CO-TEACHING AS A MODEL OF INSTRUCTION FOR ENGLISH AS SECOND
LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN A GENERAL EDUCATION CLASSROOM

A thesis presented
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Abstract

The English language learner population in schools across America is growing each day. Meeting the educational needs of these students can be very challenging. In an effort to meet the educational demands of these diverse leaners, there is a need for instructional practices that enable these students to learn English and required grade level content. This case study explored the experiences of English as second language teachers who co-teach English language arts with general education teachers in a mainstream classroom. Major findings include the importance of teachers working together in a collaborative partnership and the role of the principal in supporting co-teaching efforts.

Keywords: English language learner; English as a second language teacher; mainstreaming; collaboration; co-construction of new knowledge; co-teaching; transformational learning

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Children of immigrants are the fastest growing population in U.S. schools today (Caldeon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011). Half of these students are labeled English language learners because they do not speak English fluently (Caldeon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011). Despite the rapid growth of this population and the conscientious efforts of educators to educate these learners, our limited English proficient students are still struggling academically in mainstream classrooms (Abedi & Dietel, 2004). State test scores in this particular subgroup are often 20 to 30 percentage points lower than scores of other students (Abedi & Dietel, 2004). Unless school administrators and teachers identify the needs of our English language learners and explore the effective models of instruction these students require to be successful in literacy development, the gap will widen in academic achievement between English language learners and native English speaking students.

Research Problem

The Forest Ridge School is a large, urban K-8 school with 910 students in a northeastern state. In 2001, 11.7% of the students at the Forest Ridge School were considered limited English proficient students, also referred to as English language learners, or ELLs. The limited English proficient student population has grown to 31.4 % (State Department of Elementary & Secondary Education, 2014). There are 4 classes at each grade level, with approximately 25 students in each class. Approximately 246 of the 910 students at the Forest Ridge School are English language learners. English languaage learners improved, but did not reach the composite proficiency index target, on the 2013 end-of-year test (School Profiles, 2012).

English language learners at the Forest Ridge School are serviced by five English as a second language teachers. Three of those teachers were included in this study. To better serve

the high ELL population at the Forest Ridge School, classrooms with a high number of English language learners implemented a co-teaching model of instruction that included a general education teacher and an English as a second language teacher. Specific classroom teachers were selected for the position at each grade level. English language learners with the highest need of service were selected for the co-taught classrooms at each grade level. More support time was made available in the model because the English as a second language teachers were able to co teach English language arts and service students in fewer classrooms as opposed to all classrooms. This study explored a co-teaching model of instruction for English as a second language teachers with a general education teacher for the instruction of English language arts instruction at the Forest Ridge School.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the co-teaching model of instruction with English as second language teachers who co-teach with general education teachers to instruct English language learners in English language arts in general education. The setting for this study included classrooms at a large K-8 urban school. The school has approximately 100 students per grade level, which approximately 31.4% of the students are English language learners and for 51.5% of the students, English is not their first language. Research states that language minority students need more intense supplemental instructional strategies that specifically support English language learners (Protheroe, 2011).

Deficiencies in Evidence

Research has documented the many challenges English language learners face in our classrooms. According to Wassell, Hawrylack, and LaVan (2010), there is disagreement as to whether or not the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of our English language learners support

their success in American schools. These students are learning a new language and content

knowledge at the same time (Wassell, Hawrylak, & LaVan, 2010). Some researchers have found

that quality of instruction is what matters most for English learners to be successful in school

(Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011). More specifically, quality of instruction includes language

and literacy instruction, integration of language, cooperative learning, and monitoring of

implementations and outcomes (Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011). This study found that

quality of instruction was enhanced by teams who have necessary supports in place to function

collaboratively.

Decisions about instructional programs for English language learners is especially

challenging for school districts (Dahlman, 2009). Many times, school districts do not have the

resources to change the programs to keep up with the growing English language population

(Dahlman, 2009). Programs for English language learners remain the same for years without

looking at the specific needs of the students (Dahlman, 2009). Schools may have pullout

programs where English language learners leave the classroom for English instruction. One

teacher may instruct non-English or limited-English speaking students in a stand-alone or

Sheltered English Instruction classrooms. According to Harklau (1994), there are several

integrated language and content area programs available to school districts in the United States.

The lack of success of these programs signalled a call for a change in the isolation of English as

a second language teachers and classroom teachers (Harklau, 1994). The teachers in study are an

example of how ELL students can be supported through teachers working together.

According to Honigsfeld and Dove (2008), the resources concerning co-teaching

between English as a second language teachers and mainstream educators. As a result, there was

a need to study how schools can best serve the needs of English language learners utilizing co-teaching model with limited resources. This study begins to fill that gap.

The Audience

General education classroom teachers and English as a second language teachers who co-teach English language arts to English language learners in a general education classroom . Qualitative data was used to evaluate the process and ideas about this co-teaching approach to service English language learners. Data was collected on teacher collaboration, teamwork, and instructional practices. The intent is to share the results of this study with colleagues at the school and beyond.

The findings may be useful for district administrators, highlighting the co-teaching model of instructing English language learners in an English language arts classroom. The results explore the need and benefits for teachers and the entire staff to work together and share understandings that contribute to a coherent, more targeted, and collaborative approach to teach English language learners (Theoharis & O'Toole, 2011). The findings of the study are also useful to practioners and researchers more broadly interested in best practices for ELL students and co-teaching. Also, this study serves as an example of an instructional leader embarking on an inquiry project with staff. Therefore, school level leaders may find this as an example of inquiry done with teachers in order to think about instructional programming.

Significance of Research Problem

ELL students arrive in the United States from many different countries and many of these students arrive after traumatic experiences in their native countries (Stufft & Brogadir, 2010). These newly arrived English language learners may not have had any formal education in their own country and may have no literacy skills in their native language (Stufft & Brogadir, 2010).

Though English language learners arrive with various levels of skills, many times they are grouped together with one teacher to address their widely diverse needs (Calderon, Slavin & Sanchez, 2011). In fact, Calderon, Slavin & Sanchez (2011) stated that as the numbers of English language learners increases in our general classrooms, mainstream classrooms teachers recognize the importance of learning how to best address their educational needs.

English language learners benefit from instructional strategies identified as best practices for native language speakers (Protheroe, 2011). According to Protheroe (2011), these practices tend to be weaker for English language learners than for native English speakers. McIntyre (2010) emphasized that language minority students need more intense and supplemental teaching. There is a need for additional instructional strategies to specifically support the special needs of English language learners. A locally designed curriculum that meets the specific needs of a community of English language learners is a place, according to Theoharis & O'Toole (2011), where high expectations for achievement can be possible.

Classroom teachers have reported feeling stress and anxiety when trying to provide services for English language learners while teaching mainstream curriculum and standards to all students (English, 2009). Designing a curriculum for language minority students that is parallel to the general curriculum takes collaboration between general education teachers and English as a second language teachers (Harklau, 1994). This process takes time, preparation, and resources (Theoharis & O'Toole, 2011). By focusing on the co-taught classrooms of the Forest Ridge School teachers and administrators, the researcher examined whether this is the best use of resources and model of English language arts instruction used by their English as second language teachers.

Positionality Statement

I, the researcher, am an educator. I completed my 42nd year in education in June of 2014. I spent 21 years as an elementary classroom teacher and 21 years as a principal. One of the biggest changes and challenges I have seen is managing the diverse needs of our student population. At the Forest Ridge School, we are very rich in diversity with 31.4% of our students English language learners (State Department of Elementary & Secondary Education, 2014). I believe education is the great equalizer in our society. As a daughter of an immigrant parent who arrived in this country during the 1920's at the age of 15 and was placed in a first grade class, I have a great deal of empathy for our newly arrived English language learners.

In 42 years, I have seen many changes in curriculum, instruction, assessment, instructional programs, and changes in the student population. I believe the two major changes are student population and assessment. It is increasingly difficult to meet the instructional needs of a diverse school population so assure that all students have the necessary knowledge and skills necessary to be successful in school.

In curriculum, I have seen districts (and even schools) with various curriculums for each grade level. Now, we have state standards and school districts must align their curricula to these standards. All students will have access to the same curriculum. Instruction has changed a great deal over the years. I have seen reading taught through the use of strategic phonics programs and witnessed the 'whole language approach' in reading instruction. Whole language is when spelling, vocabulary, and grammar are not taught in isolation, but instead through reading and writing (Brooks & Brooks, 2005). Twenty years later, phonics is once again emphasized as an important tool when learning to read.

Phonics is one tool used in the process of learning to read. Students are more actively engaged in practicing reading, speaking, writing, and listening skills in this process. There is more talk and dialogue among students. Students work cooperatively in groups, 'turn and talk,' and self-regulate their learning. Students produce products to show what they have learned. The teacher is the facilitator in the learning process.

In addition to curriculum, assessment has also changed significantly. Students in the 1970s and 1980s participated in achievement tests to measure progress in the areas of reading and math. In my school district, we experienced over a decade of no major testing. Now, we have high stakes testing—the MCAS in English language arts as well as in math and science and technology. In today's world of high stakes testing, schools must do all they can for English language learners to be successful in the area of literacy. Students must take the MCAS English Language Arts test after residing in this country for a year. It is my position that educators must provide the right services for our English language learners so that they can aquire the literacy skills to be successful on these tests.

English language learners can reach the expected level of performance through the implementations of targeted instructional strategies, differentiated instruction, progress monitoring of students' needs, and a linguistically as well as culturally rich curriculum (Gil & Woodruff, 2011). English language learners, like all students, need opportunities to talk with their classmates. Students provide valuable assistance to one another. Students need to be allowed to use their first language and feel comfortable in class asking a question, answering a question, or clarifying a statement for a classmate (Wassell et al., 2010). Proficiency in both languages helps students make connections between language and understanding content (Jalongo & Sabolak, 2011).

Teachers and administrators must be aware of and sensitive to the learning needs and styles of English language learners (Harklau, 1994). It should not be about how schools and classrooms adapt to English language learners, it is how schools and classrooms can change to better serve these students (Wassell et al., 2010). Teachers must see themselves as teachers of English language learners, not as a teacher who has English language learners in their classrooms (Pappamihiel, 2007).

The needs of English language learners cannot be met by a classroom teacher or a licensed English as a second language teachers alone. Classroom teachers and English as second language teachers must collaborate and create shared instructional leadership (Brooks, Adams & Morita-Mullaney, 2010). Teachers musts work together because it may take a language minority student up to seven years to develop a language proficiency level to compete with native language speakers (Harklau, 1994).

As a principal of a school with a high population of English lanaguage learners, I understand the urgency to meet the educational needs of all the students in my school. The Forest Ridge School provided English as a second language teachers the opportunity to co-teach language arts with general education teachers to English language learners. For this study, I explored the co-teaching model of English as a second language teachers' collaboration with general education teachers teaching English language arts in a general education classroom.

Machi and McEvoy (2009) stated that personal attachment may provide the passion for research but that it can also cause bias. Certaintly, as a daughter of immigrants, as a life long educator, and as the leader of Forest Ridge School, the entire study was influenced by my position. I used my position in order to further relationships with participants in order to yiedl information that would not be available to an outsider. At the same time, throughout the research

process, I was cognizant not to ask eading questions. Questions were developed based on relevant literature and not influenced by my personal interest in English as a second language. Additionally through interviewing both English as a second language teachers and general education classroom teachers I was able to understand a deeper perspective on how English as a second language instruction is working for teachers at the school.

Research Questions

The over-arching question that guided this study was: How does a classroom with an English as a second language and general education collaborative teaching model enhance the teaching process of English language arts? Three secondary questions **contributed** to a better understanding of the practice of co-teaching for English as a second language teacher: (1) What is the English as a second language teacher's past teaching experience and how did she become involved in a co-teaching model? (2) What is the role and experiences of the English as a second language teacher co-teaching English language arts in a mainstream general education classroom? (3) What are the perceptions of the English as a second language teacher and the general education classroom teacher on student learning and the experiences of English language learners in a co-taught mainstream classroom?

Theoretical Frameworks

This study applied Ludwing von Bertalanffy's (1968) General Systems Theory. Ludwig von Bertalanffy defined a system as a "set of elements standing in interrelations among themselves and with the environment" (Jun, Kim, & Lee, 2011, p.73). In other words, the whole is equal to more than the sum of its parts, and this feature of a system comes from the relationships of its parts (Jun, Kim, & Lee, 2011). This theory sees the world as a pattern of

parts in relations and of relationships and interconnections. The interrelation between the parts

gives some qualities to the whole that are not found in the individual parts alone (Bello, 1985).

Von Bertalanffy's General Systems Theory is a science of wholeness, suggesting that

characteristics appear or emerge out of the interactions of the various parts (Anfara & Mertz,

2006).   System thinking now plays a critical role in the fields of management, social science,

and organizational design (Jun, Kim, & Lee, 2011).   Each part of an organization brings forth a

different perspective. Each perspective provides a different angle or approach (Bello, 1985).

Reality is somewhat relative and this relativity requires new ways of understanding and new

knowledge is proposed (Bello, 1985).   General systems thinking changes the systems we

experience and help us move on by developing ideas that will improve the quality of life

(Buckle-Henning & Chen, 2012).

A co-teaching relationship between two teachers contextualizes teachers within an

organizational setting and how they would like to think about themselves (Anfara & Mertz,

2006). The English as a second language teacher and the content area teacher have the

opportunity to demonstrate the specific areas of expertise they bring to a co-teaching situation,

assuring both teachers that their strengths provide a significant contribution to the instruction

being carried out in the classroom (Hepner & Newman, 2010). Effective co-teachers spend time

discussing common beliefs, as well as differing views and opinions dealing with curriculum,

instruction, assessment and classroom routines. As a result, they reflect on their practice and

improve their skills (Hepner & Newman, 2010).

A co-teaching relationship, utilizing collaboration, support, and the exchange of ideas,

provides the strength for more risk-taking, specifically the development and use of new

innovative strategies by both teachers (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2008).   The ELL teacher brings their

knowledge of language acquisition and the classroom teacher contributes their knowledge of the general curriculum, creating a learning environment where students benefit from the teachers' knowledge and experience working together. This concept is illustrated as Figure 1. This study used general systems theory to determine how co-teachers work together to create a system to help students learn. Understanding the system and how the various components of that system work together will administrators and researchers understand how to help other teachers create similar systems to benefit their students.
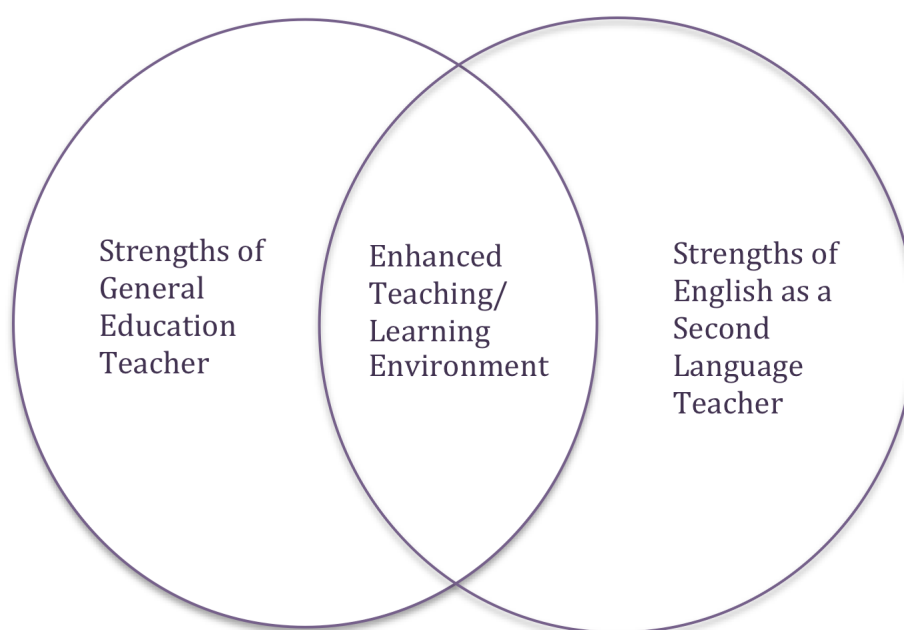
*Figure 1. Ludwig von Bertalanffy's (1968) General Systems Theory adapted to illustrates General Systems Theory in a co-teaching ELL environment.*

Teachers' practices are strengthened through collaboration in the creation of a system through co-teaching (Anfara & Mertz, 2006). Further, teachers benefit from the learning environment established in a co-teaching relationship because they are able to learn from each

other in an experiential setting. Mezirow's (2000) theory of transformative learning provides a helpful structure to understand the co-teaching relationship as a learning environment. Mezirow (2000) defined learning as the "process of using prior interpretation to construe a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one's experience as a guide to future action" (p. 5). Learning is a process of constructing and reconstructing meaning leading to a person's growth and development (Mezirow, 1978). Mezirow describes transformational learning as a constructivist theory of adult learning (Mezirow, 1978). Constructivists believe that knowing is a process of understanding and making sense of one's experiences (Erickson, 2007).

Through transformational learning, individuals become more reflective and transform their perspectives and ways of thinking as they generate new beliefs and justify a new course of action (Erickson, 2007). Mezirow believed that adult learning should make learners more capable of rigorously self-scrutinized thinking (Servage, 2008). Through transformational learning, individuals transform their perspectives and ways of thinking to make them more inclusive, reflective, and capable of change (Mezirow, 2000).

