

Running Head: PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE  
LEARNERS

PREPARING PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS  
WITH A COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICE LEARNING PROJECT

By

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### **Abstract**

Despite considerable number of English language learners (ELLs) in mainstream classrooms, very few of the teachers are adequately trained to work with ELLs (Hutchinson, 2013). This disparity leads to many problems such as ELLs struggle with the demands of academic life in mainstream classrooms due to their teachers' lack of knowledge, skills, and positive disposition towards ELLs. Hence, mainstream teachers' awareness of ELLs' experiences, knowledge, and skills is critical. One important action for increasing the teacher awareness is to prepare linguistically responsive teachers.

This qualitative study aimed to explore the pre-service teachers' (the PSTs) experiences in a course offered at a graduate school of education at a US state university. Throughout the 15-week semester, the PSTs discussed the Funds of Knowledge approach, communicative strategies, and language and culture. They also met the community members who were ELLs and helped them practice English for eight weeks. The primary data sources were observations of the seminar portion and service-learning project, interviews with six PSTs and six ELLs, documents such as PSTs' course assignments, and pre- and post-course surveys.

The findings revealed that this course helped the PSTs develop a positive orientation towards ELLs, gave them a chance to reflect on their own beliefs about instruction, and enhanced their use of conversation strategies while interacting with the ELLs. The ELLs reported to feel more confident in their conversation skills after their interaction with the PSTs. The study adds to the literature showing the importance of providing the PSTs with the opportunities to interact with the community members

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coming from diverse backgrounds. Further research can be conducted to see whether the PSTs retain and implement the information they had learned from this experience.

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**Dedication**

To my mom



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## **Chapter 1: Introduction and Problem Statement**

Imagine yourself in a situation where you do not speak the same language with other people and you have to interact with them throughout the day. How would you feel? Frustrated? Angry? Disappointed? Lonely? Do not feel lonely; today, the USA is home to nearly 65 million people who speak a language other than English (United States Census Bureau, 2015). More specifically, New Jersey (NJ) is home to 166 languages, with 30.3% of the population (age 5 and above) speaking a language other than English sometimes or always (NJDOE, n.d.; United States Census Bureau, 2015). In other words, if you are a teacher at a school in NJ, you are more likely to meet a student who is learning and/or speaking English along with another (home) language.

Historically, language education posed a problem for educators ranging from the proponents of English-only education to the proponents of dual language education. To put it differently, while some programs restrict the use of other languages in instruction, other programs like dual language education regard languages as resources and use those languages to help all students reach proficiency in both languages and to teach the content as meaningfully as possible (Freeman & Freeman, 2008). Unfortunately, placement and exit criteria for these programs differ from school to school (Wolf et al., 2008), and most of the time they are much quicker than the research-proven timeframe,

which is approximately 5-7 years, to be proficient in a language (Cummins, 2000; Williams, 2015). Both research and student achievement reports indicate that ELLs continue struggling with the demands of academic life (DiCerbo, Anstrom, Baker, & Rivera, 2014; Ranney, 2012), especially in mainstream classrooms in which they need to learn academic language and content at the same time (Cummins, 2000; O'Hallaron, 2014; Ranney, 2012; Scarcella, 2003; Schlepppegrell, 2004). To eliminate these difficulties, it is critically important that not only ESL (English as a second language) teachers but also all mainstream teachers should be educated about ELLs and their needs. Thus, teacher education programs need to be designed to provide PSTs with the knowledge and skills so that they not only develop positive attitudes toward language learners but also learn strategies to teach language and content at the same time.

Unfortunately, only five states, Arizona, Florida, New York, California, and Pennsylvania, require all teachers to take courses about ELLs or second language acquisition (Hutchinson, 2013; Ballantyne et al., 2008). Fourteen states including Maine, New Hampshire, and Texas do not require teachers to know strategies or be experts to teach ELLs, while 32 states such as New Jersey, Maryland, and Virginia either refer to language as an example of diversity or require teachers to know some strategies (Ballantyne et al., 2008). Thus, it is highly likely that many mainstream teachers have several misconceptions about language acquisition process and ELLs (e.g. excessive use



of home language interferes with English learning) (Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Karabenick & Noda, 2004; Reeves, 2006), and are not aware of ELLs' linguistic needs as well as the best practices to facilitate these students' learning (Young & Hadaway, 2006).

### **The Framework for Preparing Linguistically Responsive Teachers**

To change these misconceptions, to increase pre-service teachers' (PSTs) awareness about ELLs, and to provide them with necessary knowledge and skills to teach these students, teacher education programs need to be designed carefully. Lucas and Villegas (2010) proposed the "framework for preparing linguistically responsive teachers" combining all of these important details about teachers' awareness of ELLs' linguistic needs. Originally proposing a framework for culturally responsive teachers, Lucas and Villegas argued the importance of taking "the notion of language from the periphery into the center of the discussion of teaching, and by extension, teacher preparation" (Lucas & Villegas, 2011, p. 56). In other words, they claim that the knowledge or application of culturally responsive pedagogy may not be enough to meet the needs unless these teachers are aware of their students' linguistic needs. Thus, teachers should have specific and "complex set of knowledge, skills, and orientations," so that they can be linguistically responsive. In this framework, there are three orientations followed by four pedagogical knowledge and skills for "the expertise of linguistically responsive teachers" (Lucas & Villegas, 2013, p. 101):

1. Sociolinguistic consciousness: An understanding that language, culture, and identity are deeply interconnected; and an awareness of the sociopolitical dimensions of language use and language education.

This element entails that teachers should acknowledge that students come with their own identity and cultural beliefs, and reflect them using various linguistic features. Apart from this, teachers should know that being a source of power, language and language education policies are directly affected by political views. Undoubtedly, these political views have an impact on the language users in and out of the classroom. This element also entails that teachers should be aware of their own identity and beliefs, as their use of and views on language affect their perceptions toward their students and their teaching philosophy.

2. Value for linguistic diversity: Belief that linguistic diversity is worthy of cultivating, and accompanying actions reflecting that belief.

This element focuses on the importance of acknowledging the home languages and seeing them as resources rather than barriers in learning the mainstream language.

3. Inclination to advocate for ELL students: Understanding of the need to take action to improve ELLs' access to social and political capital and educational opportunities, and willingness to do so.

The third element indicates that teachers should be knowledgeable about how they can take further steps to increase the educational equity, quality, and access. At this point, they have suggested that being advocate is not limited to support educational policies but includes learning different strategies useful for ELLs, modifying curriculum and materials, and improving family and community connections (Lucas & Villegas, 2011).

4. Learning about ELL students' language backgrounds, experiences, and proficiencies: Understanding of the importance of knowing about the backgrounds and experiences of ELLs, and knowledge of strategies for learning about them.

Being part of pedagogical knowledge and skills, this element indicates that teachers should know that not one ELL is similar to the other one in terms of background and language proficiency. They may come in varying language proficiency levels both in their home language and in English. Moreover, their educational experience like the duration of previous schooling (formal or informal) and their prior experiences may vary, even if they come from the same family or country. Another important aspect in this element is that teachers should be open to learn more about the students' households and personal lives, and the Funds of Knowledge they have in their families (González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005). This will help teachers design their lessons and curriculum more

appropriately for the students. Moreover, this will give the ELLs' families the message that they are valuable sources of information that can be used during the instruction.

5. Identifying the language demands of classroom discourse and tasks: Skills for determining the linguistic features of academic subjects and activities likely to pose challenges for ELLs, including identifying key vocabulary, understanding syntactic and semantic features of academic language, and the linguistic expectations for successful completion of tasks.

This element emphasizes the importance of examining the course content, tasks, and lesson delivery in terms of its linguistically appropriateness for the ELLs. However, this does not entail that teachers should simplify the language or tasks. On the contrary, teachers should know the possible challenging linguistic aspects and demands of the content so that they can eliminate these challenges and provide assistance to the students when necessary.

6. Knowing and applying key principles of second language learning:

Knowledge of key psycholinguistic, sociolinguistic, and sociocultural processes involved in learning a second language, and of ways to use that knowledge to inform instruction.

This element focuses on the teachers' knowledge about how languages are learned and skills to incorporate this knowledge into practice. Some of the major language learning

principles can be listed as (a) academic language is different from conversational language, and mostly acquired later than conversational language (Cummins, 2000), (b) comprehensible input, i.e. meaningful but appropriately challenging language is necessary (Krashen, 1985), (c) students should be exposed to authentic communicative/collaborative tasks (Swain, Kinnear, & Steinman, 2011), (d) students use and transfer their prior linguistic skills they have in their home languages while learning another language (Cummins, 2000), (e) the learning environment should be free from anxiety so that students feel comfortable to make mistakes (Krashen, 1987), and (f) students take ownership of their own learning trajectories and investments in learning (Peirce, 1995).

