classroom engagement and true assessments or evaluation.

English Language Learner (ELL)

An *English language learner* refers to any child who is; in kindergarten to grade 6, Canadian born or newly arrived, whose first language is not English or is a variety significantly different from that used in Ontario elementary schools and who may require educational language supports to attain English proficiency (Gándara, Maxwell-Jolly & Driscoll, 2005; Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 2005).

Faculty of Education

A *faculty of education* is a Canadian term which is synonymous to the commonly used American terms in the literature; Teacher Education, Pre-service Teacher Education, Teacher Preparation and Teacher Training. Regardless of the title, *Faculties of Education* provide pre-service teachers with the necessary education, experiences and training required for certification and to effectively undertake teaching.

Pre-service Teacher (PT)

Pre-service teachers are often referred to in the literature as student teachers or teacher candidates. PTs are post-degree students enrolled in and attending a faculty of education in pursuit of teacher certification and teacher training.

Teacher Preparation

Teacher preparation is the result of adequate and effective faculty of education programs. For the purpose of this study, the level of preparation is determined by the teacher's knowledge of ELLs, ELL experiences or events and ELL competence (see *competence*).