According to Mezirow, transformational learning assumptions are critically analyzed when an open and objective form of discussion takes place and individuals present and review the evidence and arguments for and against a problematic assertion to arrive at a consensus (Anfara & Mertz, 2006). Musanti and Pence (2010) believed that teacher growth does not happen in isolation. Instead, it happens when teachers collaborate with peers and co-construct new ideas about teaching and learning (Musanti & Pence, 2010). These ideas are illustrated as Figures 2 and 3.

Mainstream teacher's knowledge of content

English as a second language teacher's skills in teaching English language learners

Mainstream classroom teacher and the English as a second language teacher reflect on their practices and build on their knowledge and skills

Mainstream teacher's collaboration with English as a second language

English as a second language teacher's collaboration with mainstream teacher

Figure 2. Mezirow's Theory of Transformational Learning applied to illustrate the theory in teacher collaboration.

Individual strengths and skills of the mainstream teacher and the English as a second language teacher

⬇

Co-construct new knowledge and skills teaching English language learners

⬇

Enhanced teaching and learning environment
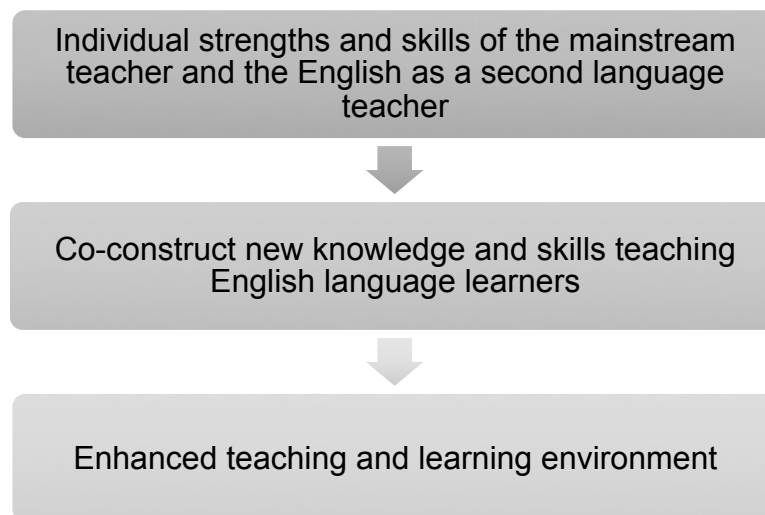
Figure 3. New knowledge and skills lead to an enhanced teaching and learning environment. Co-construction of new knowledge and skills gained through teacher collaboration (Musanti & Pence, 2010).

The findings of this study demonstrate that a co–teaching relationship incorporates the skills of both the mainstream content area teacher and the English as a second language teacher. Combining the expertise of both teachers (von Bertalanffy, 1972) created a dynamic interaction that encouraged teachers to reflect on their practice and their skills. The co-teaching experience provided the mainstream content area teacher and the English as a second language teacher the opportunity to transform and grow in their professional competencies.

Three teams of teachers, each comprised of an English as a second language teacher and a general education classroom teacher, were interviewed individually and later together in a focus group about their experiences co-teaching English language arts to English language learners in the general education classroom. Teachers discussed their roles and responsibilities, models of co-teaching, collaboration, and planning. The teachers discussed the benefits of co-teaching as well as their concerns.

The literature substantiates what the teachers stated regarding how they understood their roles and responsibilities to the students in the classroom and the importance of teachers collaborating and planning together. Each teacher had specific strengths and skills. These include language acquisition skills, analyzing data, and content knowledge. An enhanced learning environment results from the teachers combining their areas of expertise. Individual teacher's lessons complement each other. Teachers learned from each other, and they have grown professionally as a result of this experience.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

History of ESL Instruction

Historically, students who are different have been excluded from regular classroom instruction for the entire school day or for part of the school day (English, 2009). The same is true of ESL students. English language learners in an English as a second language program (ESL) model are assigned to mainstream classroom for the majority of the instructional day (English, 2009). In elementary schools, a common practice for teaching English language learners is to have these students leave their classrooms for thirty minutes for 'pull out' supplemental services in sheltered English as a second language instruction (Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011). For the remainder of the day, English language learners remain in the general education classroom in a 'sink or swim' instructional environment usually with teachers who feel they are not well prepared to teach them (Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011).

At the secondary level, English language learners may have a different experience. Typically, all English language learners at the secondary level are assigned to the same English as a second language classroom, with one teacher trying to meet the needs of students with various levels of English proficiency (Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011). The primary focus of ESL programs is to assist English language learners in acquiring skills in English (Bahamonde & Friend, 1999). They do not focus on the academic areas, therefore compromising the student's curriculum (Bahamonde & Friend, 1999). The role of the English as a second language teacher is unclear to content area teachers at the secondary level, as is how these teachers get their point across to the students (Brooks, Adams, & Morita-Mullaney, 2010).

Context: Forest Ridge School ESL Instruction

The Forest Ridge School is a large, urban K-8 school with 910 students. In 2001, 11.7% of the students at the Forest Ridge School were considered limited English proficient students and are also referred to as English language learners or ELLs. Currently, the ELL population has grown to 31.4% (State Department of Elementary & Secondary Education, 2014). There are 4 classes at each grade level with approximately 25 students in each class. Roughly 108 (or 22%) of the students are English language learners at the K-3 level.

The State Department of Elementary and Secondary Education recognized that limited English proficient students may need additional support from an English as a second language teacher. The suggested support may range from 30 minutes per day to as much as 2.5 hours per day (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2009). Presently, 5 English as a second language teachers serve the entire population of approximately 278 English language learners who are dispersed across all classrooms. For the English as second language teachers, collaborating with so many different classroom teachers and content area teachers, and managing all the needs of the English language learners can be difficult and creates anxiety for all the constituents.

At the Forest Ridge School, ESL students receive instruction in their regular classrooms. The general education classroom teacher in grades kindergarten through grade five delivers direct instruction on specific reading skills to the students each day. These skills include phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The classroom teacher organizes literacy centers for the students to reinforce and apply the skills taught during direct instruction. The literacy centers include writing centers, vocabulary centers, phonics/listening center, and partner reading for fluency. There are also centers to target specific needs of

individual students with learning disabilites or students whose first language is not English. ESL students receive specific support from the ESL teacher who can develop "sheltered" and content area curricula for these students (Harklau, 1994). The ESL teacher can provide pedagogical advice to the general classroom teacher on second language acquistion through collaborative lesson planning. This model is often called a 'push-in model' of instruction (English, 2009).

Needs of ESL Students

McIntyre et al. (2010) emphasized that language minority students need intense supplemental teaching. This shapes and alters how best practices for all students are perceived differently for English language learners. Protheroe (2011) noted that English language learners may benefit from strategies that are effective for native English speaking students, but these strategies tend to be less impactful for English language learners. There is a need for additional instructional strategies that specifically support English language learners (Protheroe, 2011). These strategies include assessing students' backgrounds, challenging conversations, activities that students can complete independently, scaffolded instruction, visual and graphic organizers, feedback, learning stations, and a variety of reading activities.

Additionally, English language learners need opportunities to talk with their classmates. Students are powerful resources to help one another. Cooperative learning activities and think-pair-share tactics promote oral communications. Intense vocabulary development is also essential for English language learners. Skilled readers can still comprehend text with a few unknown words, but disruption of comprehension occurs if the number of unknown words is too high (Jalongo & Sabolak, 2011). Videos, pictures, visual displays, and word walls help develop vocabulary (Harklau, 1994).

Instruction must include rigorous curriculum, high level thinking, critical thinking, problem solving, and excellent literature (McIntyre et al., 2010). Incorporating students' background knowledge whenever possible into classroom lessons provides instruction that meets the English language learners' individual needs (Hansen-Thomas, 2008). The use of a student's native language helps, not hurts, the English language learner (Protheroe, 2011). Students need small group instruction, heavy monitoring of individual progress, direct and explicit teaching of skills, and high levels of support, which includes instruction by English as a second language teachers (McIntyre et al., 2010).

The learning environment for English language learners requires teachers who can ask good questions and understands content, but also teachers who have been trained to listen to and talk to students differently (Pogrow, 2009). Questions and conversations need to be developed by teachers so that students verbalize and reflect on key ideas and demonstrate a general sense of understanding (Pogrow, 2009). Fast paced, low level questions limit opportunities for students to talk, formulate their thoughts and express their ideas about issues that require higher order thinking skills (Zhang & Dougherty-Stahl, 2011). Strategies used in classrooms for English language learners are methods based on how students learn (& Hughes, 2009). Sheltered instruction combines what experienced teachers know as good teaching practices instructional practices designed to meet the linguistic and educational needs of second language learners (Hansen-Thomas, 2008). of sheltered instruction also include:

- use of cooperative learning activities with appropriately heterogeneous groups of students
- a focus on academic language and content vocabulary
- use of an English language learners first language when necessary

- use of hands on activities

- authentic demonstrations and modeling

Effective instruction in English language arts demands a combination of experiences in reading, speaking, and writing (Jalongo & Sabolak, 2011) where students are able to participate in small, intellectually-engaging peer led group discussions, and are provided an opportunity for meaningful language development (Zhang & Dougherty-Stahl, 2011). Sheltered instruction uses this communicative approach to teach language as well as content (Hansen-Thomas, 2008). In the traditional classroom setting, general education teachers are prepared to teach instruction in all content areas including reading (Hansen-Thomas, 2008). Pairing an ESL teacher who is trained in language aquistion skills with the general classroom teacher can help ensure that students are supported in language instruction and grade-level-appropriate content (Hansen-Thomas, 2008).

Co-Teaching

Traditionally, co-teaching has been defined as the collaboration between a mainstream classroom teacher and a special education provider. It has recently been expanded to include interventionists such as remedial math teachers, reading specialists, gifted or talented teachers, and it also includes English as a second language teachers (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2008). Co-teaching is based on co-teachers' active participation and on-going classroom involvement (Walther-Thomas, 1997). There are several methods to deliver co-teaching instruction: one teach-one assist, station teaching, parallel teaching, alternative teaching, and team teaching (Hepner & Newman, 2010).

The methods implemented depend on the various activities conducted by the co-teachers. One teach-one assist is a common model; usually the content specialist teaches and the

interventionist assists. In station teaching, the co-teachers develop three activities to support the learning goal. The co-teachers lead two of the activities and the third activity is completed individually by the student or with a partner. Parallel teaching reduces teacher-student ratio by having both teachers teach the same lesson to half the class. Alternative teaching is effective in meeting the needs of specific groups of students. The co-teachers split the class and one co-teacher can teach a special lesson to a specific group of students. In team teaching, both teachers teach the lesson together. This method of co-teaching takes a great deal of planning (Hepner & Newman, 2010).

Whatever method is used, co-teaching partners share responsibility for direct instruction, curriculum planning, development and modifications, guided practice, re-teaching, enrichment activities, students' evaluations, as well as family communications (Walther-Thomas, 1997). Co-teaching is not an instructional strategy and it is not a technique. It is a method of instruction where teachers work collaboratively to deliver quality instruction (Murawski & Hughes, 2009).

Most collaboration between a mainstream classroom teacher and a specialist or interventionist occurs outside the general education classroom when the classroom teacher seeks out the professional expertise of a specialist as individual student problems arise (Walther-Thomas, 1997). Teachers meet with a specific colleague to discuss their concerns about a student (Walther-Thomas, 1997). Suggestions, ideas, and intervention plans may be developed by the specialist to be carried out by the mainstream classroom teacher without the interventionist spending significant time in the classroom of the teacher for whom the intervention plan and strategies was developed (Walther-Thomas, 1997). Teachers receive many good ideas in this process, but have limited assistance carrying out the strategies, except in the

case of co-teaching, because a co-teaching model is based on the co-teacher's active, on-going classroom involvement (Walther-Thomas, 1997).

Harklau (1994) stated there are several differences between mainstream inclusion classes with English language learners and sheltered English classrooms just for English language learners. First, in a sheltered English classroom, there is a great deal of authentic oral communication and written work required to deliver the specific subject matter. The structures of a mainstream classroom provide fewer opportunities for extended interaction between students. Plus, in the mainstream classroom, there is no feedback on the target language. Although mainstream classrooms offer many opportunities for English languge learners to interact with fluent English speakers, newcomers to the U.S. are reluctant to take advantage of such opportunities (Harklau, 1994). The right environment and support provided to English language learners helps these students thrive in our schools (Verdugo, 2007).

Best Education for ESL Students: Inclusion versus Pullout

Researchers have not reached a consensus as to what works best when teaching language acquistion to English language learners (Verdugo, 2007). Teaching language skills creates debate in American schools, centering on such issues as immersion, educating students in their native language, or educating them through a bilingual framework (Verdugo, 2007). There is a belief that the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of English languge learners put them at a disadvantage in typical American classrooms (Wassell et al., 2010). Others feel that immigrant children should be mainstreamed as quickly as possible so that the students immerse themselves in the social and academic life of the school and therefore are more motivated to learn English (Harklau, 1994). These same supporters of mainstreaming believe it is important that English language learners not be in separate classrooms because they will not develop a sense of

belonging in the school (Varela, 2010). There is also a belief that children will learn English faster if they are in general education classes with native English speaking classmates as role models (Harklau, 1994).

Yet, mainstreaming English language learners into general education classrooms does not, according to Varela (2010), align with the literature's findings. Many students are placed in mainstream classrooms long before they are ready to compete with native speakers (Harklau, 1994). It may take a language minority student up to seven years to develop the language proficiency level to compete with native language speakers and five to seven years for English language learners to pick up the academic language needed to be successful in grade-level classes (Harklau, 1994; Varela, 2010).

English language learners bring many cultural assets to an inclusive mainstream classroom. Administrators and teachers have expressed concerns that focusing on the needs of all students, while managing the inclusion of English language learners, may not allow the support needed for all students to be successful (Theoharis & O'Toole, 2011). There is a great deal mainstream teachers with English language learner students to understand about the constantly changing English language learner student population and their various academic backgrounds and levels of proficiency (Harklau, 1994). Many students from diverse cultural backgrounds enter school with a wide range of literacy abilities, some with less experience seeing print, which can lead to deficits in phonological awareness and letter recognition (Patel, 2010).

Not all ESL students have the same needs. Teachers may have students who were born in the United States but are growing up in homes where English is not spoken (Flynn & Hill, 2005). Children of migrant workers who frequently move may also be ESL students (Flynn &

Hill, 2005). These students must be provided multiple opportunities for language input and output in both speaking and writing (Harklau, 1994). The varying needs of ESL students make it important for teachers to be responsive and knowledgable of a variety of ways to help ESL students.

Teachers of English language learners must think about language carefully and adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of English language learners (Flynn & Hill, 2005), while also meeting the needs of all students in the mainstream classroom.   Students must see relevance in what they are learning; that it is important, interesting, and authentic (Pogrow, 2009). Therefore, teachers should present content objectives in ways that represent how the students perceive the world (Pogrow, 2009). Whatever methodology is used, one necessary factor according to Delpit (2009) is that students be asked to think critically about what they are learning, which can be different for English language learners in the mainstream.

Good ESL teaching uses a variety of techniques to facilitate student learning (Hansen-Thomas, 2008). Generally best practices include methods like cooperative learning, hands on activities, discourse among students to discuss cause and effect, and to predict outcomes (Hansen-Thomas, 2008). When students are actively involved and engaged, it is likely that good teaching is happening (Haberman, 2010). Good teaching happens in environments where student can build upon experieces and a high level of dialogue (Haberman, 2010). The social aspects and the content areas of learning that take place cannot be separated (Lave, 1991).

ESL teachers must see themselves as professionals who need to make the connections between theory, practice, and social issues (Pennycook, 1989). It is difficult for an individual teacher with a classroom of diverse learners to meet their needs by themself (Murawski & Hughes, 2009). Teachers must work together to share ideas and to exercise their power to

improve the conditions where students learn and teachers teach (Pennycook, 1989). In an inclusive ESL class, ESL teachers learn how to vary content presentation, individualize instruction, scaffold learning experiences, and monitor students' understanding (Graziano & Navarett, 2012). In a school where there is a high English language learner population, collaboration between classroom and English as a second language teachers is crucial, but can be difficult.

Even though there are benefits to collaboration, it has its challenges. For example, geographical placement of classrooms and scheduling are important for English as a second languge teachers if they are to help classroom teachers support English langugage learners. Many times, rather than being part of an educational instructional team, English as second language teachers are isolated or considered peripheral staff, and they are often exluded from decisions made about their students (Brooks, Adams, & Morita-Mullaney, 2010). This can happen in large buildings where classrooms are far apart or where English as second language teachers do not share common planning or team time (Brooks et al., 2010).

Without regular discussion among classroom teachers and the English as a second languge teachers, decisions about English language learners are made without the understanding a specialist can provide as to how the decision will impact the student (Brooks et al., 2010). Classroom teachers are well trained in their content area. English as second language teachers have expertise in second language acquisition. Without collaboration, it is uncertain how each teacher can better support English language learners (Brooks et al., 2010).

As professional learning communities, schools must work to develop and increase effectiveness (Sigurdardottir, 2010). Collaborative practices are central to professional development. Meaningful collaborative professional activities such as curriculum development,

lesson planning, and sharing of creative instructional practices increases teachers' professional growth. Collaboration increases opportunities for teachers to discuss and reflect on their work (Musanti & Pence, 2010). By sharing and revisiting their beliefs and practices, teachers can co-construct their knowledge on teaching and learning (Musanti & Pence, 2010). There are many benefits to team teaching, but it is a sophisticated and complex process where two teachers have to balance their partnership professionally (Jang, Nguyen, & Yang, 2010).