7. Scaffolding instruction to promote ELL students' learning: Ability to apply temporary supports to provide ELLs with access to learning English and content taught in English, including using extra linguistic supports such as visuals and hands-on activities; supplementing written and oral text with study guides, translation, and redundancy in instruction; and providing clear and explicit instructions.

This final element puts forward the importance of specific strategies to help ELLs.

Scaffolding is another important term used in teaching pedagogy. Teachers provide assistance until students need it, and gradually, eliminate these aids when the students

become proficient in that specific task (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2013; Schleppegrell, 2004). Thus, this element entails that teachers should know what kind of support to provide to the students struggling in a task.

To sum up, teacher education programs should incorporate effective teaching strategies specifically useful to teach ELLs as well as opportunities to interact with ELLs prior to beginning the profession. As a result, these teachers can provide ELLs with “the linguistic, academic, and personal support” to increase their success and comfort to participate in the classrooms (Lucas & Grinberg, 2008, p. 610). Considering the necessity to increase teacher awareness, knowledge, and skills, teacher preparation programs should teach PSTs “language progressions, language demands, language scaffolds, and language supports” (Santos, Darling-Hammond, & Cheuk, 2012, p. 4). Moreover, they should incorporate collaborative and hands-on activities so that teachers can be actively involved in the learning process (Desimone, 2009; Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001; Little, 2006; Putnam & Borko, 2000). Additionally, for all these efforts to be successful, it is also important that PSTs have positive attitudes toward ELLs and willingness to modify their instruction to meet their academic and linguistic needs (Hutchinson, 2013; Lucas & Grinberg, 2008; Lucas & Villegas, 2011; Premier & Miller, 2010).

Some teacher education programs are designed to achieve these goals in several ways such as adding a required or elective course about ELLs and language acquisition to the program (Hutchinson, 2013), modifying the course content to incorporate information on ELLs (Lucas & Grinberg, 2008), and educating mentor teachers to help these PSTs. In other words, at the end of these programs, PSTs are expected to be more linguistically responsive, aware of these students' personal lives and needs, and able to implement strategies that will increase ELLs' achievement and participation in the classroom activities (Lucas & Villegas, 2013). Another influential way to increase teacher quality is providing PSTs with opportunities to interact with ELLs such as in a community-based service-learning project (Lucas & Grinberg, 2008; Wurr & Perren, 2015). Teachers who participated in such programs with a view to understanding their ELLs better indicated that they had to leave their comfort zones to improve their teaching strategies. "I'm being stretched beyond my comfort zone and realizing that the uncomfortable feelings I have once a week, my students experience every day" (Grassi & Armon, 2015, p. 456), says a PST after she participated in a service-learning project in which she had to interact with Spanish speakers. This teacher also reported that leaving the comfort zone was a key to begin understanding the students' personal lives, and eventually their academic and linguistic needs. In her reflection, she stated she was able to build the empathy to understand how her students might feel uncomfortable in the school settings.

**The Study Context: The PRELL (Preparation for English Language Learners)****Course**

Being aware of the importance of preparing linguistically responsive teachers, a university in New Jersey requires its' PSTs to offered a course titled "Preparation for English Language Learners"<sup>1</sup> (PRELL) among three elective courses including a service-learning project as part of their coursework. The course was specifically designed for the PSTs to prepare them to work with culturally and linguistically diverse communities, more specifically to work with ELLs (Curtis, 2018). In the syllabus (Appendix A), the goals for this course were listed as

- (1) to demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of English language learners;
- (2) to practice and acquire various teaching strategies for ELLs;
- (3) to develop significant knowledge of research in education, intersections with systemic issues, research-to-practice issues, and future challenges in areas that affect the education of ELLs;

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<sup>1</sup> In order to maintain confidentiality, this course name is a pseudonym



- (4) to hone knowledge, skills and dispositions to help ELLs increase English language proficiency, content-area knowledge, and to become fully participating members of their classrooms and schools; and
- (5) to practice professional collaboration and lesson planning. (Course Syllabus, 2017, p.2)

In line with these goals, throughout the semester, the PSTs discussed the demographic trends in the country and in the state, the educational needs of the diverse communities with various language backgrounds, the interactions between schools and the community members, the types of bilingual education and language policies, the conversational strategies for teaching ELLs, and the Funds of Knowledge approach (González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005).

**The reading materials.** One of the aims of this course was to increase the PSTs' awareness about ELLs' lives, knowledge, and experiences. To realize this aim, along with several articles on language education, language policy and diverse populations, one of the key reading materials was the article titled "Intercultural Conversation: Building Understanding Together" by Dooley (2009), which discusses the strategies that native speakers can use while interacting with ELLs to eliminate ELLs' nervousness. Another major material read and discussed throughout the semester was the book titled *Funds of Knowledge: Theorizing Practices in Households, Communities, and Classrooms* by

González, Moll, and Amanti (2005). The PSTs cited these two key readings in the whole class discussions and the assignments.

**The Funds of Knowledge approach.** The key topic throughout the semester was the Funds of Knowledge approach. In the Funds of Knowledge approach, it is essential to learn about “the lives of ordinary people, their everyday activities, and what has led them to the place they find themselves” (González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005, p. 1). The major aim in learning about these lives and activities is to improve the quality of the education, especially for minority and low-income communities (Barton & Tan, 2009; Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992). As a result, it is suggested that teachers be eager to find out “one of the household’s most useful cultural resources, an essential toolkit that households need to maintain (mediate) their well-being (p. 19).” Additionally, teachers should have “the desire to improve teaching practice and a willingness to step out of their comfort zones to achieve that end (p. 8)” through learning more about students’ daily lives. After participating in a project that aimed to understand Latino families’ Funds of Knowledge through visiting their homes and conducting interviews with them, an in-service teacher stated, “This points to something else all of us teachers ... had in common – the desire to improve our teaching practice and a willingness to step out of our comfort zones to achieve that end” (González, Moll, Amanti, 2005, p. 8). In other words, the course put a great emphasis on understanding the households and the Funds of

Knowledge they had and using that information in the curriculum and in the delivery of the lessons.

**The organization of the course and the delivery of the course materials.** The course was held for 14 weeks during the Spring semester in 2017 for 160 minutes. For the first five weeks, the course was organized as a whole class discussion. After talking about the course assignments and course related issues, the PSTs discussed the readings as a whole class for an hour. In the remainder of the time, they did activities or discussed the issues that would prepare them for the community-based service-learning project they would have after the sixth week of the semester. The PSTs discussed the chapters from the book by González, Moll, and Amanti (2005) and the issues related to language, culture, cultural adaptations, migration, and intercultural conversation (See Syllabus, Appendix A). Starting from the fourth week of the semester, a group of the PSTs, served as discussion leaders and prepared discussion questions to ask the rest of the class. For example, in week 4, they read the Dooley (2009) article and the discussion leaders included questions like “How can teachers and students fix or address misunderstandings that emerge during conversations?” based on the article. That group of PSTs had responsibility to lead the discussion. However, the instructor occasionally asked additional questions and expanded the conversation and the comments. Moreover, if the PSTs needed clarification or more information about a concept, she provided them with

the additional information. For instance, from time to time, she reminded the definition of Funds of Knowledge and stated that

These household visits, interviews – it is not about school, they are there to learn about the home. You are talking to them “valuation”, building on that knowledge, different kind of environment. You would create these moments not about school but their lives, homes, families.

In other words, the instructor helped the PSTs conceptualize the Funds of Knowledge approach. The instructor also encouraged the PSTs to think more about the application of the Funds of Knowledge, especially into the curriculum. During these discussions, the PSTs were expected to make connections to their previous experiences they had gained from their student-teaching. On the other hand, teaching goals, instructional activities, or reading materials were not specified or not provided to differentiate the strategies that would be used to teach adult ELLs from the ones that would be used to teach younger ELLs during the semester.

**The community-based service-learning project.** Apart from the seminar portion, the course also had a community-based service-learning project, during which the PSTs met local community members weekly for approximately eight consecutive weeks. The service-learning project took place in a local public library in Douglas, on Wednesdays, between 6 pm and 7 pm. The community members were notified through

flyers published in the library bulletin boards, on the library website, and on the relevant website of the Graduate School of Education. Moreover, the community members were also notified by their friends or acquaintances. In other words, the community members' participation in these weekly meetings was voluntary.