A Need for Research on Co-Teaching

Given the increasing number of ELL students in the United States population, there is a need to better understand how to educate these students. Co-teaching is a strong model because it creates collaboration and interaction between teachers who offer different areas of expertise while sharing responsbilites of school and students' goals (Friend & Cook, 1995).

Co-teaching provides many benefits for students (Friend, Cook, Hurley-Chamberlain, & Shamberger, 2010). In a co-teaching situation, specialists are provided with critical information about classroom routines, expectations, and current student performance levels, allowing specialists to provide more appropriate instructional practices for specific students (Walther-Thomas, 1997). The exchange of ideas between co-teachers promotes the use of innovative strategies that benefit all students in the classroom (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2008). A co-taught classroom increases student participation due to a lower student-teacher ratio and students learn with peers with a range of academic skills and English language fluency in the least restrictive environment (Friend et al., 2010; Honigsfeld & Dove, 2008).

Co-teaching is helpful for teachers because by reducing the student-teacher ratio, it allows for differentiated instruction (Friend et al., 2010). Effective co-teaching allows teachers to discuss and reflect on common or divergent beliefs on curriculum, instruction, assessment, and

classroom routines (Hepner & Newman, 2010). It is a response to the increasing difficulty one teacher may have keeping up with the knowledge and skills needed to meet the instructional needs of a diverse student population (Friend et al., 2010).

Studies on Co-Teaching

Pardy (2004) conducted a qualitative study of team teaching in an international school in Germany. The school catered to children from many cultural and language backgrounds. This case study was conducted in grades 1 through 4. Each grade had two classes, making eight teacher teams. Students were offered fixed periods where they received instruction solely by a German speaking teacher who did not necessarily use the Primary Years Programme which is a structured inquiry based curriculum (Pardy, 2004). Students were offered ten flexible periods in the regular classroom where the German speaking teacher and the classroom teacher taught simultaneously and where the adopted curriculum framework was followed (Pardy, 2004). Data was collected through interviews, observations, and journals. The purpose of the study was to determine how teachers, parents, and students in an international school perceived the practice of simultaneous team-teaching in conjunction with a dual language program. The study found that children from all language groups preferred small group instruction and for that one teacher to speak one language (Pardy, 2004). Though the children were quite responsive and cooperative in their use of language with the other children in the class, the study also found that the teachers involved wanted to see team-teaching continue but they wanted more time for planning with all teachers who had contact with their students (Pardy, 2004).

Portocarrero and Bergin (1997) conducted a mixed-methods study exploring the development of literacy skills of both English as a second language and native English speaking students. In their study, classroom teachers and ESL teachers collaborated by providing readers'

and writers' workshops. The workshops were originally offered to first and second grade

students at the Viers Mill Elementary School in Silver Spring, Maryland, but were extended to

students from grade one to grade five (Portocarrero & Bergin, 1997). Data collection included

teacher observation, anecdotal records, and informal reading assessments to measure students'

progress (Portocarrero & Bergin, 1997). The purpose of the study was to explore the idea of

collaboration combined with the school's desire to implement a whole language

reading/language arts program using the format of readers'/writers' workshop to raise the low

test scores of English language learners as well as to increase the comfort level of classroom

teachers in working with these students (Portocarrero & Bergin, 1997).

Portocarrero and Bergin (1997) found that by using this model, the English language

learners were no longer isolated in a pullout program and were able to work under the same

expectations as their English speaking classmates, but at their own pace, increasing their self-

esteem. The uninterrupted time enabled students to develop and improve their reading and

writing skills and students benefited from receiving instructional support from two teachers in

the classroom (Portocarrero & Bergin, 1997). A co-teaching model allowed these English

language learners to be successful in the mainstream by facilitating academic and social

language (Portocarrero & Bergin, 1997). However, this model can be difficult to carry out

because of student assignments. Only eight or fewer English language learners can be assigned

to a classroom participating in a co-teaching model according to this study (Portocarrero &

Bergin, 1997).

Peercy and Martin-Beltran (2011) conducted three case studies examining collaborative

relationships. Three pairs of teachers who represented different approaches to collaborative

planning and teaching were identified and asked to participate in interviews and observations of

their co-planning, teaching, and debriefing on their lessons. The purpose of the study was to

understand how ESL teachers experienced inclusion in mainstream classrooms through their

collaboration with mainstream colleagues. The study found that including English language

learners in mainstream classrooms required close collaboration and coordination between the

two teachers to develop language as well as growth in content knowledge (Peercy & Martin-

Beltran, 2011). Co-teaching required a desire on the part of both teachers to spend time

planning, working together, and constantly improving collaboration (Peercy & Martin-Beltran,

2011). According to the authors, it is important to look more closely at the ways teachers

envision their teaching practices, their common goals, their counterpart's expertise, and

opportunities for the ESL teacher to plan with mainstream teachers to understand what

fundamentally supports or hinders such collaboration. While their study explored collaboration,

all three pairs (six teachers in all) used different co-teaching approaches. The first pair co-taught

voluntarily, working collaboratively at their own initiative. The second pair collaborated

because their school participated in a 'plug-in' ('push-in') pilot project. The third pair

represented a pullout ESL model that generally did not engage in co-planning or co-teaching.

Perry and Stewart (2005) conducted a study of interdisciplinary team teaching in Japan,

with fourteen practicing team teachers over a two-year period at an English-medium liberal arts

college in Japan. Data collected included two sets of videotaped interviews conducted in 2001

and 2002. In the first round of interviews, teaching partners were interviewed in pairs. For the

second round of interviews, teaching partners were interviewed individually (Perry & Stewart,

2005). The purpose of the study was to investigate how interdisciplinary contact between

language and content specialists might be a model for teacher development (Perry & Stewart,

2005). The study found several elements of effective partnerships in co-teaching. These

elements included sharing a common pedagogical philosophy, understanding roles and responsibilities, a commitment to the same outcomes, and the willingness to develop and reflect on one's practice (Perry & Stewart, 2005). The study included a high number of interviewees, yet each interview lasted only 20 minutes. The researchers acknowledged the difficulty the interviewees had answering the last question, which was, "Do you think content-based team teaching is effective?" (Perry & Stewart, 2005).

In summary, the three qualitative case studies and the one mixed-methods study reviewed all included team teaching participants. Teacher interviews were conducted in each of the studies, while the mixed-methods study included informal reading assessments. Parents, teachers, and students were interviewed in one study (Pardy, 2004). Different approaches to co-teaching were applied, including 'plug-in' ('push-in') or 'pullout' models (Peercy & Martin-Beltran, 2011). Portocarrero and Bergin's (1997) suggested that eight or fewer English language learner should be included in a co-taught mainstream classroom.

These studies demonstrated how co-teaching can benefit students. The approach makes sure that students do not feel isolated and are able to work under the same expectations as their English speaking speaking classmates which increases their self-esteem (Portocarrero & Bergin, 1997). The uninterrupted time improved students' reading and writing skills when students received instructional support from two teachers (Portocarrero & Bergin, 1997). Pardy (2004) found that students preferred small group instruction.

The findings indicated several effective elements of co-teaching. Co-teaching requires a desire for team teachers to spend time planning, working together, and collaborating (Peercy & Martin-Beltran, 2011; Pardy, 2004). Co-teachers must share common philosphical beliefs,

goals, and they need to be committed to the same outcomes (Perry & Stewart, 2005; Portocarrero & Bergin, 1997).

Based on this review of the literature, this study explored how English as second language teachers perceived a co-teaching model of instruction for teaching English language learners in a large urban school with a high percentage of English language learners.

Advocacy Argument

The presence of the rising number of English language learners in large urban schools poses an important diversity challenge (Verdugo, 2007). One of the major concerns is the low level of achievement among these students (McIntyre, Chen, Munoz, & Beldon, 2010). Different models of instructions are are available to English lanaguage learners. English language learners can be in self-contained sheltered classroom for English language learners or inclusive mainstream classrooms with native English speakers.

Teachers must be given the tools to incorporate effective and essentials strategies and techniques so that English language learners are not just sitting alongside native speakers, but are exposed to 'sheltered' or content area curriculum for English language learners (Harklau, 1994). 'Sheltering' refers to the process of making content comprehensible to English language learners while they develop English proficiency (Varella, 2010). Teachers need professional development on ELL instruction and sheltering for these practices to be effective.

According to Harklau (1994), there are several integrated language and content area programs available to school districts in the United States. These programs signify a call for change in the isolation of English as a second language teachers and classroom teachers (Harklau, 1994). The development of such programs necessitates a close collaborative

relationship between the English as a second language teachers and the classroom teachers so they can share their expertise in their respective fields (Harklau, 1994).

The needs of English language learners cannot be met by licensed English as a second language teachers alone. Classroom teachers and English as a second language teachers must collaborate and share instructional leadership (Brooks et al., 2010). ESL teachers must work collaboratively to develop a curriculum that is aligned with the regular curriculum (Harklau, 1994). English as a second language teachers and content area teachers need time to work toward integrating their respective curricula and their roles as teachers and supporters of English language learners (Harklau, 1994). Collaborative teaching requires teachers to develop a strong sense of community and a collective responsibility for teaching all students (Servage, 2008).

Effective co-teachers spend time discussing their common, as well as differing, beliefs concerning curriculum, instruction, and assessment while they reflect on their practice, refine their skills, and improve their practice (Hepner & Newman, 2010). Team teaching between English as a second language teachers and grade level classroom teachers can work well, but both teachers need to reflect on the individual strengths and qualities they bring to the co-teaching situation, as well any professional or personal issues that may cause a problem in the co-teaching relationship. When co-teachers believe they provide a valuable contribution to the co-teaching relationship and learning situation, they implement strategies to avoid potential obstacles (Hepner & Newman, 2010).

Research on English as a Second Language (ESL) programs in elementary schools, according to English (2009), currently lacks an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the responsibility of educating English language learners. Lesson planning, instructional practices, and progress monitoring of students by both the classroom teacher and

the English as a second languge teacher should be focused on meeting the needs of individual English language learners. The instruction of English language learners, through a co-teaching model, requires the understanding and flexibility of all partipants involved in the education of English language learners in order to move forward (English, 2009).

A co-teaching model of instruction during the literacy block in a mainstream classroom allows both teachers to demonstrate and apply particular strategies and skills during a co-taught lesson. Collaboration and discussion of ideas provides teachers the courage and support to take risks when using more innovative strategies (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2008). By taking risks and applying new strategies, both teachers enhance their pedagogical skills. Mutant and Pence (2010) believed that teacher growth does not happen in isolation, but through collaboration in professional learning communities. Shared strategies and skills can also be applied by the mainstream classroom teacher across all content areas when the English as a second language teacher is not in the classroom (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2008).

Public schools in the United States are not only the transmittors of academic knowledge but also function as a means of socialization (Harklau, 1994). The socialization function of schooling has been evident for years in the assimilation of new immigrants into schools and local communities, as well as into the national society (Harklau, 1994). According to Murawski and Hughes (2009), students in co-taught classrooms have been found to improve in academics, social skills, and self-esteem.

The availabilty of teachers is a critical issue for English language learners (Wassell et al., 2010). A major benefit of co-teaching is smaller student-teacher ratios (Murowski & Hughes, 2009). English language learners are aware of whether teachers make themselves available to them not only during class, but before school, after school, and during lunch (Wassell et al.,

2010). Teacher availability promotes student learning through the additional use of English conversation and a greater sense of comfort, support, and acceptance (Wassell et al., 2010). Students feel more comfortable taking risks in class when this is the case. By having both teachers responsible for instruction, discipline, and support, it prevents co-teachers from unintentionally labeling specific students and helps the co-teachers to think about all of the students as 'their students' (Walther-Thomas, 1997).

Co-teaching can promote peer relationships among students from various cultural and ethnic backgrounds. When students do not speak in class or make friends with native English speakers, teachers believe it is sometimes due to their distinct cultural background (Kilman, 2009). Kilman (2009) believed instead it could be because of the way we instruct English languge learners. By pulling students out of class for separate instruction (pull-out model), students lose contact time and opportunities to make friends (Kilman, 2009).

In a co-taught classroom, English language learners learn content alongside fluent English speaking students. In this heterogeneous environment, English language learners are provided the opportunity to work with students who have various English language fluency skills and various academic capabilities (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2008). This type of environment differs from an English as a second language pull out program where students leave the classroom and work alongside other struggling readers and writers.

Many times, students are pulled from exploratory classes in order to accommodate scheduling of services. These are important social times for young children. If students' social and emotional needs are not met in the classroom, it will be difficult for them to concentrate on the demanding content in school (Curran, 2003). Students produce language when working

together, providing assistance, sharing information, and checking for comprehension (Curran, 2003).

By creating the right classroom environment for English language learners, one where students feel safe and secure and students' affective filter (sense of fear and anxiety) is lowered, language acquisition rises (Curran, 2003). These conditions can be uniquely met in co-taught classrooms with the additional support from English as a second languge teachers. More individual support to students leads to on-task behavior by students and more effectively completed assignments and classwork (Jang, Nguyen, & Yang, 2010).

The co-teaching relationship provides teachers with an opportunity to share their professional expertise. General education classroom teachers are considered masters of content, while English as second language teachers or special education teachers are viewed as masters of access (Sileo, 2011). In a co-teaching relationship, English as a second language teachers increase their knowledge about specific content. Classroom teachers learn more about effective instructional approaches in English language arts for English language learners and how English as a second language (ESL) instruction is organized (Harklau, 1994). Teachers reported professional satisfaction and personal growth from participation in collaborative experiences (Hepner & Newman, 2010).

Conclusion

According to Brooks et al. (2010), principals are the primary gate keepers for educational change. When central office, school-level administrators, and teachers work together like a web of instructional leadership, student achievement increases (Brooks et al., 2010). According to Servage (2008), deep and positive change comes from shared professional learning.

Decisions concerning English as a second language programs are especially challenging in the current era as more and more English language learners enter our schools (Dahlman, 2009). Dahlman (2009) considered a high ELL population to be when the ELL population is between 15% and 25% of the overall student population. The Forest Ridge School's ELL population is 31.4%. Because most urban settings do not have the resources to adequately examine the needs of the teachers and students in ELL programs, programs often remain the same for years (Dahlman, 2009). Schools doing well with their English language learners are typically in school districts that have developed strategies to meet the specific needs of these students (Pascopella, 2011)(Pascopella, 2011).

Schools that encourage collaboration among teachers will have more research based strategies in their classrooms. Teachers at first may have different areas of expertise but when they come together to determine what will be taught, how it will be taught and who will teach it, lessons will proactively created that will address the various needs of the English language learnes in the classroom (Murowski & Hughes, 2009).

Critical reflection is essential for educational transformation to take place and this can happen only if teachers and administrators within a school are able to imagine other possibiities. Mezirow's theory of transformative learning emphasizes the importance of reason and rationality (Servage, 2008). Through a professional learning environment where strong reasoning and democratic participation is exercised, personal growth and learning will take place which will lead to social transformation (Servage, 2008). Co-teachers can come together and combine their professional skills and values. Through combining these individual strengths, a positive academic and social climate will be created for students (Sileo, 2011).

One common concern about co-teaching is the cost to fund two teachers in every classroom. Administrators must creatively schedule co-teaching assignments. Co-teachers must be assigned students with the highest level of need. Students who may not need as much in-class support may be assigned to other classes (Murawski & Hughes, 2009).

In today's world of high stakes testing and accountabililty, educators must do all they can for all students to succeed (Paz, 2008). Cultural acceptance and professional training must reach teachers, parents, and administrators in order to move forward, provide a positive environment, and provide the right instructional practices for English language learners (Paz, 2008). The literature described co-teaching as a model of instruction for English as second language teachers that enhances the teaching and learning environment in a school with a high population of English language learners (English, 2009; Honigsfeld & Dove, 2008). This study examined the experiences of English as a second language co-teachers to better understand their experiences.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This study examined the experiences of English as second language teachers and general education teachers who co-teach English language arts in a mainstream classroom. This case study explored themes and essential factors (Creswell, 2012 of the lived experiences of these individuals teaching in a collaborative co-teaching model. The research question that guided this study was: What is the experience of ESL teachers co-teaching ELL students in an English language arts general K-8 educational setting?

The study explored the experiences of ESL teachers and general education teachers by gathering teachers' stories. A case study methodology allowed for an examination of the context in which these experiences took place (Creswell, 2013). This approach is aligned with the study's interpretive/constructivist research paradigm. A characteristic of constructivism is the recognition of the importance of interaction between the researcher and the object of research (Ponterotto, 2005). Ponterotto (2005) wrote that only through interaction and dialogue can deeper meaning be uncovered. The interpretive paradigm is concerned with understanding the world as it is through a level of subjective experience (Burrell & Morgan, 1992). This study is aligned with the paradigm of social constructivism. In social constructivism, individuals search for understanding of the world in which they live or work (Creswell, 2013). Accordingly, the goal of the research was to rely, as much as possible, on the participants' views of the situation (Creswell, 2013).

Research Design

Qualitative research is the appropriate approach for exploring if a co-teaching model of instruction of English as a second language enhances the teaching process of English language arts in an urban school. According to Creswell (2013), it is appropriate to conduct qualitative

research when a problem or issue needs to be explored to develop a detailed understanding of the issue. More specifically, in this study, the experiences of ESL teachers co-teaching with general education content area teachers were explored. By conducting research on the co-teaching model of instruction for English as second language teachers in a general classroom setting, insights into how this model enhances the teaching process in an urban school were gained.