As part of the service-learning project, the PSTs (namely the conversation partners or the facilitators) used conversation/activity guides (Appendix, B; Community-Based Language Learning [CBLL], 2017) for these weekly interactions, and then reflected on these interactions using a self-debrief checklist (Appendix C; Curtis, 2018). The conversation guides included information about the communicative goals, language functions, vocabulary to be taught, necessary adaptations for ELLs at different proficiency levels, and appropriate materials and resources. In the first four weeks (starting from the sixth week of the semester), the instructor provided these guides, but for the last four weeks (starting from the tenth week of the semester), the PSTs were required to create new activity guides based on what their community member wanted to learn about. In the self-monitoring debrief checklist, the PSTs evaluated their own pace of speech, implementation of wait-time, and inquiries about the community members' experiences and so on. Some PSTs chose to write these reflections right after the interaction before leaving the class, while some of them chose to do it later. The PSTs

either wrote a paragraph by picking an item from the checklist or filled the checklist with some notes in the form of phrases and handed it that way.

**The nature of the interaction with the PSTs and the community members.**

The PSTs formed groups of three to work with the community members and kept the same groups throughout the semester. In these groups of three, they also worked together to revise and implement the activity guides. After one hour of whole class discussion, the PSTs in groups scattered around the meeting room and placed the materials they brought on the tables. When the community members entered the meeting room, they were welcomed by the course instructor, signed in their names and randomly chose which group to interact with. After the PSTs welcomed the community members, they began the conversation on the topics depending on the community members' interests and needs. For example, the most common discussion topics were talking to medical doctors, ordering at a restaurant, and expressing oneself during a job interview. The PSTs also discussed issues such as talking to car mechanics and revising a blog, a personal statement for a graduate school application, or a research article. In all cases, the community members' choices shaped the topic of the conversation.

Most of the community members who came to the second or the following meetings usually went to the groups they interacted in the previous meetings. Thus, the PSTs sat together in their specified groups as long as they had a community member to

interact with. When the PSTs did not have a member in their table, the PSTs joined the other groups who had a member. In that case, those PSTs either actively participated in the conversation or passively observed the interaction between their peers and the community members.

### **My Role in the Study Context**

I started learning English as a foreign language when I was eleven years old. I enjoyed learning a language so much that when I was in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, I decided to be a teacher of English (as a foreign language). Throughout the years in my secondary and high school, I kept that dream and when I was in teacher training high school, I decided to major in Foreign Languages. During that time, I broadened my future goals, and at the age of seventeen, I decided to be a faculty member at a university where I would be a teacher educator. In other words, educating PSTs in language education has been my dream for nearly fifteen years. With this dream job in my mind, I got my bachelor's degree in Foreign Language Education. After graduation, I got the opportunity to teach English to the university students. However, this job was not satisfying enough for me, and I found the opportunity to apply to a scholarship provided by Ministry of Education which expects grantees to study and get doctoral degrees abroad and return and be faculty members. After being granted this scholarship, I came to Rutgers, obtained the Master's

degree in Language Education, and then applied to Teacher Leadership concentration of the Ed.D. program.

Considering the position that I would get in my home country after finishing the program, I strived to improve myself in terms of teacher education. Hence, during the Ed.D. program, the importance of mainstream teacher education for ELLs caught my attention the most. At that point, with the help of the instructors in the Language Education Department and my chair, I decided to focus on the PSTs' preparation for ELLs, as a result of which I designed the qualitative study to observe the PRELL course which was taught at a university. In other words, not only the increasing number of language learners in the mainstream classrooms both in the USA and around the world, but also the importance of teachers' knowledge, skills, and dispositions to educate these ELLs effectively drove me to conduct this study. As an ELL and a teacher of English as a foreign language, I expected to discover how the PSTs got prepared for working with ELLs and what kind of disposition, knowledge, and skills they had or they would have after interacting with the community members. At the end of the study, I expected not only to answer my research questions, but also to improve my own understanding of teacher education in general and teacher preparation for language learners in particular. Apart from this, after my data collection was completed and during the time I was writing the data analysis of this current study, I taught a similar course in Spring 2018, which I



designed by keeping in mind the PSTs' reflections and suggestions that I had discovered in the data. In short, throughout my journey in this dissertation process, I brought my own perspectives of a language learner and a language teacher as well as a novice teacher educator.

### **The Research Questions**

The purpose of this qualitative research study was to explore the experiences that the PSTs and the community members had during the PRELL course and during their interaction in the service-learning project. The research questions being addressed are:

1. What kind of knowledge, skills, and dispositions did the PSTs have toward ELLs before and after participating in a course titled "Preparation for English Language Learners" which had a requirement of a community-based service-learning project? Were there any changes in these knowledge, skills, and dispositions? If so, how?
2. In what ways did the PSTs and the ELLs (the community members) engage with the course?
  - a. How and when do PSTs make use of the teaching strategies for ELLs that they learned in the seminar portion of the course?
  - b. How do the PSTs experience their interactions with the ELLs?
  - c. How do the ELLs experience their interactions with the PSTs?

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

The purposes of the PRELL course, during which the data were collected for the current study, guided the selection of the research to be included in the literature review.

The major purposes of this course are to increase the PSTs' knowledge, skills, and dispositions towards ELLs, to provide the PSTs and the ELLs with the opportunity to interact with each other in a rather informal "conversational" environment, and to introduce the PSTs with the effective scaffolding strategies to use during their interaction with the ELLs. Thus, the literature review was organized by the studies that reveal findings about the PSTs' attitudes and beliefs towards ELLs, the service-learning projects to prepare PSTs for the diverse communities, and the scaffolding strategies used to teach ELLs.

### **PSTs' Dispositions Toward Teaching ELLs**

In the framework for preparing linguistically responsive teachers, Lucas and Villegas grouped the "inclinations or tendencies toward particular ideas and actions, influenced by attitudes and beliefs" as orientations of linguistically responsive teachers (2011, p. 56). Teacher attitudes and beliefs are influential in instructional practices (Byrnes, Kiger, & Manning, 1997; Karabenick & Noda, 2004). Therefore, it is essential to look across the literature to see the PSTs' beliefs and attitudes towards ELLs. The research on this issue revealed that the PSTs may not be aware of diverse populations'

linguistic needs, and therefore, they do not include necessary modifications to help these students. Some studies investigated the relationship between participants' dispositions towards ELLs and their prior experience in learning a language and/or experience in attending a course about ELLs or cultural diversity. Other studies looked at the teacher education programs to see how they prepare their PSTs to work with the culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

**Demographics and dispositions.** Some studies examined the PSTs' beliefs and attitudes and the demographic information such as being monolingual vs bilingual, and having prior coursework and experience with ELLs. In their study with 561 undergraduate participants, Dixon, Liew, Daraghmeh, and Smith (2016) did correlational analysis between demographics and the views and beliefs towards ELLs. They “hypothesize that teachers with more language learning experience themselves will be more supportive of ELLs” (p. 11). They found that the language experiences of the participants did correlate to their beliefs about language learning. Participants who were monolingual considered learning a second language to be more difficult than their fully or partially bilingual peers thought. Those who were completely fluent bilinguals considered learning a language to be less difficult than those who had studied a language but were not fluent. Interestingly, bilinguals considered language learning to be less difficult and require less motivation than participants who had learned a second language,

but were not fluent. However, prior language learning experience did directly correlate with being willing to support the ELLs. In other words, the PSTs with the language learning experiences showed more willingness to support ELLs compared to monolingual PSTs. Despite including PSTs' self-reports with a response rate of 51% (286 students who were currently enrolled in a language related course), this study provided indications of how PSTs' beliefs and background knowledge about language learning could affect their beliefs and attitudes towards ELLs, and what kind of misconceptions they might have about these issues. Thus, it is essential to teach PSTs how languages are learned and how teachers can promote ELLs learning through appropriate modifications and accommodations.

Similarly, comparing the PSTs who had prior coursework on ELLs and had current contact with ELLs to those who did not have either experiences, Torres and Tackett (2016) found out that the PSTs who had prior coursework on ELLs indicated higher levels of agreement with the inclusion of ELLs into subject area courses, and felt more prepared to help ELLs. The majority of the participants rated language barriers (78.4%) and inadequate time and resources for teachers (55.8%) as the most challenging issues. One important thing to note about data collection in this study is that the scale was designed for mainstream teachers, so the authors did not mention whether they modified the items for the PSTs. Additionally, the study sought to see whether there was a

difference in the PSTs' beliefs depending on their current experience (directly working with an ELL). However, they did not provide clear results in the analysis section.

Moreover, neither the information about the course nor the type of interaction with ELLs was clearly defined, which limited its credibility to state that this particular course and interaction with ELLs affected PSTs' beliefs and self-efficacy to teach ELLs.

In another quantitative study, Ferguson and Boudreaux (2015) looked at PSTs' beliefs about their responsibilities for teaching ELLs, their preconceptions of ELLs in a general education setting, and their perceptions of their professional training. Being enrolled in three undergraduate courses, (i.e. education-social studies methods, diversity, and English language learning course), 74 PSTs responded to a 16-item online survey. Despite having differences in their demographics, most of the participants had positive attitudes towards ELLs, and felt ready to have them in their mainstream classroom. Although they did not explain why these participants had positive attitudes towards ELLs, the courses could be a factor that made them feel more responsible and aware of these students' needs. In other words, upon examining the participants and the data collection procedures carefully, we can infer that students enrolled in these kinds of courses were probably engaged in discussions on diversity, and hence, they had developed positive attitudes towards ELLs. In short, though the study yielded important results, the researchers failed to integrate deeper interpretations to show why these

participants had developed positive attitudes and higher level of self-efficacy to teach ELLs.

**Teacher preparation programs and dispositions.** Other studies looked at the PSTs' beliefs and attitudes when they attended courses that included the topics like multicultural education, ELLs' education, and second language acquisition theories, and when they had some type of interaction with the ELLs. Torok and Aguilar (2000) investigated the changes in beliefs and knowledge in language issues after participating in a 3-week intensive summer multicultural education course. The results of qualitative and quantitative data revealed that not only the course content but also the assignments requiring the PSTs to engage in a non-English setting was rewarding for the participants. The PSTs were able to interact with the ELLs in community events and recognize their own beliefs about language issues. The PSTs became more open to linguistic diversity and aware of the language policies. The results were the same for both monolingual and bilingual participants, though. This shows that interactions with the ELLs are helpful for the PSTs, but prior language experience is not always a predictor of awareness or knowledge. Apart from this, the contradictory results between two items in the surveys (the importance of learning English rather than keeping first language and L1 instruction should be offered) indicated that the participants may still interpret the urgency to learn English as more important than maintaining the first language. The PSTs may have

thought that an L1 can only be used to accelerate English learning, and thus, they failed to acknowledge the home language as a resource and view it as an inseparable part of one's identity. These results indicated the importance of working on PSTs' misconceptions and myths about ELLs.

Pappamihel (2007) included over 130 content-area PSTs who were enrolled in a required course, specifically designed to provide information on how to work with ELLs (cross-cultural communication, ESL methodology, ESL curriculum design, assessment, and applied linguistics) with the requirement to spend 10 hours working with an ELL partner in the community (p. 48). Although the data were collected for three years, there is no detailed information about how many students participated in each cohort, or how many journals were collected at the end of the data collection period. The author, also the instructor of this course, collected reflective and dialogic journals after each hour of interaction with the ELL partner. Overall, interpretations from the self-reports seemed positive about the effects of the course on PSTs' beliefs, as the participants began to question their own beliefs and began to change them. Likewise, interacting with an ELL and seeing the course concepts in real life settings were described as rewarding. However, what kind of interaction was expected from the PSTs, despite being labeled as tutoring, and where and when this interaction occurred were not specifically described except stating that the community-based service learning experiences were varied (p. 50).

Thus, the design of this interaction experience is questionable. Finally, the reflective journals were written as part of the course requirement, therefore, the PSTs may have not included their honest feelings.

In a study conducted in Australia, Premier and Miller (2010) investigated how PSTs learn about linguistic needs. Course outlines, surveys and interviews with the PSTs revealed that the courses did not prepare the PSTs for linguistically diverse populations, which led them to be frustrated and less confident. Several of the PSTs had the misconceptions that supporting students linguistically was not their job but the aides' job. However, the PSTs also commented that being exposed to strategies to teach ELLs and having more opportunities to work with these students during their practicum would have been more beneficial for them.

Durgunoglu and Hughes (2010) conducted two studies to understand the PSTs' beliefs towards ELLs. The data on the first study with 62 participants revealed that students had somewhat positive attitudes toward ELLs and their parents, but neutral views about their own self-efficacy and preparedness. Despite being neutral, this result was interpreted as negative since the students were expected to know diversity issues due to the courses they had attended and their previous experiences with ELLs. In relation to this, the more positive attitudes correlated to higher level of preparedness and self-efficacy. The second study included observations of four randomly selected student-



teachers working in high schools and having ELLs in their classrooms. The data revealed that these participants had moderately positive attitudes towards ELLs, but low levels of self-efficacy and preparedness. Observations also revealed that the PSTs tended to ignore ELLs' needs, and mentor teachers did not provide specific guidance for ELLs; instead, ELLs developed their own way of supporting each other (p. 36). It is surprising and interesting that the courses on diversity issues that the participants attended were not helpful enough for the PSTs to increase their preparedness and self-efficacy. Hence, one can imply that teacher education coursework should be revised so that the PSTs retain the information as long as possible. At this point, the authors only emphasized the implications from the second study: Mentor teachers should be educated and peer interaction among ELLs and mainstream students should be increased as much as possible. However, deeper explanation could have been beneficial to understand why students were not prepared after attending voluntary diversity classroom experience and diversity courses. Thus, an interview could have been conducted to understand why these student-teachers "neglected" these ELLs or what they thought about their preservice education.

Hutchinson (2013) investigated the impact of a three-credit course on the PSTs' knowledge and beliefs towards ELLs. The course themes included second language learning acquisition, strategies, and adaptations as well as 10-hour ESL classroom

observation. The pre- and post-language attitude surveys and observation reflections indicated that the PSTs began to question their views towards ELLs. Although attitudes and beliefs towards ELLs changed, English-only perceptions did not change a great deal, as relevant items were mostly rated as “undecided”. This was also seen in student reflections in that several PSTs were concerned about and refrained from using students’ L1 during instruction. Moreover, the level of support for linguistic needs did not show a significant change, which indicated that the PSTs still had concerns about ELLs similar to the concerns they had prior to the course. On the other hand, the author indicated that they had learned the strategies in the course and observed how these strategies used in the classrooms with ELLs. Overall, the author did not provide detailed information about the course content and the activities the PSTs were involved in during the course and observation. Thus, she could not clarify why the course did not yield significant changes nor discuss what kind of strategies they had learned in the course and the observation. One implication can be that changes in attitudes and beliefs are very hard even if it is a semester-long course, but it is easy to learn about and implement the strategies. Thus, teacher education programs should be carefully designed so that PSTs can be more open to change their beliefs and willing to be more supportive.

**Conclusion.** The studies showed that the PSTs may have positive or negative attitudes and beliefs towards ELLs, regardless of their prior experiences as language

learners or knowledge they have about ELLs. In addition to this, attending a course including topics about multiculturalism or ELLs may or may not affect the PSTs' dispositions towards ELLs. At this point, the type of the interaction also becomes noteworthy in that close interaction with ELLs let the PSTs become more aware of the ELLs and the diverse communities. In line with this, this study would add to the literature about the PSTs' beliefs and attitudes, as the PRELL course in this study provided the PSTs with the opportunity to interact with the community members one-on-one for eight weeks.

### **Service-learning Projects to Prepare PSTs for Diverse Communities**

With the increase in the number of students coming from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, PSTs' preparation for these communities has gained importance (Lucas & Villegas, 2010). One of the ways to prepare the PSTs is to provide them with the opportunities to interact with the ELLs and the community members from these diverse populations in service-learning projects. Hence, the studies in this section were conducted to understand how service-learning projects were implemented in teacher education programs to increase the PSTs' knowledge, skills, and dispositions towards diverse communities, more specifically for ELLs. The studies investigated the impact of the service-learning projects from various perspectives such as PSTs' understanding of

the community as well as the service-learning project (Szente, 2008), and PSTs' improvement in terms of intercultural competence (Palpacuer-Lee & Curtis, 2017).

**PSTs' discoveries about themselves and the community members.** Some studies examined how the PSTs interacted with the community members, how they improved their understanding of diverse communities, and how they enhanced their own perceptions after interacting with the community members. Bollin (2007) investigated 110 PSTs' reflections on a service-learning project during which they tutored academically struggling recently immigrated Hispanic ELLs at their homes. The results showed that the participants in the project were able to understand their Hispanic students, their families and cultures, and their own beliefs about this population. Many indicated that their prior beliefs were mainly stereotypical: Hispanic families were not interested in their children's education. However, they were able to see how "hardworking" they were (p. 182). Although the main focus of the course and the service-learning project was on multiculturalism and multicultural perspectives, and not specifically on linguistic needs, many PSTs were able to acknowledge that these students needed differentiation and modification during instruction.