The model of inquiry used was a case study. A case study was selected because it was important to understand the common or shared experiences of teachers who instruct English language learners in a collaborative co-teaching model in a particular school. The experiences of these teachers included both their subjective and objective experiences. It was important to understand these common experiences to enhance the practice or develop policies (Creswell, 2013) on co-teaching English language learners in a mainstream classroom.

Research Tradition

It was determined that the research question could best be answered using a case study approach. Stake (1978) and Yin (2003) extensively examined case study as a research strategy. As a research strategy, the case study is used to contribute to the knowledge of individuals, groups, organizations, social and other related phenomenon (Yin, 2003). A case study is preferred when a 'how' or 'why' question is posed and the study involves a contemporary phenomenon within some real life context (Yin, 2003).

This case study sought to understand the experiences of English as second language teachers co-teaching English language arts with general education teachers in a general education classroom. It was important to understand several individuals' common or shared experiences of co-teaching as well as to develop a more in-depth understanding of a case or a comparison of several cases (Creswell, 2013). This case study focused on a few key issues for a better

understanding of the complexity of the issue of co-teaching. According to Stake (1978), case studies may be the preferred method of research because they are epistemologically aligned with an individual's experience. The most effective means of adding to understanding is through the natural experience acquired in ordinary personal involvement (Stake, 1978). The study ended with conclusions on the overall meaning derived from the individuals' experiences with co-teaching. Yin (2003) and Stake's (1978) perspectives are aligned with the research paradigm of constructivism.

Participants

Aligned with case study best practices, all of the teachers who participated in this study taught at the same school. This was a school with a unique context and an ELL program. Therefore, as a case study, it allowed for particular attention to the context in which the phenomenon occurs (Yin, 2003). Both purposeful and criterion sampling (Creswell, 2013) were used to select participants for the study. Three English as a second language teachers and three general education teachers who had experienced co-teaching English language learners in a general education English language arts classroom were selected. It was important that individuals were able to articulate their lived experiences (Creswell, 2013). Neither age nor the number of years in education were factors in selecting the participants, but rather their professional experiences in education.

Individuals selected had various experiences as co-teachers or English as second language teachers. Participants selected had experience with various models used to serve English language learners. These models included a 'pull out' model (Kilman, 2009) where teachers remove the English language learners from the general education classroom for instruction in English. Another model was a self-contained classroom for English language

learners. Finally, an attempt was made to select English as second language teachers who also had co-teaching experience as a general education classroom teacher.

Recruitment and Access

Co-teachers participating in the co-teaching model at the Forest Ridge School were asked to be part of this study. Potential participants were contacted via e-mail (see Appendix A) or through general mail. Invitations to participate in the study were mailed to criterion-selected individuals. Permission to interview staff at the Forest Ridge School was requested from the Superintendent of Schools (see Appendix B).

The invitations stated the purpose of the study and why the individual was selected to participate in the study. The individuals were asked to contact the researcher by e-mail or telephone if they were interested in participating. Selected participants were asked to sign an informed consent form (see Appendix C). Any known risks, benefits, or uncertainties associated with participating in the study were explained. The interview process was explained to each participant. The individual participants in the study determined the locations where the interviews took place.

Data Collection

Data was collected from six individuals by conducting in-depth, semi-structured interviews containing open-ended questions. A Focus Group session was also conducted. In semi-structured interviews, the researcher has a specific topic to learn about (Creswell, 2013). The interviews had a specific focus: to learn if and how the co-teaching model of instruction for English as second language teachers with a general education teacher in a general classroom setting enhanced the teaching process in an urban school. A qualitative responsive interviewing style was employed. The researcher prepared questions that focused on the case study. An

interview protocol guide was designed and followed (Creswell, 2013). Each interview began with questions that provided opportunities for the interviewee to become more comfortable in the interview process (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The researcher was respectful of each participant's time and remained within the time specified for the interview.

The individual interviews (see Appendices D and E) established the context of each participant's experience. Participants were asked to tell as much as possible about their past teaching experiences. Participants were asked how they became involved in a co-teaching model. It was important to understand the training and the amount of experience the co-teachers had in various instructional models for teaching English language learners.

The second part of the interview allowed the participants to discuss the concrete details of their present experiences co-teaching English language arts in a general education classroom. The participants were asked what they actually did and their roles in the classroom. The researcher asked participants to reconstruct a day of co-teaching in the general education classroom and talk about their relationships with their co-teacher or students.

The Focus Group questions (see Appendix F) encouraged participants to reflect on student learning and the experiences of English language learners in a co-taught mainstream classroom. This interview addresses the educational, emotional, and social needs of the students. Participants reflected on their past teaching experiences, looked at their present situations, and expressed their understanding of co-teaching English language learners in a general education classroom.

Interviews took place at each participant's choice of location. Privacy was provided for the participant. Each interview took approximately 60 minutes. Participants gave permission for

the researcher to audio record each interview. Each participant signed informed consent forms. Prolonged engagement and persistent observation continued throughout the interview process.

Data Storage

A locked file cabinet in the researcher's home was designated for the sole purpose of storing information for this particular study. Masking the individual names of participants protected the anonymity of all interviewees. Pseudonyms were used. All participants were assigned a letter and a number. A digital recording device was used to record and to store the information that was kept in a secured location.

All audio-recorded information was stored in the locked file cabinet after each interview. All computer files were backed up onto a flash drive, password protected, and stored in the locked cabinet. A database of all information on computer files, flash drives, personal notes, and audio tapes were kept in the file locked cabinet and password protected. The information will be stored for seven years and then destroyed.

Data Analysis

Each interview was analyzed following word-for-word transcription by a transcription service after each set of interviews was completed. Building on the key words from the research questions, the researcher went through the data and highlighted significant statements, sentences, or quotes that helped to develop themes from these statements to better understand how the English as a second language teachers experienced co-teaching English language arts in a general mainstream classroom. Moustakas (1994) called this step horizontalization. After horizontalization, each interview was analyzed using in vivo coding. During in vivo coding, the researcher looked for specific words and phrases the participants used in their responses during the interviews. All codes were collapsed into broader themes. Following in vivo coding,

provisional coding took place (Saldana, 2012).   Provisional codes were formed using transformational learning (Mezirow, 1978) and general systems theory (Jun, Kim & Lee, 2011).

Once coding was complete, a composite description of the essence of the experience of all the participants was developed. The textural description of 'what' they experienced and the structural description of 'how' they experienced it were combined to convey the overall essence of the experience (Moustakas, 1994). A composite description was then written that presented the very nature of the experience (Creswell, 2013). The goal of the composite passages was to illustrate how a classroom with an English as a second language and general education collaborative teaching model enhanced the teaching process of English language arts, in accordance with research best practices (Polkinghorne, 1989).

Trustworthiness, Quality, and Verification

Lincoln and Guba's (1995) perspectives on validity using authenticity, credibility, and transferability were applied to the study. Triangulation was applied to individual interviews centering on different teaching experiences. The experiences varied from being a general education classroom elementary classroom teacher, a secondary middle context area teacher and being an English as a second language teacher.

Through the various experiences the participants had in education and as English as a second language teachers in a co-teaching model, the researcher used individual perspectives to locate corroborating evidence and identify themes in the data. Triangulating the information added validity to the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Trust was established between the participants and the researcher. There was reciprocity between the participants and the researcher, given their working relationship at the research site. Through member checking, findings were shared with participants. Any misinformation or any

misinterpretations were examined. The researcher shared her role in education and her experiences working with English as second language teachers, general education teachers, and co-teaching models with the participants.

Detailed descriptions of the participants and the location of the study were provided. The researcher listened carefully for interconnecting details, strong verbs, and quotes. Significant phrases or sentences that pertained to the experience were noted (Creswell, 2013). A strong understanding of the study evolved through the analysis of the experiences of the participants and what it meant to the individuals involved (Wolcott, 1994). Detailed experiences and ideas common to all the participants involved in the co-teaching model of instruction were clustered into themes. A digital recorder was used for recording and transcribing. Critical pauses and over emphasis of terms were noted (Creswell, 2013). All data was carefully coded with a great deal of detail.

Preliminary data was shared with the participants who then checked for accuracy and accountability. This member checking procedure allowed the researcher to check for any missing information or any area of uncertainty brought forth by participants concerning the study. This procedure was critical for credibility.

In the analysis process, the researcher looked for recurring behaviors or actions. To demonstrate credibility, the evidence was persuasive, based on structural corroboration and consensual validation (Eisner, 1991). The study combined and synthesized the many perspectives to develop an understanding of the co-teaching model of instruction and the collaboration of an English as a second language teacher and a general education teacher in the teaching learning process of English language arts in an urban classroom.

Protection of Human Subjects

Permission to conduct the study was granted by the Internal Review Board at Northeastern University prior to selecting individuals to participate in the interview process. Upon approval, the participants were contacted. All participants understood how he or she was selected to be a participant and the purpose of the study (Creswell, 2013).

The researcher took care to be respectful to all participants. The interview process was explained to each participant. The participants were asked to state when and where he or she wanted the interview to take place. Participants chose one interview on school grounds and one in a restaurant of their choice. The importance of privacy and anonymity were acknowledged. The number of English as second language teachers with experience co-teaching in a general education classroom with a general education teacher is low. Participants may have felt that they could easily be identified. The process of protecting the identities of the participants was explained to the individuals involved in the study.

Pseudonyms were created for the school and the individuals studied to protect the identity of the participants. Participants did not have to answer any questions they were reluctant to answer (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The researcher avoided disclosing information that would harm any of the participants by using pseudonyms and composite descriptions were the focus of the study (Creswell, 2013).

Participants' names are not associated with the research findings in any way, and only the researcher knew the identity of participants (Creswell, 2013). All data was kept on a personal computer. Notebooks and interview transcripts were kept in a locked filing cabinet. Upon the willing acceptance of each participant to be part of a study, a mutually agreed upon time and place for the interview was arranged.

Before the initial interview process began, each participant was asked to sign a written informed consent form. Participants were not pressured to sign the form (Creswell, 2012). The form guarantees the participants certain rights, signing the form signified agreement to be involved in the study and acknowledged the protection of their rights (Creswell, 2012). The form included the purpose of the study, a phrase that participants have the ability at any time to opt out of the study, as well as their right to have their data deleted from the dissertation altogether (Butin, 2010). The written consent form also included contact information for the researcher in the event that an individual participant wanted to contact the researcher with a question or a concern (Butin, 2010).

Chapter 4: Findings

In recent years, schools in large urban areas in the United States have experienced a wave of immigrant children from many parts of the world. These children come to school with various levels of educational attainment and from different economic backgrounds. Educators in urban schools must design programs that address the academic needs of English language learners (Bahamonde & Friend, 1999). The purpose of this study was to understand how co-teaching as a model of instruction can enhance the teaching and learning process for English language learners. One-on-one interviews were conducted with individual members of three teams of co-teachers. Each team included a classroom mainstream teacher and an English as a second language teacher. Instructional levels ranged from second grade to middle school. All six teachers participated in a focus group discussion on co-teaching English language learners in a mainstream classroom. The responses to the interview questions and from the focus group provided the qualitative data results for this study.

The overarching question that guided this study was: In an urban setting, how does a classroom with an English as a second language and general education collaborative teaching model enhance the teaching process of English language arts? Three secondary questions contributed to a better understanding of the practice of co-teaching for English as a second language teacher:

1. What is the English as a second language teacher's past teaching experience and how did she become involved in a co-teaching model?

2. What is the role and experiences of the English as second language teacher co-teaching English language arts in a mainstream general education classroom?

3. What are the perceptions of the English as a second language teacher and the general

    education classroom teacher on student learning and the experiences of English

    language learners in a co-taught mainstream classroom?

ESL Program at the Forest Ridge School Participants

The study was conducted in a large urban school with approximately 910 students. For

the purpose of this study, the school is referred to as the Forest Ridge School. At the time of the

study, the English languge learner population had grown to 31.4% (State Department of

Elementary & Secondary Education, 2014). There are four classes at each grade level with

approximately 25 students in each class. The district has one early learning center, five large K-

8 schools, and one high school. There is a school choice program where parents can choose any

school in the district for their child to attend.

The study included three mainstream classroom teachers. Two of the three teachers were

elementary teachers who taught English language learners. The third teacher was a middle

school English language arts teacher. The three English as a second language teachers worked

with the general education teachers in a co-teaching model, servicing English as a second

language learners in the mainstream classroom during English language arts. The pseudonyms

used for the teachers are Kay, Michelle, and Lee for the general education teachers and Margaret,

Chloe, and Noelle for the English as a second language teachers. All of the participants were

female and they had diverse educational backgrounds.

General education teachers' backgrounds.

Kay taught third grade and had been at Forest Ridge for three years at the time of the

interview. In 1999, Kay received a Bachelor's Degree in Animal Science from the University of

Vermont. She began working at the Franklin Park Zoo in Boston after graduating from college.

Kay wanted to travel, do service work, and was also interested in learning about another culture and another language. In 2003, Kay joined the Peace Corps. She was assigned to Nicaragua where she learned how to speak Spanish. After leaving the Peace Corps, Kay went to Spain and took a TESL (teaching English as a foreign language) course. After taking the course, she taught a three week course in English to college students. Kay then went to Japan and taught English at the high school level for two years. Kay's world experiences and teaching English in another country prompted her to become an English as a second language teacher. She moved to Boston and received her Masters Degree in teaching English as a second language through the Boston Teachers' residency Program in ESL Mentoring. Kay believed that her experiences living and working in other countries was beneficial to her as an English as a second language teacher. Living and working in Nicaragua and Japan provided Kay the opportunity to understand what it is like to be a second language learner. Accordingly, Kay recognized the needs of the English language learners in her class and their families.

Michelle's undergraduate degree was a Bachelors of Science in Journalism. She volunteered in her son's school and became interested in teaching children. Because of this, Michelle pursued and completed a Masters in Education. She was certified in elementry eduation and English as a second language. Before being hired as a permanent teacher, she was a paraprofessional and a substitute teacher. Through these experiences, she observed various teaching and classroom management styles. For instance, Micelle described seeing Mrs. C, a second grade teacher, who wrote detailed lesson plans in a weekly plan book which she followed each day in a very timely, structured manner. The school day always ran smoothly with very few disruptions. The teacher and students knew exactly what they would be doing and accomplishing throughout the day. Michelle was also influenced by Ms. Julie, who was a very

nurturing teacher. Michelle was Ms. Julie's student teacher and later became a paraprofessional in Ms. Julie's classroom. Students in Ms. Julie's class felt they could be themselves and were not afraid to take risks. Michelle believed students felt very responsible for their work. The students' comfort and high confidence levels created a collaborative environment where students learned from each other. Michelle believed her experience with Ms. Julie was integral to her understanding of the co-teaching model. This experience had a positive influence on Michelle as a co-teacher of English language arts with an English as a second language teacher.

Lee received a Bachelors Degree in Elementary Education and a Masters Degree in Special Eduation. At the time of the study, she taught sixth grade English language arts. She had also taught elementary and special education. She began her teaching career as a para professional in a special needs elementary classroom. Lee's first teaching assignment was a second grade teaching position in a special education inclusion classroom. She co-taught with a special education teacher for two years. She found the experience quite positive. Lee stated how she might have had particular skills to work better with a certain student and how her co-teacher might have been better able to service other students. Lee's positive co-teaching experiences supported her desire to co-teach English language arts with the English as a second language teacher.

ESL teachers' backgrounds.

Margaret graduated from college in China where she majored in English. Following graduation, Margaret became a translator in foreign affairs for five years at the college. She left the college and became a travel agent and tour guide. Margaret talked about how she loves children. She taught night school in China and worked with families seeking to adopt children. In 2000, Margaret decided to come to the United States and become a teacher. Upon arriving in

the United States, she began teaching English as a second language in an urban school district.

She continued her education and went on to receive a Masters in Education in teaching English

as a second language. She has been working in her present district, which has a high Asian

population, for ten years. She enjoys working with English language learners. Margaret

believed that because of her past life experiences, she understood and could relate to the students

and their families. She enjoyed sharing her knowledge with colleagues.

Chloe received her Bachelors Degree in nutrtion. She worked as a lab manager for

several years. She became interested in teaching while volunteering at her young son's school in

Germany. Chloe, having experienced living abroad, thought it would be a natural process to

become an English as a second language teacher. She hoped to move back to Europe someday.

She received her Masters Degree in Teaching English Lanaguage Learners. Chloe had been

teaching for seven years at the time of the interview and began teaching by having her own

classroom of newly arrived English language learners. She has been a student support teacher

for English language learners using a pull-out model, and she has also been a co-teacher with a

general education teacher. Chloe's experience in Germany helped her to understand what it is

like to be a language learner.

Noelle always wanted to be a teacher. She enjoyed languages and completed a

Bachelor's degree in Spanish and English as a second language, as well as a Masters degree in

Education. She taught Spanish in Washington, D.C. for two years before coming to Boston to

teach Spanish. Noelle followed in the footsteps of her mother who was an English as a second

language teacher. At the time of the interview, she had been an English as a second language

teacher in her present district for the past two years. Noelle enjoys working with English

language learners. Noelle, as a Spanish major in college, considered herself a second language

learner. Noelle's experience majoring in Spanish provided her first hand experience in understanding language acquisition. Noelle's personal understanding and background in learning another language contributed to her belief in the importantance of a positive learning environment for students where students are not afraid to make a mistake and they can be risk-takers.. She described herself as a big advocate for a nurturing and warm classroom environment because she personally thrived in a positive learning environment with certain teachers who knew how to support and correct students.