Szente (2008) investigated the PSTs' experience in one-on-one tutoring with the culturally and linguistically diverse students for 15 hours during a semester. Szente

collected time logs, reflection journals, and case studies to investigate the PSTs' progress in

1. understanding of service-learning pedagogy, 2. understanding the community, 3. understanding of students, 4. general pedagogical understanding, 5. knowledge about self, 6. general commentary on the impact of the practicum experience. (pp. 142-143).

The researcher found that interacting with these students one-on-one increased the PSTs' understanding not only about themselves but also about the students and the communities. They were able to apply the course readings to the real life applications in addition to developing the ways of teaching the ELLs better. The PSTs understood ELLs' linguistic needs, and modified and adapted their instruction based on these needs.

Droppert (2013) also investigated the effects of community-based service-learning project on PSTs' cultural awareness. Having been assigned to work for not-for-profit organizations, the PSTs provided assistance to the low-income, refugee, immigrant, or homeless communities, or taught English to the young adults in alternative high schools or shelters. Although the details of these service-learning projects were not provided, the results yielded that the participants found the experience as "rewarding and beneficial," as they felt more confident to be teachers after interacting with the community members. The researcher also found that the participants improved their

understanding of the multicultural communities, developed their collaboration skills with diverse communities, and improved their own perceptions about their dispositions.

Regalla (2013) summarized the PSTs' reflections on a two-week service-learning project held in Costa Rica for four consecutive cohorts. The data were collected from 28 PSTs, six of whom were non-ESL, to understand how this project helped the PSTs understand their ELLs. The participants admitted that "they had to leave their comfort zones" (p. 27). Moreover, as a result of attending 10-hour Spanish instruction during the project, the PSTs were able to "walk in their students' shoes" and acknowledge what being a language learner and a "foreigner" meant (p. 27). The author sent out a questionnaire a year after the project, and the participants stated that they could "understand the struggles faced by ELLs" better with the help of the service-learning project held in Costa Rica. Although it is not clear whether the TESOL group or non-ESL group were quoted in the article, the data revealed promising results as the service-learning project provided the PSTs with invaluable opportunities to acknowledge ELLs and their specific needs.

**PSTs' evolved perceptions about ELLs' parents.** Several studies focused on how interacting with the community members who were also ELLs' parents helped PSTs improve their understanding of these parents, especially the PSTs' views on parents' involvement or lack of involvement in the school-related activities. Hooks (2008)

investigated how the PSTs increased their knowledge about ELLs' families, diversity, and supportive communication strategies. The 44 junior year PSTs in Early Childhood major were asked to prepare a mock parent conference with the adult ELLs who were attending language classes offered by a child development and family center. In this one-time guided activity, the researcher found that the PSTs were nervous before attending this activity, and concerned about how to interact with the people who were ELLs. After this interaction, the PSTs reflected on their improved understanding of diversity issues, family lives, and communicative strategies like cues, facial expressions, slower pace of speech, and clear expressions. Even if the study relied on only one interaction between the PSTs and the ELLs, it yielded valuable information about the importance of incorporating interactional activities into the teacher education programs.

Glazier, Able, and Charpentier (2014) studied the impacts of two types of service-learning project on the PSTs' views about diversity. The 32 Elementary education PSTs were assigned to the local families to interact with them for 15 hours for a semester, during which they attended the special events, did home visits, babysat, and helped with the children's homework. The 16 PSTs in the Master of Arts in Teaching program assigned to assist teachers in a Summer school addressing the needs for low-income African-American or Latino students for a 30-hour service-learning over 5 weeks. The researchers found out that the PSTs in both courses had developed their understanding of

diverse communities. The PSTs recognized that families valued education and made every effort to have their children educated, which were not easily acknowledged by the teachers as form of parental involvement. The PSTs also revealed deficit perspectives about the families and the resources they had as well as the similarities between the families and their own families that they did not expect to see at the beginning. Finally, the researchers commented on the two types of service-learning project and emphasized that the closer interactions the PSTs had with the families and the students, the more they improved their understanding of diverse community members. In other words, being an assistant to a teacher during the Summer school did not necessarily lead to deeper and complex understanding about the diverse students' lives.

Figueora, Suh and Byrnes (2015) investigated how a service-learning project helped the PSTs improve their understanding of parental involvement in school settings. During a six-week family literacy program, the eight participants from a graduate school (four of whom were PSTs) interacted with the families who had children in the public schools. The researchers reported on one activity when the participants and the families role-played a telephone conversation with a teacher. The data revealed that the participants were able to recognize the relationship between race, language, culture, and identity. On the other hand, despite emphasizing the importance of learning about Funds of Knowledge, the participants were still likely to make assumptions about the parents



based on their own experiences. The researchers indicated that “they [the graduate students] assumed, for example, that the parents would be able to schedule daytime appointments without asking them what times of day would work best given other demands such as work” (p. 56). In other words, the graduate students interacted with the community members based on their own perceptions about scheduling without taking into account the families’ other responsibilities. The researchers concluded that despite these traditional views, the graduate students began to recognize the family responsibilities and workload, which may hinder them from attending school events.

Reyes, DaSilva Iddings, and Feller (2016) conducted a study in which the PSTs visited the homes of the early childhood students for a year. They examined the data in terms of the PSTs’ views on language, literacy, and family literacy practices, and their understanding of the Funds of Knowledge. The PSTs were able to pinpoint the language and literacy development and the family literacy practices of the children whom they wrote the case studies about. On the other hand, the study revealed that no matter how detailed the PSTs read about the Funds of Knowledge approach and discussed it, they could not go beyond the theoretical definition of the concept and could not provide real-life/classroom applications in their reflections and interviews.

**PSTs’ improvement in intercultural competence.** Several studies examined what kind of improvements the PSTs made after interacting with the community

members. In their exploratory case study, Rodríguez-Arroyo and Vaughns (2015) looked at how the PSTs benefitted from service learning experiences with ELLs. Looking at the reflective journals of 35 PSTs, the researchers found that the participants were able to address their misconceptions about linguistically diverse populations, began to question their own beliefs, and look for more integrative strategies to work with ELLs. The study revealed an important result in that working with parents in addition to working with ELLs was very insightful in that participants were able to “gain various assets of the community as well as the needs in the community” (p.26).

Apart from these, Palpacuer-Lee and Curtis (2017) conducted a study to understand how the PSTs developed their intercultural competence after attending a service-learning project in which the PSTs interacted with adult ELL community members for eight weeks during a language teacher education course. The data were collected through the researchers’ field notes, the PSTs’ reflective journals, and the PSTs’ mid-term and final course evaluations. Upon conducting a narrative analysis, the researchers primarily focused on finding out “the ‘tellable’ events that presented a ‘breach’ or a disruption of the pre-service teachers’ expected norms” (p. 170). The data yielded that the PSTs attending this course had been confronted with events that allowed them to co-construct their understanding not only about the ELLs but also about their own beliefs and identities.

In another study, Palpacuer-Lee, Curtis, and Curran (2018) found out that the PSTs' acts of engagement during a service-learning project during which the pre-service language teachers interacted with the community members who were also adult ELLs. The data consisted of reflective journals and the booklet of advice collaboratively prepared with the PSTs and the community members. The data collected from thirty PSTs revealed that the PSTs had engaged in four different ways with the conversation partners. The PSTs recognized their own assumptions about knowledge, compared and contrasted their beliefs to their conversation partners', and felt concerned about how to provide further help to the ELLs. The PSTs also celebrated the community members' achievements, built reciprocity with them, and learned about the community members' Funds of Knowledge.

**ELLs' voices about service-learning projects.** Few studies included the community members as participants. For example, d'Arlach, Sánchez, and Feuer (2009) conducted the qualitative study to reveal the perceptions of the recipients of the service. The participants were nine community members who were the Spanish-speaking Latino immigrants and who were partnered with English-speaking university students. They found out that the community members had improved their confidence in their language skills, as they changed their views about themselves and felt empowered. Moreover, the community members reported to see the university students as equal to themselves and

found them to be reachable to communicate, and criticized some of the university students for being ignorant and disrespectful. Thus, the study showed the importance of listening to the recipients of service-learning projects to improve the quality of interaction and the implementation of the service-learning projects.

Bippus and Eslami (2013) investigated the ELLs' perspectives after attending a service learning project as part of their language course in a college. Being enrolled in a language course, the ELLs were asked to either go to a retirement center to conduct interviews with the elderly residents who were the native speakers of English to write biographies about them or go to a library in which they held weekly story times for preschoolers. Although the ELLs seemed to be the service providers and the non-ELLs as the recipients, the researchers reported on the ELLs' gains after attending these service learning projects. Collecting data through documents, observation notes, and interviews, the researchers found out that the ELLs explained to feel more confident to talk to the native speakers after attending the service learning project. Moreover, the ELLs found this type of interaction very helpful to see their own capabilities and improvement. Additionally, the ELLs found the interactions very authentic, as it was the real life application for what they had learned about the language in their courses.

**Conclusion.** Although the types and applications of the service learning projects showed variety, they proved to be effective in terms of raising the PSTs' awareness for

ELLs. It has been seen that the PSTs began to think more about their own perceptions and ELLs' needs after interacting with the community members. In line with this, the ELLs were also benefitted from these interactions, as they felt more confident in their language skills and felt more integrated in the community that they were living in. Thus, it is important to include service-learning projects into the teacher education programs as much as possible. At this point, the current study aimed to add to the literature by providing detailed information about the type and the application of a community-based service-learning project, and by examining how it helped the PSTs be aware of their own perceptions and beliefs and prepared to work with ELLs.

### **Scaffolding Strategies Used to Improve ELLs' Oral Language and Conversational Skills**

Oral language development is crucial for ELLs to improve their reading and writing skills (Wright, 2010, 2016). Being in the process of language learning, the ELLs need help to achieve the tasks in a given activity, as the language is the only medium of expressing their understanding of the concepts (Walqui, 2006). Thus, the teachers should know the multiple perspectives to language learning and the learning process, and provide the ELLs with the scaffolding strategies so that the ELLs gain more confidence in their learning process and improve their language skills (Walqui, 2006). The common instructional strategies for scaffolding are listed as modeling, contextualizing the tasks

and activities, and pre-teaching (e.g. Walqui, 2006). Teachers can help ELLs improve their interactional skills by speaking slower and avoiding complex sentences, idioms, and cultural references that ELLs are unfamiliar with (Dooley, 2009; Wright, 2016).

The teachers can also encourage ELLs' participation by providing appropriate and constructive feedback, creating collaborative activities with the more proficient peers and with different grouping of students (Swain, Kinnear, & Steinman, 2011; Wright, 2016). They can design meaningful interactions focusing on explicit instruction for the topics (Cummins, 2000; Wright, 2016), use authentic materials and hands-on activities (Swain, 1985, as cited in Lightbown & Spada, 2006). Building background knowledge (Brown, 2007, as cited in Reiss, 2012; Echevarria et al., 2013), focusing on higher-order thinking and questioning skills (Bloom & Krathwohl, 1977, as cited in Reiss, 2012; Zwiers, 2014), and using home language when necessary (Hansen- Thomas, 2008; Echevarria et al., 2013) are also among the other scaffolding strategies that have been found useful in ELLs' instruction. With that said, the studies in this section conducted to examine the scaffolding strategies that increase ELLs' participation in the classroom interaction and improve their language skills.

**Scaffolding strategies to improve ELLs' interaction.** The studies revealed that teachers can improve ELLs' participation by implementing several strategies like asking purposeful questions and providing them opportunities to share about themselves. For

example, Facella, Rampino, and Shea (2005) interviewed 20 early childhood teachers to reveal what kind of teaching strategies they used for their ELLs and why they thought that these strategies worked well. The teachers reported that repetition, use of realia, and connections between content and language were helpful strategies for ELLs. However, when the results were examined carefully, it is seen that few teachers mentioned the strategies to teach language such as encouraging the kids use the words in context, target a few words within a story, and preview books before reading (p.215). Only half of the teachers indicated that they provided the ELLs with the opportunities to speak and listen (p.215). In this sense, although the teachers were able to identify several teaching strategies, they could not touch upon the specific strategies to teach the language.

After conducting research on the adaptation process of the newly immigrated students in a classroom setting, Kathleen Mohr recognized that “The teachers missed many opportunities to help ELLs communicate in class, allowing them to be less involved in oral interactions” (Mohr & Mohr, 2007, p.440). Thus, with a careful analysis of the classroom interaction they observed for a larger study, Mohr and Mohr (2007) came up with the Response Protocol, as a way to increase ELLs’ participation in the classroom interactions. They stated that teachers can find opportunities to scaffold and enhance ELLs’ interaction and learning through various types of responses. For example, when the ELLs are correct, the teachers can expand the conversation by asking questions

to elaborate their answers. When the ELLs use another language as a response, the teachers can ask them or a peer how to say it in English. When ELLs are wrong, the teachers should first understand whether the misunderstanding stemmed from lack of content knowledge or lack of language skills. Then, they should find appropriate ways to solve the miscommunication problems like “Tell me more so I know what you’re thinking” or “You said \_\_\_\_\_. But, I thought that \_\_\_\_\_. Please, help me understand.” (p. 446). When ELLs prefer not to answer or to stay silent, the teachers can encourage them to share by saying things like “Can you show us what you know by acting it out or drawing it?” or “I’m going to come back to you and ask you again. Please get ready to talk with us” instead of ignoring their silence or considering them less competent (p. 447).

Similar to what Mohr and Mohr (2007) found in their data analysis on ELLs’ opportunities to participate in the classrooms, Yoon (2007) conducted a comparative study to see how two teachers interacted with the ELLs and increased ELLs’ participation in the classroom activities and discussions. The researcher found that one teacher had an English-only approach, included American culture throughout the lessons, and ignored the cultural background of the two ELLs in his classroom. On the other hand, the other teacher encouraged the ELLs to share more about themselves and their lives and cultures, assisted them when necessary, and paired them with a non-ELL peer in some activities.



Moreover, the observation yielded that the ELLs in the first class were less active than the ELLs in the second class. One striking result with this study is that the ELLs' non-ELL peers mimicked what their teachers did. In other words, while the non-ELL peers did not interact with the ELLs and tended to avoid working with them and left the ELLs alone in the first classroom, the non-ELL peers in the second classroom were eager to help the ELLs and work with them. These students in the second classroom got excited to learn more about the ELL peers' lives and experiences. These results were corroborated with the ELL interviews in that while the ELLs in the first classroom reported to be less comfortable to actively participate in the class activities, the ELLs in the second one felt happy with the teachers and their peers, as they attended to their emotions and lives. Thus, the study indicated that creating a safe and comfortable classroom is crucial for increasing ELLs' participation in the classroom, especially in the discussion of topics that are part of the "cultural discourse", which will in turn increase their communication and linguistic skills.

In line with Mohr and Mohr's study (2007), Kim (2010) investigated how ESL teachers use questions as a way to increase participation of the ELLs in their pull-out classroom. She reported that teachers used coaching questions like "Do you have any questions? What else do we look for when we edit?" (p. 131), facilitating questions like "Do you have an answer to [your friend's] question?" (p. 134), and collaborating

questions like “Which piece is your favorite? Which piece did you not like? Which piece shows your best work?” (p. 135). Although the data were mostly collected in an ESL classroom, in which ELLs felt more comfortable to speak (Yoon, 2007), the purposeful questions helped the ELLs speak more not only in the whole-class discussions but also in small group interactions with their peers. In other words, the study proved the importance of implementing various questioning strategies to help ELLs share more about themselves and their thoughts.

In her study, Lucero (2014) focused on the oral academic language development in the first-grade bilingual classrooms to reveal how teachers use linguistic scaffolding. Observing one Spanish-medium and two English-medium bilingual classrooms throughout the academic year, she found out that teachers’ use of “micro-level” linguistic scaffolds like repetitions and restatements (p. 545) increase the ELLs oral language development and increased their level of understanding the concepts. She also looked for the macro-level discourses that teachers used based on the “students’ changing level of conceptual understanding and language proficiency over the course of a unit” (p. 547). In other words, teachers increased the complexity of the linguistic discourse as the students learned more about the concept. The data also yielded that teachers formed macro-level discourses “with the use of micro-level discourses” (p. 547). Thus, similar to the benefits

of micro-level scaffolding, the ELLs improved their contextualization of the concepts and oral language skills with the help of macro-level discourses.

**Teacher preparation for scaffolding.** Several studies were conducted to see whether PSTs learn teaching and scaffolding strategies in their teacher preparation programs. Karathanos (2010) compared mainstream teachers who had not taken any courses about ELLs in their teacher education to those who had at least three courses on ELLs to explore these teachers' use of students' native languages during instruction. Although both groups reported some level of L1 use in instruction, the group that had taken courses about ELLs before used ELLs' L1 more frequently than the group who had not taken any courses about ELLs before. The overall implication can be that courses on ELLs are effective for further instructional practices. However, the wide range of demographic differences among the participants may have led to different results. In other words, one cannot assume that only three courses on ELLs informed these teachers to use L1 during their instruction. There could be other variables that led them to modify their instructional strategies.