Three of the six teachers experienced living and working in another country. The teaching experience of the participants ranged from five years to eighteen years. They all had taught elementary and middle school age students. All six teachers had previous co-teaching experiences and at different levels in English as a second language or in special education. All teachers seemed to respect, enjoy, and support one another as co-teachers.

The major themes that emerged from the data included various models of co-teaching, roles and responsibilities of co-teachers, planning, instructional practices, benefits of co-teaching, concerns dealing with co-teaching, as well as the benefits of a pull-out model. The topic of when students should be placed in a co-taught classroom was discussed as well as whether a a co-taught classroom hinders the support needed for all students to be successful. Each pair of teachers had a different working relationship. Therefore, the themes that emerged from the study are presented as pairs of teachers, followed by all six teachers who participated in the focus group.

Models of Co-Teaching

 Station teaching and parallel teaching.

Kay and Margaret primarily used station teaching and parallel teaching. Kay would plan the English language arts lesson with specific skills and strategies with some input from Margaret. For the first thirty minutes, Kay and Margaret would parallel teach their lesson and then students would break up into stations. Mararet would work with her English language learners and reinforce the vocabulary and the reading strategies the students were working on. Both teachers agreed that the students get extra English support during the literacy block and that it is a great supplement to the class. Students received differentiated instruction to target their specific needs. The student teacher ratio supports all students in the class.

Station teaching and one teach-one support.

Michelle and Chloe used station teaching and the one teach-one support model most often. They would reverse roles occasionally. Chloe has a background in science and Michelle availed herself and the students to Chloe's expertise in this area. Michelle believed that by reversing teaching roles, it showed mutual respect and the mutual responsibility for teaching to the students.

During station teaching, Chloe would coordinate her lessons using the same vocabulary as Michelle plans for the entire class. Chloe used an English language development reader that coordianted with the reading story for the week. Michelle and Chloe worked together by coordinating these stories and discussing individual student's needs. Michelle and Chloe believed this model had been successful because of the repetition; having Chloe reinforce the same vocabulary in the same concepts so that students had reinforcing repetition throughout the literacy period. According to Chloe, "Repetition builds the students' confidence." Michelle and Chloe believed this model was beneficial because they could go more in-depth, meeting the individual needs of the students.

Lee and Noelle teach at the middle school level. They have used the various models of co-teaching depending on the needs of the students. The majority of the time they used the one teach-one support model. Lee enjoyed having another teacher in the room. Lee believed the second teacher may pick up on something about the lesson or a student that she may have missed.

Noelle circulates around the room monitoring the needs of English language learners and assisting them or any student in the class when necessary. She also breaks down instruction and content for students. She would modify instruction to meet the needs of students. Depending on the activity, she described how she might sit at a table and go over, in-depth, certain areas of the lesson she that felt students may need more explanation about. Any student could join that group. Noelle would take English language learners out of the classroom during an assessment, or during a special assignment if necessary, so that students could work in a more relaxed and supportive environment.

There are various models of co-teaching: one teach-one support, parallel teaching, alternative teaching, station teaching and team teaching. The station teaching model and parallel teaching are used most often at the elementary level. The one teach-one support model is the major model at the middle school level, with some station teaching. All three pairs of co-teachers followed the lead of the general education teacher. The English as a second language teachers supported the general education teachers and the English language learners. Individualizing instruction, because of the smaller student teacher ratio, was more easily attained with two teachers in the classroom. In this model, general education teachers, English as a second language teacher, and students all benefited.

Roles and Responsibilities

Kay saw her role as the general education classroom teacher responsible for planning lessons and identifying levels of instruction for all the students in her class. Kay believed she is responsible for communicating and collaborating with Margaret about individual students. Kay reviewed the weekly vocabulary words, reading skills, and strategies she would be working on with her entire class with Margaret. Kay stated,

> Since we didn't have much time to plan together and we both knew what we needed to teach but didn't have as much time to plan cooperative, she had her center so she had a lesson plan planned out for them and she could review the things that she knew that I was going to be teaching during the mini lessons.

Margaret felt responsible for the development of the English language learners' reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. Margaret believed her role was to support the lessons taught by Kay, and to go into more in-depth explanations for the English language learners. Margaret would parallel teach the lesson being taught by Kay during the first 30 minutes of the English language arts period. Then she would move on with her students to station teaching, where she reinforced the lesson being taught by the general educaion teacher. Margaret stated, "This is a good model for teachers having the classroom teacher and the ESL teacher collaborating getting to know the students and then to work with them together." Though her major focus was the English language learners, Margaret felt equally responsible for all the students in the class. She even supported Kay with classroom management.

Michelle believed her role and responsibility as a classrooom teacher was to organize the lessons for grade two English language arts literacy block. She was responsible for readying all stations and for students to know how to rotate through the various learning centers. Michelle

stated, "It was great, groups were set up and students knew what center to go to." The instruction she planned complemented the instruction provided by Chloe. The lesson plans targeted the needs of all students. Michelle believed her co-teacher was a support to her. When Michelle would teach a writing lesson, Chloe would support the lesson in more detail for their English language learner students. "Chloe would go into more depth with her students using supplementary materials, such as the English language learner reader, and have a beautiful writing lesson with her student," according to Michelle. As co-teachers, each individual showed mutual respect and responsibility to the students in the class. Michelle said, "I admire my co-teacher."

Chloe felt it was her responsibility to coordinate her instruction to complement the direct instruction of Michelle, the classroom teacher, and used station teaching most often to accomplish this task. Chloe used and reinforced the same vocabulary as the classroom teacher. She reinforced vocabulary and reading skills at her station and also modeled fluent reading. She monitored the students' engagement and progress in listening, speaking, reading, and listening. One particular strengh Chloe had was data collection and analysis. This particular strength complemented the instructional strengths of the classroom teacher, Michelle. She was able to support the classroom teacher in the area of progress monitoring for all students in the class.

Lee was a middle school English language arts teacher at the time of the study. By the time they reached sixth grade, Lee had students at various levels of proficiency in the area of English languge arts. Lee needed to prepare students for demanding standardized state tests. Lee needed to teach reading comprehension, writing, and responding to text. Lee understood that she needed to differentiate instruction for all students.

Noelle taught English as a second language at the middle school level with her co-teacher Lee. Noelle supported and reinforced the skills taught by Lee, reinforcing the skills taught in English language arts class. Noelle believed she was a support to students within the English language arts curriculum. She reinforced the content and instruction taught by the classroom teacher, as well as providing supplementary materials for the students to use.

Noelle was able to scaffold the instruction for the students. Occasionally, she would have a station that would target the needs of any student in the class when students worked in groups. This could be a challenge. Noelle stated,

> It's more challenging to collaborate in our particular school, the schedules are different; because I work with multiple grades, lots of times I would be entering a classroom once the class had already started and often leaving before it ended which led to a lot of improvising.

The goal for Noelle was for the English language learners to reach the same end goals as native language speakers.

Michelle believed the instruction carried out in the classroom, by both Chloe and herself, complemented each other. Lee stated she was able to differentiate instruction because of Noelle's support. Whatever co-teaching model was used, co-teachers shared responsibility for direct instruction, curriculum planning, development, and modifications, guided practice, re-teaching, enrichment activities, and students' evaluations, which supports Walther-Thomas's (1997) findings.

Co-teaching is a method of instruction where teachers can work collaboratively to deliver quality instruction (Murawski & Hughes, 2009). All three teams of co-teachers believed their co-teacher was a support to them. The co-teachers supported eachother's lessons and

instructional practices. They each brought particular strengths to the classroom. Together, they were responsible for the success of all students in the classroom. Walther-Thomas (1997) write that co-teaching is based on co-teachers' active participation and on-going classroom involvement.

Planning

Kay planned weekly with her co-teacher Margaret. The planning time was due to Margaret understanding Kay's patterns for developing lesson plans in language arts for specific skills and strategies. Though formal planning time had decreased, Kay found time to informally communicate and collaborate with Margaret. Kay believed that more planning time was desirable. Kay stated, "It would be great if we could meet more and do more planning together." Kay also said, "With more time, we could do more cultural enrichment with the students."

Margaret considered the amount of planning time with her co-teacher Kay as sufficient to meet the basic needs of the common subject English language arts that they taught together. Margaret attended grade level team meetings, which helped her understand what content and skills students would be working on. They did collaborate and plan using student data. They agreed that more time would help them get to know the individual students and their learning styles.

Michelle formally planned once a week with her co-ESL teacher, Chloe. She stated, "Two heads are better than one." She believed the formal planning time was sufficient, though every day they did some informal planning in general conversation. They would also text a quick idea to one another. Michelle would set up the groups and get organized for instruction to begin when Chloe entered the room. Chloe followed Michelle's style. For example, for writer's

workshop, she used the same correcting and editing styles. Michelle stated, "Instruction was carried out in the classroom, so there was no time lost, and students were getting double-team."

Chloe supported a formal, specific, common planning time with her co-teacher Michelle. This regularly-scheduled common planning time was important to Chloe. She liked to plan lessons that supported the instruction being carried out in the classroom, but she also wanted to discuss specific students and their struggles. Chloe stated, "Having enough time to coordinate lessons and time to communicate is an issue." Chloe managed her own scheduled prep times strategically so that she could meet with Michelle and the grade level team. She liked to embed strategies that would help these students succeed in her lessons.

Lee preferred more planning time. She and her co-ESL teacher, Noelle, planned informally on a weekly basis. They also e-mailed each other with ideas and concerns. They shared ideas and were willing to break down content material so that all students reached the same end results.

Noelle described limited time for co-planning. No official formal planning time was established. The English language arts lesson for the day was determined by Lee, the general education classroom teacher. Noelle was informed about the lesson and the supplementary materials that would be used. This type of planning was sufficient according to Noelle for one classroom, in one content area. It was efficient if all of the English language learners for a specific grade level were assigned to one specific section of English language arts at the middle school level. It would be more beneficial if Noelle could be in the same class, every day, with the same teacher, during the same class period. This was not possible because Noelle serviced multiple grades that followed different schedules.

All three teams would have preferred more formal common planning time. This was hard to establish with limited time in the school day and the high number of English language learners. Teachers made the time, informally, to collaborate and plan with their co-teachers. It was more difficult for Noelle and Lee at the middle school level because of the four grade levels serviced by Noelle. Limited planning time reduced what each team could discuss and how much they could collaborate. Planning time tended to be more about content and instructional support and less about individual struggling students.

Peercy and Martin-Beltran (2011) suggested that co-teaching requires a desire on the part of both teachers to spend time planning, working together, and constantly improving collaboration. Planning time allows teachers to discuss and reflect on common or divergent beliefs on curriculum, instruction, assessment, and classroom routines (Hepner & Newman, 2010). Co-planning is an advantage for teachers trying to keep up with the knowledge and skills needed to meet the instructional needs of a diverse student population (Friend et al., 2010). Schools that are doing well with their English language learners are in school districts that have developed strategies to meet the specific needs of these students (Pascopella, 2011).

Instructional Practices

Various instructional practices were conducted by the co-teachers. Kay believed extra support needed to be provided to students. Kay's instruction was reinforced by her co-teacher Margaret. Differentiated instruction was provided to students due to the collaboration and instruction by two teachers in various instructional groupings. Kay had a better understanding of how to meet the needs of students and grouping students because she worked with a co-teacher.

Margaret carried out instruction in a variety of ways. It was important for her to understand the background experiences of her students. She differentiated instruction using

various instructional materials. Margaret, along with her co-teacher Kay, applied authentic

learning experiences, such as plays. These experiences involved activities where students talked

more and could practice speaking the language.

Michelle organized stations for co-teaching. Students were engaged and on task at each

station. Co-teachers could reflect on the students' work and provide more direct instruction to

individual students, so more students were on task. Individual strengths of both teachers were

utilized. Michelle's strength was writing and Chloe's was data collection and analysis. Michelle

explained, "We try to build eachother's confidence."

Reflecting on student work and understanding the needs of her students was important to

instruction, according to Chloe, Michelle's co-teacher. Chloe aligned her instruction with

Michelle's lesson for the day. She individualized her instruction based on the needs of her

students. She worked with struggling students more intensely in a small group station setting.

There, she would have students read and respond in writing to a story, applying their reading,

writing, listening, and speaking skills.

Lee modified instruction with Noelle, the ESL teacher. Lee stated, "Noelle comes up

with things that would work better or [could be] done differently with students, which makes me

a better teacher and the students benefitting from [it]." Extra time and support could then be

spent with the students. Material was broken down and scaffolded to meet the pace and learning

styles of all students. Lee used such practices as "Turn and Talk," group work, and individual

conferences. The goal was for all students to reach the same end result.

The "I do it, we do it, you do it" modeling approach was used by Noelle. She was an

extra support to students in class, as well as out of class. She circulated and assisted students in

class during Lee's teacher-directed instruction. She clarified any questions students had during a

class lesson in this one teach-one support co-teaching style. She reinforced and "deep modeled" for her students. Students were provided extra support outside of the classroom if needed.

Having two teachers in the classroom allowed for a smaller teacher-student ratio. Co-teaching was helpful for teachers because reducing the student-teacher ratio allowed for differentiated instruction (Friend et al., 2010). The increase in individualized instruction and support helped students stay on task. More individual support to students led to on-task behavior by students more effectively completed assignments (Jang, Nguyen, & Yang, 2010).

Teachers working collaboratively as a team support one another when planning authentic experiences and creative lessons for students that they may have been hesitant to attempt alone. Two teachers working together encourages teachers to be risk-takers. Collaboration and discussion of ideas provides teachers the courage and support to take risks and use of more innovative strategies (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2008). The exhange of ideas between co-teachers promotes the use of innovative strategies by teachers that should benefit all students in the classroom (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2008).

Benefits of Co-Teaching

Kay stated that Margaret's English languge arts instruction was a supplement to the instruction carried out in the general mainstream classroom. Kay collaborated with Margaret, who Kay considers the specialist in English language acquisition. They worked together to better understand what each student needs, the level of support each student received, and if it was enough, as well as the right, support.

Margaret reinforced the language art skills taught. Daily routines were established with Kay. Both teachers knew what was being taught to students. Lessons were aligned and complement each other. Margaret and Kay worked together and decided which students could

work more independently and which students needed more scaffolding. Students knew what they would be working on with a particular teacher. Co-teaching made students feel both teachers would help, and students respected both teachers.

According to Michelle, co-teaching was double instruction for the English language learners in her class. The individual strengths of each teacher complemented each other. Michelle believed one particular strength that Chloe brought to the classroom was her knowledge about the students, having had the students the previous year for English as a second language. Michelle said, "An inclusion teacher who looped, that was great." The particular strengths were a mutual support for each teacher, which helped to build eachother's confidence. Chloe, who co-teaches with Michelle, believed there was more consistency with lessons because of their co-teaching. She worked at a station, reinforcing the cocepts taught by the classroom teacher. She used the same vocabulary and this repetition reinforced and increased student confidence.

Lee agreed that both she and her co-teacher, Noelle, bring their individual strengths to the classroom. They, too, complement eachother. Lee stated, "I think that it makes both yourself and that person better at what you're doing because sometimes she may pick up on something that I'm not noticing." Lee believed that her ESL co-teacher, Noelle, made her a better teacher. Co-teaching made both teachers better at what they were doing. Noelle concurred that co-teaching could be effective at the middle school level. Noelle knew what was happening in the classroom. Teachers could spend extra time with students. Co-teachers and students simultaneously benefitted from this experience. Noelle and Lee thought the extra set of hands and eyes in a classroom was always good for both.

All three teams of teachers agreed the collaboration and support between both teachers made planning and delivery of instruction more beneficial for the students. By combining their

individual strengths, a positive academic and social climate was created for students, aligning with Sileo's (2011) assertions. Without collaboration, it could be unclear what each teacher did to better support the English language learners (Brooks et al., 2010). The individual strengths of both teachers complement each other, which raises the quality of instruction. Teachers have reported professional satisfaction and personal growth from participation in collaborative experiences (Hepner & Newman, 2010).

Concerns

There are many benefits to co-teaching but there are some concerns that emerged from the interviews of both the classroom teachers and the ESL teachers. Kay was concerned that Margaret could not meet with students every day. Margaret thought the classrooms were loud. Loud voices in the classroom can be distracting because some English language learners need a more quiet environment. Margaret believed a smaller setting would be quieter and more individualized for English language learners. In a large mainstream classroom, there are more opportunities for behavioral issues and she felt her students had a more difficult time focusing.

Michelle complemented the work of the ESL teacher Chloe, but it described how it was important that they got along well. Time was an issue for Chloe because she serviced 57 students across several grade levels. It was hard for co-teachers to coordinate with each other. Communication was more about specific students than on lesson planning. Planning needed to be more formalized. Chloe also thought that some English language learners were more comfortable in small group environments.

While Lee believed there was not enough time for planning, time and consistency were issues for Noelle. Noelle was the ESL teacher for grades five to eight. Noelle stated, "Consistency is my biggest concern." It was difficult to be on the same schedule with so many

teachers who were on different schedules. Co-teaching in more than one English language arts class and in multiple grades was very demanding. Noelle lamented that she could not be in every ELA class every day.

The three general education teachers were concerned with scheduling, co-teachers servicing students every day, and stressed the importance of a good relationship with their co-teacher, which they all did. The three ESL teachers had more concerns. They serviced many students and serviced multiple grades. Co-teaching could be difficult because of scheduling issues, especially at the middle school level. The teachers agreed that more planning time was needed to plan lessons as well as to discuss individual needs of students.