Salerno and Kibler (2013) conducted the document analysis of the PSTs' culminating case study projects. Out of 65 participants taking the course on teacher research and teacher capacity, 16 PSTs wrote their projects on ELLs that they had observed in their field-experience. The researchers analyzed these 16 culminating

projects, and found that most of the teachers described ELLs in terms of their behavior, family, and language. Moreover, they included several strategies to teach ELLs (i.e. peer interaction, motivation, differentiation). However, they did not recognize languages and families as resources except one or two instances. The authors indicated that only one PST who was in ESL major was able to connect the language to many other variables like student behavior and engagement. The results showed that the teacher education program was not successful in promoting linguistic diversity as well as providing effective strategies for PSTs to teach ELLs.

Daniel (2014) used various data collection methods, such as individual case studies, surveys, observations, and individual interviews with many stakeholders (e.g. teacher educators, supervisors, mentors), to understand how and when PSTs learned to educate linguistically diverse populations during their one-year long internship. The results revealed that ELLs' language needs and the best practices to meet these needs were not discussed or taught neither during the training courses by the teacher educators nor during internship by mentors/cooperative teachers. These PSTs were able to see changes in students' interaction and involvement in the classroom activities on the condition that they were engaged with these ELLs in some ways with their own effort. In other words, this teacher education program failed to integrate language learning and

language diversity issues into the coursework, which resulted in unprepared PSTs having a lower level of self-efficacy to teach ELLs.

**Conclusion.** The studies indicated that linguistic scaffolding such as repeating the words, phrases, and instructions; reformulating the sentences; speaking clearer and in a slower pace; asking appropriate questions, and using the ELLs' home languages as resources were reported to be helpful to increase the ELLs' conversational and oral language skills. On the other hand, the studies conducted to see whether teacher education programs introduce these skills or improve the PSTs' self-efficacy revealed that teacher education programs need substantial revisions to introduce the PSTs, regardless of their area of specialization, with the effective teaching and scaffolding strategies. At this point, this study would provide information about how the PSTs taking this course specifically designed to teach ELLs got prepared to work with ELLs.

### **Summary of the Literature Review**

The review of the literature showed that teacher education programs had a major role in the preparation of the PSTs for the linguistically and culturally diverse communities. The PSTs might have assumptions, biases and prejudices towards diverse populations and lack of understanding of effective strategies that work best with these communities. The studies revealed that the PSTs can improve their knowledge, skills, and dispositions toward diverse populations with the help of carefully designed teacher

education programs. In the studies reviewed, the researchers found that the PSTs needed to be exposed to the specific teaching strategies to use with the ELLs. Moreover, the PSTs improved their understanding of diverse populations the best when they were provided with the opportunities to interact with the ELLs closely such as through a community-based service-learning project. Although the studies reviewed yielded similar results, the participants and the types of the service-learning projects showed variety. Thus, it is still important to examine different participants in different courses including different service-learning projects.

This study would add to the literature how attending a purposefully designed course to teach ELLs enhanced the PSTs' knowledge, skills, and dispositions toward ELLs. Moreover, this study would provide additional insight to few number of studies including the perspectives of the recipients of the service. Finally, the majority of the literature reviewed did not provide detailed information about the courses and/or the service-learning projects. Thus, providing detailed description of the course content, the course materials, and the nature of the interaction with the community members, this study would offer insights to teacher educators who plan to add similar courses and service-learning projects into their teacher education programs.

### **Chapter 3: Methodology**

This chapter provides detailed information about the research design, the participants, and the research site. The chapter also includes brief description of the PRELL course, the course materials, and the nature of the interaction occurred between the PSTs and the community members. The chapter concludes with the information on ethics, researcher bias and assumptions followed by issues on validity and reliability.

#### **Research Design**

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences that the PSTs and the adult community members who were ELLs had during the course of their interaction. The qualitative design was used, as it helps researchers understand “how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences” (Merriam, 2009, p. 5). Moreover, the flexibility of the qualitative research strategies enables researchers to probe for additional details when initial questions do not result in full elaborations (Guest, Namey, & Mitchell, 2012). In this way, the qualitative design helped me elucidate how the PSTs experienced the PRELL course that was specifically designed to teach PSTs about ELLs, what the PSTs learned from the course content, how the PSTs used the strategies they learned from the course content, and how the PSTs and the community members engaged with each other. On the other hand, the multilingual feature of the weekly meetings challenged me to collect data to understand

the experiences of the novice speakers. In other words, my emerging skills in Spanish prevented me from understanding the Spanish conversation occurred during the weekly meetings with the community members and interviewing the novice speakers of English whose home language is Spanish.

### **Research Site**

Although the study consisted of the PSTs who were enrolled in a graduate level course at a university in New Jersey, the study was conducted where the course section met, i.e. in an off-campus location- a public library which was located in one of the most diverse cities (Douglas) in the state. Nearly 54.4% of sixty thousand people are non-White population, among which 49.9% of total population are Hispanic or Latino/a, and 38.6 % of total population are foreign born persons (United States Census Bureau, 2015). In line with that, 57.4% of population who are over the age of five speak a language other than English at home (United States Census Bureau, 2015). Moreover, the percent of high school graduates (25-years old and above) is 62.4, while the percent of people with Bachelor's degree (25 years old and above) is 20.5. The median household income was \$38,399 with a poverty rate of 34.9%. Considering the linguistic needs of this culturally and linguistically diverse community, the neighboring university had built the connections with the public library not only to serve the community but also to give its' PSTs the chance to interact with the community members.



**The PRELL Course**

The course titled as PRELL (Preparation for English Language Learners) was specifically designed for the PSTs to prepare them to work with culturally and linguistically diverse communities, more specifically for ELLs. The PSTs discussed both the issues regarding the ELLs' lives and education and the Funds of Knowledge approach (González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005). As the PSTs attending this course had already done their student-teaching, they were expected to make connections to their previous experiences throughout the course. Moreover, the PSTs were introduced with the conversational strategies to help ELLs and improved their way of teaching English to the adult community members.

In addition to the seminar portion, the course also had a community-based service-learning project, during which the PSTs met local community members approximately eight times in the Spring 2017 semester (which was explained in detail in Chapter 1). The PSTs as conversation partners or facilitators used conversation/activity guides for these weekly interactions, and then reflected on these interactions in several assignments.

**Participants**

The data collected during the Spring 2017 semester from the participants who were the PSTs taking the PRELL course and the ELLs (namely the community members)

attending the service-learning project. A purposeful sampling strategy was used for the study, as it enables researchers to find participants who will provide the most detailed information about the issue (Merriam, 2009).

The main criterion for sample selection for the PSTs was to be enrolled in this particular section of the PRELL course and to agree to participate in the study. All of the 21 enrolled students gave their consents to be part of the study (Table 1). One of the PSTs was specialized in ESL, two of them was specialized in science education, and 18 of them were specialized in special education. The PSTs in special education program chose to enroll this course among the three courses that had a community-based service-learning project to fulfil the requirement of a community-service for graduation. The other three PSTs chose to take the course as an elective. The data from the PST specialized in ESL was excluded from the data analysis considering that the purpose of the study was to examine the experiences of the PSTs who would teach ELLs as mainstream or special education teachers.

Out of the remaining 20 PSTs, 19 PSTs took the pre-course survey. Eighteen of the respondents answered the Likert-scale survey and the demographic questions, and one participant only responded to the demographic questions. Out of those 20 PSTs, 19 of them filled the post-course survey and the same student did not fill both pre- and post-course surveys. All of the 20 students handed in all of the course assignments (weekly

reflections, language autobiography, overall reflection on meeting community members, and intercultural case study).

The PSTs formed groups of three to work with the community members, so seven groups were formed in total. When they finished the whole class discussion, the PSTs sat in their groups and met the community members. In the case of not having a member to interact with, the PSTs joined the other groups. When the community members came to their group, the PSTs welcomed them and started the conversation by asking about their day, and continued in the direction of the community members' interest. The PSTs kept the same groups throughout the semester and worked together to revise and implement the activity guides for the first four weeks, and create and implement new activity guides for the last four weeks depending on the community members' interests and needs. Talking to medical doctors, ordering at a restaurant, or holding a mock interview were among the mostly discussed topics as well as editing personal statement, a research article or a blog post depending on the community members' interest and desire.