Focus Group

All six interviewees met at a local restaurant of their choice. The group discussed the experiences of English language learners and native language speakers in a co-taught English language arts classroom, and what had been valuable in a co-taught classroom compared to a pull-out model. Planning, using data, instructional practices, and appropriate time and placement in a co-taught classroom were also discussed. During the focus group, the teachers described many similar themes to those that emerged during individual interviews, but they also added more detailed explanations around some themes.

English language learners' experiences in a co-taught classroom.

There are many positive experiences and benefits for English language learners in a co-taught English language arts classroom. According to Michelle, "Four eyes are better than two." While one teacher teaches a lesson, the other teacher can help keep students on task. The second pair of eyes may notice something the other teacher had missed.

Different teachers have different strengths in teaching. This could be extrapolated to, "Two brains are better than one." Teachers may present the same material in a different manner. They may use different strategies or manipulatives to help students comprehend the material. Teachers may combine their strengths and areas of expertise and determine, together, what will be taught, how it will be taught, and who will teach it. In doing so, lessons are proactively created that address the various needs of the English language learnes in the classroom (Murawski & Hughes, 2009).

Having two teachers helps students who may need extra help and it can then be provided at a station in the classroom. With one teacher in the classroom, it is more difficult to give full attention to one group. Students who need a concept taught in a specific way, such as through the use of pictures, may work with one teacher. A student who may not need as much scaffolding can work with the other teacher. Co-teaching is helpful for teachers because reducing the student-teacher ratio allows for this sort of differentiated instruction (Friend et al., 2010).

Michelle said, "Children love to hear the two voices because sometimes--one voice all day--sometimes you want to nod off." Students hear multiple voices and have multiple supports in the classroom. Students are less stressed and they are more relaxed when there is another teacher in the classroom to help them get work done and help them understand. Students do not have to leave the classroom for extra help and support. The uninterrupted time gained by not having to leave the classroom for instruction improves students' reading and writing skills when students receive instructional support from two teachers (Portocarrero & Bergin, 1997).

For some students, two teachers might be overwhelming. Other kids are able to work differently with each teacher depending on the different rapport they have with each teacher and

the various instruction practices provided by the teachers. A co-taught classroom increases student participation due to a lower student-teacher ratio and students learn with peers with various academic skills and English language fluency in the least restrictive environment (Friend et al., 2010; Hongisfeld & Dove, 2008).

Deciding on the method of instruction.

Instruction practices and planning depend on the lesson and the needs of the students. Noelle stated, "Instruction is based on what the students need and the approach is based on the support the teachers can give those students." Lee agreed that it was important to "analyze the learners in your classroom and [see] what they need and then [talk] with the other teacher and [decide] from there." When choosing a new book for her English language learners to read, Chloe would ask Michelle what skills the English language learners were struggling with. Chloe said,

> If they were struggling with compare and contrast, then I could adjust and choose the
> book that would be the best book to use for that particular strategy to demonstrate it; I
> knew that, with that group of kids, I was working on a skill that they really needed.

When there is more than one teacher, they can often work together and pool their strengths and knowledge.

Planning.

Collaboration and support were recurring themes for the participants when planning and developing lessons. At the middle school level, Noelle supported students in the skills and concepts taught during the English language arts classroom both in the classroom as well as during a "pullout" session where she provided extra support to the students outside of the regular education classroom. This provided the chance for students to think and discuss what they were

learning in the general education classroom and communicate this with Noelle. Noelle identified any gaps in student learning when the students explained their work in the regular classroom to her. According to Noelle, co-teaching is fine but, "It is trying to figure out how to best utilize the time in the classroom."

Co- planning with an ESL teacher was nice, according to Kay, because "You can look at the objectives ahead of time and identify where the kids could struggle." Kay stated, "Having someone to bounce off ideas with is really helpful for planning beforehand so that the students can get the most out of the lesson as possible." Margaret and Chloe both checked the data and monitored the progress of students.

Pullout model.

The focus group also discussed the benefits of a pullout model of instruction for English language learners. In a pullout model, students are removed from the general education classroom for a specific amount of time to give them specialized instruction in English. There are some benefits for both the students and the teacher.

The pullout method places students in a smaller classroom setting, where instruction can be more individualized. Some students are more willing to take risks in a small environment. There are not as many distractions in this type of setting. The noise levels are not as high; there are not as many students or centers for student to negotiate. Students also enjoy a scenery change and being able to go somewhere else.

For the English as a second language teacher, it might be easier for them to have their own classroom, with their own supplementary materials. It can be difficult to bring different materials to several classrooms. Margaret was able to target the individual need of her students in more depth in her "pullout" setting. Margaret explained, "If a student is having more

difficulty in speaking, I can work on that domain more closely in the smaller setting." In the mainstream classroom, she follows the lead of the teacher.

Kay co-taught with Margaret and believed because of her experiences that it was most effective to do both. She liked the ESL teacher to be in the classroom so they could see what was happening in the classroom and then be better able to support the students. She could then "pull" them from the classroom to a smaller setting when they may need extra time or work in a small group to reinforce content that was learned and clarify anything that was difficult for the student.

Kay believed it was important to have the time to collaborate in order to understand the background information for the students. English language learners may have gaps in their education and many times when they are working on something, they may not know what it is. Kay stated, "Understanding the student will help teachers to better reinforce the content." Noelle mentioned, "Ideally, you'll be able to do both. It's challenging with the schedule and with times, and being split among grades, but I think the pullout is really effective."

The co-teachers understood the benefits of being in the classroom with the English language learners. Students did not have to leave the classroom. In co-teaching situations, each teacher knows what is being taught to the students and how it is being taught (Murawski & Hughes, 2009). Two English as second language teachers agreed that it could be beneficial for students to leave the classroom for instructional support. Students also may prefer small group settings outside the mainstream classroom (Pardy, 2004). Within the study, the number of students in a mainstream classroom is high, with approximately 26 students. English language learners may need specific help when speaking and listening that could require a quieter setting or specific materials the English as a second language teacher may have in their own classroom.

Placement.

Placement in a co-taught classroom is determined by the needs of the student. The teachers in this study have seen students who have entered the general education classroom with no English skills at all and have shown great improvement by the end of the year. Students have also been in separate Sheltered English Immersion classes where they develop content knowledge and academic skills while increasing their proficiency in English that have not done as well and others that do better. Some English language learners have a desire and drive to exceed their English language abilities, while others do not progress as fast as they should. They need to be around more native language speakers.

The group concluded the best time would be between the SEI 1 level and the SEI 2 level. SEI 1 students have less than reasonable fluency in English and the focus of instruction is language acquisition and some sheltered content. SEI 2 students have reasonable fluency in English, need some support in language development, and academic support. According to the group, "Okay, still have that support of having the ELL teacher in the classroom." They described it like a bridge. Margaret, who described herself as a second language learner, thought the most important factor for learning language is the environment.

Assigning students to mainstream classrooms.

The focus group agreed it was challenging assigning students to mainstream classrooms where English as second language teachers could service them. Important factors were the grade and the teacher. At the middle school level, ESL students are placed in two sections at the research site. The year of the study, students were placed in a third section. In the lower grades, teachers and administrators used ACCESS (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State to State) scores and tried to place students with lower scores in one classroom,

where there were more students at their level. Students who scored at a higher level were grouped together. This was done so that students could get the amount of support they needed. Teachers' input was critical. For example, considering students who should not be in the same classroom for various reasons, such as being related, or two students with a social issue that made placing them in the same instructional setting less than ideal.

The sheltered environment may be better for the newcomers to our country who do not speak English. Often, they are not comfortable speaking in the mainstream classroom. Those who are comfortable speaking are the students who are not worried about their grammar or what they sound like. A mainstream classroom allows certain students to feel less isolated and lets them work under the same expectations as their English speaking speaking classmates, which increases their self-esteem (Portocarrero & Bergin, 1997). Once again, personality is key. In short, some students in large mainstream classrooms are very outgoing and are risk takers while others are shy and need more support.

The ACCESS (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State to State) scores for English language learners are shared by the English as a second language teachers with the general education teacher. The MCAS (State Comprehensive Assessment System) scores are shared by general education teacher with the English as a second language teacher. Teachers use this data to analyze students' learning. The data is used to evaluate and make adjustments to the curriculum and instructional programs. Teachers make adjustments to instructional interventions for students.

Lee and Noelle analyzed the data by the four language domains of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The co-teachers identified where students had difficulty and focused on helping students develop those skills. Together, they shelter the curriculum to meet the

challenges that each kid faces. Noelle cautioned, "Just be aware of where kids need the most support and where they need the most help, and then being able to apply that to the practices and the content of the curriculum."

The English as second language teachers increased communication through the use of data. They informed the classroom teachers about the level where each of the students tested the previous year on the ACCESS testing in each of the four domains. The English as a second language teachers also included a "can do descriptor" to identify what students could do at their level and what they needed to be able to do to move to the next level in each of the domains. As a result, teachers modified what they asked students to do or changed the assignments in some way to meet their needs. "This is where collaboration is wonderful," according to Lee. "You can see how they are increasing but in different ways of looking at information," stated Lee.

The group agreed that the inclusion of English language learners in a mainstream classroom did not hinder the support needed in order for students to be successful. The group gave several reasons: There are two people to support the students. If the English as a second language teacher is helping a small group of English language learners with a specific concept or skill, there may be a few native speaking students who may be having difficulty with that skill and these students are able to join in for extra assistance.

Additionally, the group agreed upon several best practices for reading, writing, speaking, and listening for English language learners. They suggested the following: All academic tasks should be broken down into smaller steps. Vocabulary should be explained and pictures may be used. When a student does not know the exact word, they may know similar words. Connections to real life experiences and connections to their backgrounds, modeling, and the use of visuals enhance the instruction for all students. Reducing the amount of work can reduce anxiety among

help English language learners. For example, for middle school students, instead or writing a five-paragraph essay, they could begin with a three-paragraph essay.

Chloe agreed with Margaret that a great deal of repetition of the target vocabulary and the concepts is needed. Students need to speak in complete sentences and use the academic language over and over again. Chloe mentioned that younger students might be in need of a sentence starter, and Noelle believed that an older student could need a sentence starter as well. English language learners have good ideas, but they need to figure out how to express their thoughts. Having co-teachers makes it possible to look at delivery of instruction in different ways.

Strategies that are used for English language learners are also beneficial for native speakers as well. The strategies discussed include breaking material down into smaller instructional steps, understanding the vocabulary, and modeling examples of what students need to do. Another strategy for students increase their understanding of a concept is to allow them to share what they know or something similar. Lee stated, "Kids will find a buddy and maybe it's someone at their table or someone that they've become friends with, and they help each other, it's almost like being mentors to each other." She further explained, "It creates a sense of just community within the classroom."

Collaborative teaching requires teachers to develop a strong sense of community and a collective responsibility for teaching all students (Servage, 2008). The right environment and support provided to English language learners helps these students thrive in our schools (Verdugo, 2007). In mainstream classrooms, no longer isolated, students are able to work under the same expectations as their English speaking speaking classmates which increases their self-esteem (Portocarrero & Bergin, 1997).

Theoretical Frameworks

Ludwig von Bertalanffy's (1968) General Systems Theory and Mezirow's (1978) Theory of Transformational Learning were used as the theoretical frameworks for this study. Ludwig von Bertalanffy's (1968) General Systems Theory suggests the characteristic of a system comes from the relationships of its parts (Jun, Kim, & Lee, 2011). The interrelation between the parts gives some qualities to the whole or system that are not found in the individual parts alone (Bello, 1985).

Transformational learning suggests that everyone learns from his or her experiences. Learning is a process of constructing and reconstructing meaning leading to a person's growth and development (Mezirow, 1978). Individuals transform their perspectives and ways of thinking to make them more reflective and capable of change (Mezirow, 2000).

The data that emerged from the teachers demonstrated that co-teaching encourages teacher collaboration. This collaboration brings forth each teacher's strengths, such as content knowledge and or language acquisition. The combined professional strengths led to individualized instruction for students and more effective lessons. Teachers believed their individual skills and competencies complemented each other and they had a better understanding of what each of their students need. Co-teaching made the teachers feel they were better teachers because of the co-teaching experience. Teachers reflected on their instructional practices because of the supportive co-planning and sharing of their individual strengths. Collaboration led to the growth of these teachers.

The teacher participants in this study stated that the co-teaching experience contributed to their professional growth. Lee believed her co-teacher Noelle made her a better teacher. Lee gained a better understanding on how to scaffold the instruction for English language learners in

her classroom. Chloe advanced her skills in revising and editing students' writing by working with Michelle during writers' workshop.

Teachers co-analyzed test data. Teachers identified content and skills students struggled with and, together, they shared ideas on how to better support and help students. Sharing ideas through collaboration and co-planning helped teachers reflect on their practice, refine their skills, and develop more enhanced lessons for students. According to Servage (2008) deep and positive change can come from shared professional learning.

Chapter 5: Themes, Discussion and Suggestions for Future Study

The story of America is one of immigration for groups of people from many different backgrounds (Suarez-Orozco, Suarez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2009). After the Native Americans, the United States had three major flows of immigrants. First, the United States had the original colonists during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Then the involuntary transfer of African slaves came to the United States. Next, there was the great transatlantic dispersion beginning with the Napoleonic Wars and ending with the Great Depression during the 1930s (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2009).

Today, the United States is experiencing yet another major surge of immigration. Twenty percent of the young people growing up in the United States have immigrant parents. Immigrants living in the United States are move diverse than ever before (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2009). The immigrants arriving in the United States today range from highly educated and skilled individuals to individuals with very little education and very modest backgrounds. It appears the recent wave of less-skilled immigrants is accompanied by a smaller group of highly educated individuals (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2009).

In the United States, there are approximately thirty five million immigrants, which is nearly 12.4 % of the United States population (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2009). The fastest growing population is immigrant children or children of immigrant parents. These parents left their homes and families to come to the United States for a better life (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2009). Suarez-Orozco et al. (2009) wrote that the main focus for these immigrant families for coming to the United States was to provide better opportunities for their families with a high emphasis on a better education for their children. These children are often the English language learners in today's American schools.

Migrating to a new country is difficult. For the students in public schools it involves feelings of dislocation, inferiority, leaving extended family members behind, as well as difficulty communicating (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2009). English language learners are trying to learn the English Language and use it effectively (Peregoy & Boyle, 2001). Peregoy and Boyle (2001) explained that the English language learners in our schools try to learn a new language as well as try to fit into social and academic routines at school. The right climate must be created for these students to be academically and socially successful.

John Shumann's (1986) acculturation theory correlates with the importance of a positive school and classroom climate. In this theory, Shumann discussed the importance of both social and psychological factors in language acquisition (Schumann, 1986). The creation of a positive school climate enhances a child's sense of belonging in the class, which increases the child's language skills in turn (Schumann, 1986). Research is growing in support of the need for a positive school/classroom environment. A strong connection is evident between a positive school climate, a child's language acquisition, and content learning (Schumann, 1986).

A safe, caring, participatory, and responsive school climate provides the foundation for strong social, emotional, and academic learning. A positive classroom climate involves students showing support and respect for one another. Each student in the class must feel like a valued member of the class. Students need to work cooperatively with each other with ample support and encouragement from the teachers (Schumann, 1986). According to the National School Climate Center (formerly the Center for Social and Emotional Education) (n.d.), one of the fundamental dimensions of school climate is how 'connected' people feel towards one another.

The Forest Ridge School, the site of this study, is a K-8 school. It has 39 classrooms. The percentage of English language learners at the Forest Ridge School was approximately

31.4% at the time of the study and it continues to grow. Five English as second language teachers service the English language learners. Scheduling and meeting the instructional hours required for specific English language learners was difficult.

Based on language acquisition needs and on their level of language proficiency, certain English language learners were placed in specific classrooms. In these classrooms, English language arts were co-taught with the English as a second language teachers and the classroom teacher. The English as a second language teachers no longer had to service specific students across several classrooms. More instructional time was provided to students because of the fewer number of classrooms the English as second language teachers had to service. Three teams of teachers were selected to be co-teachers.

In this qualitative case study, the goal was to understand the experiences of the English as a second language teacher co-teaching English language learners with the general education teachers. The purpose of this research study was to understand how co-teaching as a model of instruction for English as second language teachers in a general education classroom enhanced instruction for English language learners.

There were several themes that emerged from the one-on-one interviews and the focus group answered the following overarching research question and three secondary questions that will contribute to a better understanding of the practice of co-teaching for English as a second language teachers.

The overarching question that guided this study was: In an urban setting, how does a classroom with an English as a second language and general education collaborative teaching model enhance the teaching process of English language arts? Three secondary questions

contributed to a better understanding of the practice of co-teaching for English as a second language teacher:

1. What is the English as a second language teacher's past teaching experience and how did she become involved in a co-teaching model?

2. What is the role and experiences of the English as a second language teacher co-teaching English language arts in a mainstream general education classroom?

3. What are the perception of the English as a second language teacher and the general education classroom teacher on student learning and the experiences of English language learners in a co-taught mainstream classroom?

All six teachers had past experiences that motivated them to go into teaching. Three of the six teachers had international experience living and working in another country. The other three had personal and educational experiences that inspired them to become teachers.

Three teachers experienced being a second language learner in a foreign country. The first teacher, while working in Japan, decided to take a course in teaching English as a second language, which she very much enjoyed. It was in that country that she decided to teach English at the high school level. The second teacher, born in China, majored in English. She worked as an interpreter in that country for parents seeking to adopt children. She enjoyed helping the children and decided to become a teacher. The third teacher moved to Germany with her husband because of his job. She and her husband had a choice to either move to Germany or England. They chose Germany because they wanted to go to country where a different language was spoken. Their children attended an international school where she enjoyed volunteering. She liked working with students from different countries who spoke various languages.

Three co-teachers did not have international experiences. They entered the teaching profession for different reasons. One teacher felt she never had the confidence to be a teacher.

All six teachers had experiences and skills that contributed and enhanced a positive co-teaching model. The experiences three of the teachers had being second language learners in other countries helped these individuals understand second language acquisition and how newcomers to our country feel in our schools. This is knowledge that is shared with co-teachers.

Two teachers had the background and practical knowledge of co-teaching in an inclusion special education setting. They understood the importance of professional relationships and working as a team. They understood the roles and responsibilities of individuals involved in a co-teaching team. Their expertise was beneficial in creating a supportive co-teaching environment. The combined experiences of the co-teachers provided the teachers with knowledge on language acquisition, being a newcomer to a country, curriculum, learning environments, and sharing roles and responsibilities.

The English language population of the Forest Ridge School increased from 11% to 31.4% in 11 years. The three general education teachers had the opportunity to be co-teachers in classrooms with a high number of English language learners. The English as a second language teachers selected these teachers to be their co-teachers.

Meeting the Needs of English Language Learners

The co-teachers at the Forest Ridge School share a common goal and belief: They wanted all students to reach the same end result at the end of each lesson and to be successful in the classroom. Co-teachers, with close collaboration and sharing of their expertise, can provide the needed support for English language learners in the mainstream classroom and achieve this goal.

Students come first in schools. The three English as a second language teachers believed their major role was to help students and to develop the reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills of the English language learners in their classes. The instructional support and guidance provided by the English as a second language teachers enabled their students to access to the same content as the native language students in their classrooms. They aligned their instruction by going into more in-depth explanations with the skills and content taught in the general mainstream English language arts classroom.

The English as a second language teachers believed it was their responsibility to support students. Support to students can best be accomplished by complementing the instruction carried out by the general education classroom teacher. The co-teaching team could target the instruction to meet the individual needs of students. The English as a second language teachers contributed to this by following the instructional lead, planning, and gained content expertise. The general education teacher gained expertise in language acquisition skills. The English as a second language teachers provided supplementary materials for students to use.

Teachers cannot work in isolation. The general education teacher and the English as a second language teachers need to share their knowledge and expertise. Co-teaching requires strong collaboration between co-teachers. Teachers need a sufficient amount of time to collaborate in order to plan the right support and instruction to the students.

Embedded strategies helped English language learners to access and to be successful with the content in the general education classroom. These strategies included authentic learning experiences such as plays and group projects. The experiences involved activities where students talk more with classmates and so they could practice speaking the language. The

combined expertise and strengths of both teachers provide a more enhanced learning environment.

Co-teachers need to identify and discuss the needs of individual students. Through collaboration, content and instruction can be scaffolded and learning needs and styles identified by the co-teachers to better meet the individual needs of the students. Teachers working together can analyze the students in their classroom, identify their instructional needs, and then decide based on the instructional needs of the students which strategies should be used for student success. Collaboration continues when co-teachers check to make sure that all students are progressing and reaching the same end results through the use of data.

The strengths of both teachers can be combined to measure growth and identify weaknesses. The English as a second language teachers shared their expertise and knowledge on ACCESS (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State to State) scores for English language learners with the general education teacher. The general education teachers share their knowledge on analyzing the MCAS (State Comprehensive Assessment System) scores with the English as a second language teachers. This sharing of knowledge reflects great data collection and analysis of data by co-teachers in a co-taught classroom.

A small teacher-student ratio provides more individual instruction, direct instruction, and support to students. Students receive extra support in small groups or stations where the specific needs of students are targeted. Small group instruction is quieter and safer for English language learners. It provided more opportunities for individual instruction and for students to speak in a non-threatening, supportive environment. Two teachers in the classroom with individual strengths and lower teacher-student ratio create a supportive environment for all students.

Students feel there are two teachers in the room to assist them and answer any questions they may have.

The English support given to English language learners by the English as a second language teachers during literacy block is a great supplement to the class. It reinforces and supports what is being taught in the mainstream classroom by going into more in-depth explanations and instruction. The English as a second language teachers use station teaching to further reinforce or support the students in a smaller setting conducive to the needs of the English language learners. It is provided in a timely manner, usually right after the teacher directed lesson. The repetition and reinforcement of a skill or concept provided by the English as a second language teacher builds confidence with English language learners. The "second set of eyes" may notice something in the lesson or with a student that the general classroom teacher may have overlooked or missed in a large group setting.

The general education classroom teacher and the English as a second language teacher, in a co-taught mainstream general education classroom, share the responsibility of educating English language learners. The classroom teacher brings their knowledge of the content and what students need to know, understand, and be able to do. The English as a second language teacher supports the teacher and the students by breaking down the material, explaining, clarifying, and "deep modeling" the content to help students learn. This creates inclusive classrooms where teachers support all students who may have difficulty building a specific skill or understanding content. The students mutually respect both teachers. The co-teachers, by recognizing the individual strengths they each bring to the classroom, respect and understand how together they enhance classroom instruction and student learning.

The Necessity of Co-Teaching

Generally, co-teaching is primarily considered collaboration between a general

mainstream classroom teacher and a special education teacher (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2008). The

high number of English language learners in our schools has broadened the meaning to include

English as a second language teachers working with general education teachers. The varying

needs of ESL students make it important for teachers to be responsive and knowledgable about a

variety of ways to help ESL students (Harklau, 1994). Co-teachers believe their experiences as

co-teachers in inclusive special education settings or as second language learner in our country or

in another country brings more knowledge to the team. This knowledge combines with another

teachers' deep understanding of content, strategies, and language acquistion skills to provide a

deeper understanding of how to support English language learners in our classrooms.

Co-teaching is based on active participation and on-going classroom involvement

(Walter-Thomas, 1977). The English as a second language teachers provide challenging

conversations, scaffold instruction, variety of reading activities, authentic demonstrations and

modeling support for English language learners (Hansen-Thomas, 2008; Protheroe, 2011). As

stated, English language learners need small group instruction, monitoring of their progress,

direct and explicit teaching skills, and high levels of support which includes instruction by

English as a second language teachers (McIntyre et al., 2010).

Co-teaching is a sophisticated, complex process where two teachers have to balance their

partnership professionally (Jang, Nguyen, & Yang, 2010). All English language learners may

not have the same needs because of their diverse cultural backgrounds, wide range of literacy

abilities, and experience with print (Patel, 2010). Co-teaching is a method of instruction,

according to Murawski & Hughes (2009), where teachers can work collaboratively to deliver

quality instruction. The collaboration between the teachers helps them better understand the students and how to optimally address their needs. Musanti and Pence (2010) believed that teacher growth does not happen alone. It happens when teachers collaborate with peers and co-construct new ideas about teaching and learning (Musante & Pence, 2010).

The Benefits of Co-Teaching

Co-teaching is a strong model because it creates collaboration and interaction between teachers who offer different areas of expertise while sharing responsbilites of school and students' goals (Friend & Cook, 1995). With two people, it is easier to assess what knowledge students already have and to work on specific skills and needs. The sharing of ideas is helpful before teaching takes place so that students get the most out of a lesson as possible. The instruction planned by the English as a second language teacher aligns with and supports the instruction being carried out by the teacher in the general education mainstream classroom. In an inclusive class, ESL teachers learn how to vary content presentation, individualize instruction, scaffold learning experiences and monitor students' understanding (Graziano & Navarett, 2012).

English language learners are exposed to the same content in a co-taught classroom. They work alongside native language speakers. Strategies that benefit English language learners benefit all students. A classroom with two teachers is more supportive to students because of the smaller teacher-student ratio. A co-taught classroom increases student participation due to a lower student-teacher ration and students learn with peers with various academic skills and English language fluency in the least restrictive environment (Friend et al., 2010; Hongisfeld & Dove, 2008). Station teaching provides the small group setting needed by the English language learners. The objective for the end result is for all students in the class to successfully reach the same goal.

Transformational Learning for Teachers

We learn from our experiences. Transformational learning is a constructivist theory of adult learning where knowing is a process of understanding and making sense of one's experiences (Erickson, 2007; Mezirow, 1978). Mezirow (2000) stated individuals can change their ways of thinking to make them more inclusive, reflective, and capable of change. The co-teachers, through their experiences living in other countries, learning other languages, working with certain individuals, and personal life experiences, changed their ideas and views on teaching and learning. They each brought specific expertise and strengths to a co-teaching model.

English as a second language teachers need time to collaborate with general education teachers on content, instruction, and individual students' needs. General education teachers need time to discuss language skills, academic and content language, skills, and strategies with the English as a second language teachers. Together they support and complement each other's lessons. This process provides more individual, targeted lessons. Two individuals working together toward the same cause provide more time for more in depth lessons.

The needs of the English language learners in a co-taught mainstream classroom are met by the combined pedagogical skills of both the English as a second language teacher and the general education teacher. The experiences, instructional strengths, and skills of both the general education teacher and the English as a second language teacher complement each other. Students have access to the same experiences and content as the native language speakers. Instruction is carried out in a supportive learning environment with reinforcement, repetition, and accommodations made in small groups.

Hepner and Newman (2010) believed that effective co-teachers spend time discussing common beliefs, as well as different views dealing with curriculum and instruction, and that by

reflecting on these practices their skills improve. Through the co-teaching experience the English as a second language teacher and the content area or classroom teacher had the opportunity to demonstrate their specific skills and expertise. According to Hepner and Newman (2010) by applying their areas of expertise, they contribute significantly to the instruction being carried out in the classroom.

As Ludwig von Bertalanffy's theory stated, combining the expertise of both teachers creates an interaction that motivates teachers to reflect on their practice and skills and can provide both co-teachers the opportunity to transform and grow in their profession. Combining the experience, instructional strengths, and skills of both the general education teacher and the English as a second language teacher enhances teaching and learning.

Musanti and Pence (2010) believed that growth did not happen alone, but when teachers collaborate and construct new ideas about teaching and learning. The co-teaching opportunity provided to the English as a second language and general education teachers allowed them the opportunity to learn from each other. The co-teaching experience supports Mezirow's (1978, 2000) Theory of Transformational Learning when the mainstream classroom teachers and the English as a second language teachers reflect on their practices and build on their knowledge and skills.

Web of Instruction and Communication

The researcher conducted interviews and a focus group. Teachers were able to communicate their needs and benefits as co-teachers. The data from these experiences helped the researcher, as the principal of the school, to understand what was important for the teachers and the students. The knowledge gained from these conversations supports the researcher's development as a better change agent at Forest Ridge School.

Teachers learned from each other and I learned from the teachers. Together, we were a true professional learning community where teaching, learning, and assessment were discussed. Goals were identified. It was beneficial to know that what we discussed and determined best for teachers and students can be carried out. We are going to take our professional discussions to the applied level of learning.

Conclusion

I began this study to understand how teachers worked together collaboratively to benefit ELL students. I wanted to understand how teachers working together could be described as a system, each working in tandem with different skills and abilities to benefit their students (Jun, Kim, & Lee, 2011). I found that each teacher was strengthened by learning from the other teachers and that co-teaching was a transformative learning experience (Mezirow, 2000) with each teacher using their background and experiences and each other's knowledge and experience to strengthen their teaching capacity thereby, each co-teaching pair along with the students, does form a system. However, through the inquiry process, I found that there was something in the system that I had not made explicit at the outset of the study and that was me, the researcher and the principal of the school.

When I conducted the focus group, and the teachers shared their experiences with me in a conversational setting, I realized that the conversations they had about teaching and learning were integral to my decision making as a leader. The teachers gave me insight regarding what was going on in the classroom. For example, they shared about their lesson-planning process, implementation of lessons, and how students responded to the lessons. They shared benefits, such as getting to know students better, and they shared challenges, such as not enough planning time. Not having enough time to plan is something I, as the instructional leader, can influence.

Building relationships with students is also something I can encourage. I would not have understood these things without talking with teachers individually and as a group.

Because of my insider status, teachers revealed information that I may not have understood as deeply if I had been a neutral, external researcher. At the same time, because I was an insider and because I evaluate teachers, I may have been told what the teachers think I wanted to hear. However, because we sat down for multiple interviews and stories were consistent, I believe that they were open and forthright about their ideas. My position as an internal researcher allowed me to help teachers build on the success of their co-teaching and help them with the challenges. It is for this reason that I believe that I am a part of the system that von Bertalanffy (1968) described. In order for co-teaching and the ESL program to benefit students, I need to be a working part of the system. Conducting inquiry projects such as this with teachers, allows me to become a deeper, more efficient part of the system. Overall, this study was a transformative learning experience (Mezirow, 2000) that helped me to co-construct new knowledge about the ESL program at Forest Ridge School and that allowed me to have a deeper understanding of my role at the school as the primary leader.

Practical Implications

Schools must work to develop effectiveness (Sigurdardottir, 2010). Ludwig von Bertalanffy defined a system as a "set of elements standing in interrelations among themselves and with the environment (Jun, Kim, & Lee, 2011). A school is a system where the elements are interrelated. The whole is equal to the more than the sum of all its parts (Jun, Kim, & Lee, 2011). In a co-teaching situation, the English as a second language teacher brings their knowledge of language acquisition and the classroom teacher contributes their knowledge of the

general curriculum in order to create a more enhanced learning environment where students benefit from the teachers' knowledge and experiences working together.

It would be beneficial to analyze how co-teachers are identified, as well as advantageous to look at the various strengths, expertise, and experiences that individual teachers possess when pairing co-teachers. These qualities are knowledge that can be shared with other teachers. It would be favorable to have teachers with various skills, experiences, and knowledge be co-teachers. Each individual's expertise would complement the other and allow for professional development.

Collaboration and co-planning requires time. The number of English language learners, instructional hours, English as second language teachers, and scheduling must be reviewed and evaluated. English language learners must be provided a sufficient amount of instruction in English as a second language as well as in core academic instruction. Scheduling is extremely difficult when English as a second language teachers service over 50 students at various grade levels, with various mandatory services, and following different schedules. Schedules must meet the needs of English language learners as well as all students. Many times in schools, students' needs, as close as possible, are fit into a structured school day schedule.

Schools today with a growing English language learner population need to explore how to best service all students. Educators need to look at the roles and responsibilities of all teachers and how everyone can best contribute to the needs of the students. By doing so, it promotes an inclusive setting for all students. For teachers, it develops and encourages the shared responsibility of teaching and learning. The co-teachers, by recognizing the individual strengths they each bring to the classroom, respect and understand how together they enhance classroom instruction and student learning.

Research Implications

The data from this study pointed to needs for future research. The participants had a variety of backgrounds and educational training. Explicit connections between their professional and personal histories and their current experiences in being ESL and general education teachers were difficult to establish. Further research is needed that explores the connection between teachers' backgrounds and their ability to work with ELL students and their ability and desire to work collaboratively with other teachers. Four out of the six participants had experience as a second language learner or living in a different county. It is important to determine how these experiences, and others, influenced ESL teachers and their general education co-teachers in order to provide similar experiences for other teachers if needed. One way to further examine connections between the teachers' backgrounds and their work with ELL students would be to increase the sample size in this study.

The results from this study pointed to the need for a similar study with a larger sample size, such as a multi-site case study. Increasing the sample of teachers would allow for additional patterns to be revealed related to the teachers training and background. Additional sites would also allow for a more nuanced understanding of contextual differences. Forest Ridge School is a unique case, a site with a newly designed ESL program in response to the growing ELL population. Other schools will have a different context. Context influences the results of the study and therefore needs further exploration.

The learning experiences of ELL students are of upmost importance, especially given the growing population of ELL students in the United States. This study explored the experiences of teachers and their beliefs about student learning, but it did not directly explore the experiences of

students, nor student learning outcomes. Further study is needed to determine if and how collaborative teaching benefits ELL students.

Limitations of the Study

The findings of this study are not generalizable to all English as a second language teachers who work with or co-teach with mainstream general education teachers. Teachers from other schools were not recruited as this was a single-site case study. The study included three English as a second language teachers and three general education classroom teachers. The teachers all knew each other and have worked together using various models teaching English language learners.

As principal of the Forest Ridge School, I have an understanding of each individual's background, experiences co-teaching, and working with English language learners. I am responsible for teachers' and students' schedules. The fact the teachers had positive, collegial, and professional relationships and volunteered as teams to co-teach English language arts to English language learners in the mainstream classroom could have impacted the results.

Application of Results

As a researcher and the educational leader of the Forest Ridge School, I will use the data from this research to implement the following plan for the next school year to enhance the co-teaching model of instruction for English as a second language teachers in the mainstream classroom. This plan will enrich the teaching and learning environment for English language learners at the research site. The major goals of the plan include: collaboration, common planning, school-based professional development, "looping," and co-planned project-based units at each grade level with authentic learning experiences.

Co-teachers need time to collaborate. One common planning period per week will be established for each grade level with the English as a second language teacher who services students at that grade level. The English as a second language teacher may co-teach with one or more teachers at one grade level. Teachers will have time to analyze data, plan lessons together, and share instructional strategies, understanding that each teacher brings a certain expertise to the classroom. Co-teachers will discuss content, vocabulary, and linguistics so our English language learners will be successful with academic text and be successful in the classroom. Schedules will be developed allowing English as a second language teachers to teach one grade level and if necessary, a sequential grade level (for example grade one and maybe grade two).

It is very important that teachers understand the students and their specific needs. To help with this process, teachers will "loop." Teachers will work with their students for at least two years. The teacher will co-teach in first grade and the following year she will move up to second grade. The next year she will go back to first grade. I believe this plan will support the English language learners as well as the new co-teacher. As students are promoted to the next grade, the English as a second language teacher will work with the same students from the previous year. The English as a second language teachers can inform each student's new teacher about the student's level of language development, content knowledge, his or her learning style, and any other pertinent information about the student. This procedure will help the classroom teacher understand how to best meet the needs of the English language learner. The English language learner will have an easier adjustment to his or her new class knowing the English as a second language teacher he or she knows will be there for support.

English language learners are assessed as to their need for English as a second language instruction based on ACCESS test results and teachers' recommendations. At the end of the

school year, students will be assigned to particular classrooms based on specific individual needs. The general education teachers, English as a second language teachers, counselors, and administrators will determine the assignments collaboratively. Two classrooms at each grade level will have co-taught English language arts classrooms by the general education teacher and the English as a second language teacher. As the principal, I will select the general education teacher that will co-teach at the grade level.

The increasing number of English language learners in our schools requires more professional development for teachers. The state requires teachers to take specific courses for recertification. I will ask our English as a second language teachers to provide workshops for our teachers. General education teachers can provide workshops on the Common Core. They can share their expertise in their respective fields and develop a sense of co-responsibility for educating all students together. Teachers teaching teachers in their own school is very authentic. Teachers know the students, their needs, and the potential obstacles they need to overcome to be successful in the classroom. According to Servage (2008), deep and positive change comes from shared professional learning.

Each grade level team will be asked to develop a project-based unit on our school theme, which is health and environmental science. Grade level teams will develop a unit in collaboration with specialists and English as a second language teachers. The unit will incorporate content knowledge and the four domains of language speaking, reading, writing, and listening. Combining the strengths and knowledge of team members should produce creative, authentic, and informative units of study. Collaborating and working together on these units provides the teachers time, encouragement, and support to be innovative in carrying out involved

projects many teachers do not have time to do alone. The whole is equal to more than the sum of all its parts.

There are many talented energetic individuals in the school who are interested in being co-teachers. As co-teaching positions become available, I will select individual who demonstrate a desire to collaborate, share ideas, and spend time planning with a co-teacher. Their talents must support our students' needs and complement the strengths of our staff members. Understanding and meeting the needs of the growing number of English language learners in my school will be a major consideration when selecting individuals for current positions as well as new positions within the school. The ability of a teacher to be an active and supportive member of a team is an asset. Teachers must work as a team when sharing the responsibility of educating any student.

The goal is for teachers to understand that they cannot do this work in isolation. Teachers working together are a support to one another. Teachers who combine their areas of expertise and strengths transform professionally, and, therefore, enhance the teaching and learning at the Forest Ridge School.

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Appendix A: Recruitment Letter

Dear _____

I am inviting you to participate in my doctoral thesis project at Northeastern University on co-teaching as a model of instruction for English as second language teachers. This study is about the benefits of English as a second language teachers co-teaching English language learners language arts in a general mainstream classroom. This study is important because there is a scarce amount of research on the experiences and beliefs of English as a second language teachers co-teaching in a general education classrooms.

As a principal of a large urban K-8 school with an English language learner population presently of 31% and continuing to grow, this study is very important to me. My goal is to gain a better understanding of how English as a second language teachers and general classroom teachers co-teaching in a general mainstream classroom can better serve the English language learners.

I am asking all English as second language teachers who presently work at the Forest Ridge School to participate in this study. If you participate, you will be one of five teachers who teach English as a second language at the Forest Ridge School.

Your participation in the study will take approximately two hours. You will be asked to participate in an individual interview. Should you consent to participate in this study, you will participate in an interview in person, no longer than two hours, during the month of June at a time and place of your choice. The interview will be audiotaped so that I have an accurate record of your thoughts. The purpose of the interview is to learn about your experience as an English as a second language teacher. I will contact you via e-mail to arrange a convenient time and location for the interview.

If you decide to participate in the study, please contact me by June 30, 2014. Please indicate the grades you teach and your years of experience as an English as a second language teacher.

If you decide to participate in the study, you will be asked to sign a consent form at the interview. I have attached a consent form that provides additional information about the study. If you have any questions before you decide, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you decide to participate, I will answer any questions about the study whenever they arise.

Participating in the study is voluntary. You may with draw from the study at any time. During the study, you can skip over any question particular question and you can respond to any question as little or as much as you want. Your position as an English as a second language teacher at the Forest Ridge School will not be impacted by your decision to participate or not to participate in the study.

I believe this study could help inform our understanding of English as a second language teachers' beliefs and experiences co-teaching English language learners in a general mainstream classroom with a general education teacher. In addition this study may inform our understanding

of how co-teachers can support and learn from each other through a co-teaching model. I hope you will take this opportunity to share your thoughts and experiences.

If you are interested, please contact me ████████████████ or if you have any questions I can also be reached at ██████████.

Thank you for your consideration of this study,

Susan Vatalaro

Appendix B: Site Permission Request Letter

May 18, 2014

Dear Dr. [NAME],

I am a doctoral candidate at Northeastern University. I am presently writing a dissertation on co-teaching as a model of instruction for English as second language teachers teaching language arts in a mainstream general education classroom. The ESL teachers at the Forest Ridge School have been doing a great deal of co-teaching English language learners as opposed to a "pullout model" of instructing these students. I would like to write about their experiences as co-teachers and to better understand how co-teaching can enhance ESL instruction. A major goal of the program is for practicing practitioners to further improve educational programs at their school. I would like to see the findings enhance the teaching and learning of English language learners. I am requesting permission to interview co-teachers at the Forest Ridge School.

Thank you,

Susan Vatalaro

I _____give permission to Susan Vatalaro to interview teachers at Forest Ridge School on their experiences teaching English language learners in the mainstream classroom.

Appendix C: Informed Consent Document

> **Northeastern University, Department**
> **Name of Investigator(s):** Principal Investigator's name -Dr. Corliss Brown Thompson, Student Researcher's Susan Vatalaro
> **Title of Project: Co-Teaching as a Model of Instruction for English as Second Language Teachers in a General in a General Education Classroom**

Informed Consent to Participate in a Research Study
We are inviting you to take part in a research study. This form will tell you about the study, but the researcher will explain it to you first. You may ask this person any questions that you have. When you are ready to make a decision, you may tell the researcher if you want to participate or not. You do not have to participate if you do not want to. If you decide to participate, the researcher will ask you to sign this statement and will give you a copy to keep.

Why am I being asked to take part in this research study?

We are asking you to be in this study because you are an English as a second language teacher who works at the Forest Ridge School.

Why is this research study being done?

The purpose of this research is to explore co-teaching as a model of instruction for English as second language teachers in a general mainstream classroom. There is a scarce amount of research on the experiences and beliefs of English as second language teachers co-teaching in mainstream classrooms. Our goal is to gain a better understanding of how English as second language teachers and general classroom teachers co-teaching in a general mainstream classroom can better serve the English language learners.

What will I be asked to do?

If you decide to take part in this study, we will ask you to participate in an individual interview in person. The purpose of the interview is to learn about your experience as an English as a second language teacher. The interview will be audiotaped so that we have an accurate record of your thoughts.

Where will this take place and how much of my time will it take?

Should you consent to participate in this study, you will participate in an interview in person, no longer than two hours, during the month of May at a time and place of your choice. The researcher will contact you via e-mail to arrange a convenient time and location for the interview.

Will there be any risk or discomfort to me?

There is no foreseeable risk or discomfort to you for participating in this study. Participating in the study is voluntary. You may with draw from the study at any time. During the study, you can skip over any particular question and you can respond to any question as little or as much as you want. Your position as an English as a second language teacher at the Forest Ridge School will not be impacted by your decision to participate or not to participate in the study.

Will I benefit by being in this research?

There will be no direct benefit to you for taking part in the study. The information learned from this study may help inform our understanding of English as a second language teachers' beliefs and

experiences co-teaching English language learners in a general mainstream classroom with a general education teacher. In addition this study may inform our understanding of how co-teachers can support and learn from each other through a co-teaching model.

Who will see the information about me?

Pseudonyms will be created for the individuals studied to protect the identity of the participants. All data will be kept on a personal computer. All audio-recorded information will be kept in the locked file cabinet after the interview. A database of all information on computer files, flash drives, personal notes and audio tapes will be password protected and kept in a locked file cabinet of the student researcher at 26 Skyline Drive in Malden, MA. All data will be destroyed in seven years.

Notebooks and interview transcripts will be kept at the home of the researcher in a locked filing cabinet. Your part in this study will be confidential. Only the researchers on this study will see the information about you. No reports or publications will use information that can identify you in any way or any individual as being of this project.

In rare instances, authorized people may request to see research information about you and other people in this study. This is done only to be sure that the research is done properly. We would only permit people who are authorized by organizations such as the Northeastern University Institutional Review Board.

If I do not want to take part in the study, what choices do I have?

Not applicable.

What will happen if I suffer any harm from this research?

No special arrangements will be made for compensation or for payment for treatment solely because of your participation in this research.

Can I stop my participation in this study?

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You do not have to participate if you do not want to. You may with draw from the study at any time. During the study, you can skip over any question particular question and you can respond to any question as little or as much as you want and you can refuse to answer any question. Your position as an English as a second language teacher at the Forest Ridge School will not be impacted by your decision to participate or not to participate in the study.

Who can I contact if I have questions or problems?

If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ the person mainly responsible for the research. You can also contact ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮, the Principal Investigator.

Who can I contact about my rights as a participant?

If you have any questions about your rights in this research, you may contact Nan C. Regina, Director, Human Subject Research Protection, 960 Renaissance Park, Northeastern University, Boston, MA 02115. Tel: 617.373.4588, Email: n.regina@neu.edu. You may call anonymously if you wish.

Will I be paid for my participation?

You will be given a $ 20.00 gift certificate to All Seasons Restaurant, Malden, MA as soon as you complete the study/survey/etc.

Will it cost me anything to participate?

The participant for the study will incur no cost.

Is there anything else I need to know?

Include any pertinent information that may not be stated elsewhere.

I agree to take part in this research.

_____   _____
Signature of person [parent] agreeing to take part   **Date**

_____
Printed name of person above

_____   _____
Signature of person who explained the study to the participant above and obtained consent   **Date**

_____
Printed name of person above

Appendix D: Interview Protocol: English as a Second Language Teacher

Participant 1A

Date:

Part 1.

[Begin Audio]

Interviewer- Hello. You have been selected to speak with me today. You have been selected because you have been identified as a teacher who has a great deal to share about the experience of being an English as a second language teacher. My research project focuses on the experiences of an English as a second language teachers who co-teach in an urban school with a growing English language learner population. Through this understanding we hope to gain more insight into the doctoral experience and how students transition into their roles as scholar practitioners who engage in research. Hopefully this will allow me to identify ways in which we can enhance the teaching and learning process for English language learners.

Because your response is important and I want to make sure to capture everything you say, I would like to audio tape our conversation today. Do I have your permission to record this interview? I will also be taking written notes. I can assure you that all responses will be confidential and only a pseudonym will be used when quoting from the transcripts. I will be the only one privy to the tapes, which will be eventually destroyed after they are transcribed. To meet our human subjects requirements at the university, you must sign the consent form I have with me. Essentially, this document states that: (1) all information will be held confidential, (2) your participation is voluntary and you may stop at any time if you feel uncomfortable, and (3)

There is no intent to inflict any harm. Do you have any questions about the interview process or how your data will be used?

We have planned this interview to last no longer than about 45 minutes. During this time, I have several questions that I would like to cover. If time begins to run short, it may be necessary to interrupt you in order to push ahead and complete this line of questioning. Interviewer -Do you have any questions at this time?

Participant-

Interviewer: We will learn a great deal together on this subject.

Interviewer- with your permission, I will begin recording and taking notes.

Participant-

Part. I

Interviewee Background

1. Interviewer: How long have you been a teacher?

2. Interviewer: What is your background in teaching?

3. Interviewer: How were you trained to be a teacher?

Part II.
Co-teaching

4. Interviewer: As an English as a second language teacher, describe your experience co-teaching English language arts in a general education classroom. Walk me through a typical day and your responsibilities and all of the activities you are involved in.

5. Interviewer: How is this co-teaching model working for you?

6. Interviewer: Do you have any concerns about this model?

7. Interviewer: What do you feel is your role and responsibilities as the English as a second language teacher in a co-taught English language arts mainstream classroom?

8. Interviewer: When and how often do you plan with your co-teacher?

10. Interviewer: Is this an efficient amount of time?

11. Interviewer: Besides planning what are other meaningful collaborative practices you shared with your co-teacher?

11. Interviewer: There are several methods to deliver co-teaching instruction: one-teach-one assist, station teaching, parallel teaching, alternative teaching and team teaching. What methods have you used? What method do you use most often? Why?

Thank you

[End Audio]

Appendix E: Interview Protocol: General Education Teacher

Participant 2A
Date:

Part 1

[Begin Audio]

Interviewer- Hello. You have been selected to speak with me today. You have been selected because you worked in a co-teaching environment during the past school year. My research project focuses on the experiences of teachers who co-teach in an urban school with a growing English language learner population. This study will allow me to identify ways in which we can enhance the teaching and learning process for English language learners.

Because your response is important and I want to make sure to capture everything you say, I would like to audio tape our conversation today. Do I have your permission to record this interview? I will also be taking written notes. I can assure you that all responses will be confidential and only a pseudonym will be used when quoting from the transcripts. I will be the only one privy to the tapes, which will be eventually destroyed after they are transcribed. To meet our human subjects requirements at the university, you must sign the consent form I have with me. Essentially, this document states that: (1) all information will be held confidential, (2) your participation is voluntary and you may stop at any time if you feel uncomfortable, and (3) There is no intent to inflict any harm. Do you have any questions about the interview process or how your data will be used?

We have planned this interview to last no longer than about 75 minutes. During this time, I have several questions that I would like to cover. If time begins to run short, it may be necessary to

interrupt you in order to push ahead and complete this line of questioning. Interviewer -Do you

have any questions at this time?

Interviewer: We will learn a great deal together on this subject.

Interviewer- with your permission, I will begin recording and taking notes.

Part. I

Interviewee Background

1. Interviewer: How long have you been a teacher?

2. Interviewer: What is your background in teaching?

3. Interviewer: How were you trained to be a teacher?

Part II.

Co-teaching

5. Interviewer: As a general education teacher describe your experience co-teaching English

language arts with an English as a second language teacher in a general education classroom.

Walk me through a typical day and your responsibilities and all of the activities you are involved

in.

6. Interviewer: How is this co-teaching model working for you?

7. Interviewer: Do you have any concerns about this model?

8. Interviewer: What do you feel is your role and responsibilities as the general education teacher

in a co-taught English language arts mainstream classroom?

9. Interviewer: When and how often do you plan with your co-teacher?

10. Interviewer: Is this an efficient amount of time?

11. Interviewer: Besides planning what are other meaningful collaborative practices you shared with your co-teacher?

12. Interviewer: There are several methods to deliver co-teaching instruction: one-teach-one assist, station teaching, parallel teaching, alternative teaching and team teaching. What methods have you used? What method do you use most often? Why?

[End Audio]

Appendix F: Focus Group Protocol

Participants; Focus Group
Date:

Part 1

[Begin Audio]

Interviewer- Hello. You have been selected to speak with me today. You have been selected because you worked in a co-teaching environment during the past school year. My research project focuses on the experiences of teachers who co-teach in an urban school with a growing English language learner population. This study will allow me to identify ways in which we can enhance the teaching and learning process for English language learners.

Because your response is important and I want to make sure to capture everything you say, I would like to audio tape our conversation today. Do I have your permission to record this interview? I will also be taking written notes. I can assure you that all responses will be confidential and only a pseudonym will be used when quoting from the transcripts. I will be the only one privy to the tapes, which will be eventually destroyed after they are transcribed. To meet our human subjects requirements at the university, you must sign the consent form I have with me. Essentially, this document states that: (1) all information will be held confidential, (2) your participation is voluntary and you may stop at any time if you feel uncomfortable, and (3) There is no intent to inflict any harm. Do you have any questions about the interview process or how your data will be used?

We have planned this interview to last no longer than about 75 minutes. During this time, I have several questions that I would like to cover. If time begins to run short, it may be necessary to

interrupt you in order to push ahead and complete this line of questioning. Interviewer -Do you

have any questions at this time?

Interviewer: We will learn a great deal together on this subject.

Interviewer- with your permission, I will begin recording and taking notes.

Student Learning-English language learners in co-taught English language arts

1. What do you think are the English language learners' experiences in a co-taught mainstream

English language arts classroom?

2. Participant:

3. Interviewer: What have you derived as valuable for English language learners as a result of

being co-taught, English language arts, in the mainstream classroom?

4. Participant:

5. Interviewer: What are the benefits of being an English language learner in a collaborative

teaching model?

6. Participant:

7: Interviewer: What do you think are the benefits of a "pull out" model of instruction for

English language learners?

8: Interviewer: Is there a specific time students should be placed in co-taught mainstream

classrooms?

9: Interviewer: Does focusing on the needs of all students, while managing the inclusion of

English language learners in a mainstream classroom hinder the support needed in order for all

students to be successful?

10. Participant:

11. Interviewer: What do you perceive as the best pedagogical practices for English language learners?

12. Interviewer: Thank you. That's all the questions I have for you. Do you have any questions for me?

13. Participant:

14. Interviewer: Thank you for your time and I will share the output of this study with you when it's complete.

[End Audio]