Table 1

*PSTs as participants*

<b>Name of the Participant (in the groups of they formed)</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Previous experience</b>	<b>Travel</b>	<b>Language</b>
Melissa	Special education	Moderate-have a boyfriend,	Many countries such as Spain, France,	English, some Spanish

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		casual acquaintances	Mexico, Aruba, Slovakia, Morocco, New Zealand, Austria	
Shannon*	Special education	Tutoring, casual friends, Spanish roommates	No experience abroad	English, some Spanish
Claire*	Special education	No interaction-born and raised in White-only communities	No experience abroad	English
Rebecca	Special education	No interaction-born and raised in White-only communities	No experience abroad	English
Robin	Special education	Moderate-student teaching	Mexico, Caribbean and many islands	English
Jessica	Special education	No interaction-born and raised in White-only communities	Many countries such as Spain, France, Mexico, Aruba, Morocco,	English
Ellen	Special education	ELL experience-immigrated from Poland	Lived in Poland for 8 years. Many countries such as Tunisia, England, Ireland, France, Spain, Portugal, Slovakia,	Polish, English
Paul	Special education	Moderate-student-teaching/tutoring. Took bilingual classes	No experience abroad	Spanish, English

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Joey*	Special education	Moderate-student teaching	Dominican Republic, Mexico	English
Charlotte*	Science Education	ELL experience-immigrated from Nigeria	Holland, England, Nigeria, Germany, etc	English Creole in Nigeria, English
Yasmeen	Language education (ESL)	Family immigrated from India	India, Switzerland, Mexico, Canada, France, England, Egypt	Urdu, Arabic, English,
Mira	Special education	Family immigrated from India	No data	Spanish, English
Lily	Special education	ELL experience-Family immigrated from China	Taiwan, Japan	Chinese, English
Stella	Special education	ELL experience-Family immigrated from Italy	Italy	Italian, English
Andrea*	Science education	Moderate-student teaching/teacher substitute	Canada	English
Helen	Special education	Moderate-student teaching/tutoring	Mexico, Bahamas	English
Danielle	Special education	Limited- casual acquaintances	No experience abroad	English

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Hannah	Special education	Limited interaction-went to school with ELLs	Hungary, Italy, Sweden, Bahamas	English, Italian (Basic)
Rachel	Special education	Limited interaction-casual acquaintances	Mexico	English
Sabrina	Special education	Moderate-student teaching	Study abroad in Spain for 6 months. Spain, England, France	Spanish (BA degree), English
Jerome*	Special education	ELL experience, family immigrated from Philippines	Lived in Philippines for 3 years	Spanish (basic), English

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*Note.* Asterisk symbol (\*) indicated the PSTs I had interviewed (a total of six PSTs).

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The service-learning project took place in a local public library in Douglas for eight weeks, on Wednesdays, between 6 pm and 7 pm. More than 14 adult community members who were ELLs attended this eight-week service-learning project (Table 2). While some of the community members came once or twice, seven of them attended regularly, at least three times. The language proficiency levels of these community members ranged from beginner to advanced. As I cannot speak another language other than English and Turkish, I chose the members who had at least intermediate level of

English. On the other side, I tried to choose the community members who interacted with at least one of the seven three-PST groups, but I could not conduct an interview with a member who interacted with Andrea, Lily, and Stella. This group did not have a partner coming to their table regularly. In other words, they interacted with many different members, who came once or twice. To sum up, I interviewed six community members who came to the meetings regularly and worked at least with one group. All of the six community members who were interviewed came recently to the USA and had been learning English for many years. While four of these community members were Spanish speakers, each of these Spanish speakers came from a different country, i.e. Martina was from Spain, Felipe from Honduras, Fernando from Colombia, and Luciana from Mexico. The other two members, Jane and Wang Yong, were Chinese and recently came to the USA from China.

Table 2

*The community members*

<b>Community member</b>	<b>Languages</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Experience with English</b>	<b>Level/ skills</b>
Valencia	Spanish	Peru	No info	Beginner-Novice
Miranda	Spanish	Dominican Republic	No info	Pre-intermediate

Isabella	Spanish	Dominican Republic	No info	Pre-intermediate
Fernando*	Spanish, French	Colombia	More than 20 years	High Intermediate-advanced
Luciana*	Spanish	Mexico	More than 10 years	Intermediate
Felipe*	Spanish	Honduras	More than five years	Intermediate
Martina*	Spanish, Catalan	Spain	Several years	Intermediate
Olga	Mandarin	China	No info/ but PhD student	Near advanced
Maggie	Mandarin	China	No info/but PhD student	Near advanced
Ray	Mandarin	China	More than 10 years	Near advanced
Jane*	Mandarin	China	More than 15 years	Near advanced
Wang Yong*	Mandarin	China	More than 20 years	Near advanced

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*Note.* Asterisk (\*) indicates the community members I had interviewed (a total of six).

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### Data Collection Procedures

To answer the proposed research questions, the data were collected through surveys, observations, interviews, and documents (Merriam, 2009) during the Spring 2017 semester from January to May, when the course was taught. The data collection



began with the pre-course survey that was collected at the end of the first class and ended with the interviews conducted with the PSTs after the last meeting of the PRELL course. The primary sources of information for the study consisted of my observations of the seminar portion and service-learning project; interviews with the PSTs and the community members, the PSTs' weekly reflections on the interaction, the conversation guides used for interaction with the community members, and the PSTs' reflection papers on these interactions (Appendix D).

**Survey.** In order to record any changes in the beliefs and attitudes, I administered a modified version of ESL Students in Mainstream Classrooms questionnaire-survey developed by Reeves (2006) at the end of the first meetings of the class and at the end of the last meeting. Moreover, the surveys included open-ended questions about the PSTs' prior interaction as well as questions to gather the PSTs' demographic/background information. Although the pre-course survey was available online before the class started, only three of them responded. Thus, I delivered the paper version of the both surveys in the class. As a result, 19 out of 20 participants took both surveys and the same PST did not take either of them.

**Survey Items.** The survey had two parts (Appendix E). The first part had 16 items that were answered in 5-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree). It asked the PSTs' attitudes about language policies, attitudes about language learning and

ELLs, and beliefs about their knowledge of ELLs, and the strategies they may use to teach these students. The second part had the questions about the demographic information. It asked about their knowledge of and proficiency in another language, their level of interaction/ previous experience with ELLs or travel to other countries. The post-course survey had additional questions aimed to reveal their final reflection on the course and the meetings, and the knowledge and experiences they gained after meeting the community members.

**Interviews.** To gather richer information from the participants, semi-structured interviews, which allows researchers the flexibility of asking additional questions (Merriam, 2009), were conducted with six PSTs and six adult community members who were ELLs at the end of the semester. Interviews are appropriate for “obtaining a special kind of information” that cannot be acquired through observation and that are ideal for investigating people’s feelings and their interpretations of the world (Merriam, 2009, p. 88). All of these twelve interviews except two were conducted face-to-face and in English. One of them was conducted via Skype and one of them was conducted via a phone call. The interviews took twelve to thirty minutes. In addition to taking notes during the interviews, I audio-recorded all of the interviews via iPhone Voice Memos application and via MacBook Pro Quick Time Player, and later transcribed these interviews with the help of Notes application in iPhone and MacBook Pro.

***Interview protocols.*** The protocol for the PSTs consisted of nine questions aimed at gathering information about the PSTs' overall reflection on and reaction to the course content, and on the interaction with the community members they met during the service learning project (Appendix F). It also asked about the challenges they faced with and the strategies they learned during the semester. Interview questions to be asked to the ELLs consisted of background questions and six questions asking for their overall reflection about the interaction, their challenges while working with the PSTs, any changes in the level/quality of their interaction, and suggestions for the PSTs (Appendix G).

**Observations.** As another strategy to collect data for this study, I conducted periodic observations. Through observations, researchers can understand the flow of the activities in their "natural" setting, get a first-hand experience for the events occurring, and catch every detail of concern that may not be revealed during interviews or surveys (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007; Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002). In this study, I observed both the whole class interaction during the seminar portion of the course and the PSTs' individual interactions with the ELLs during the meetings. I had an observer as participant role in that participants knew my research goals. Although I am both an ELL myself and an ESL teacher, i.e. had background in the field of education of teaching ELLs, I rarely shared my own orientations as well as knowledge and skills with the group. With that said, I never had a chance to join the discussion during the seminar

portion, and I rarely talked to the participants when I sat in their table. However, I included my personal reflection to the observation notes to keep track of my involvement, reactions, emotions, questions.

***Observation tools.*** During the observation of the seminar portion, I looked at how the PSTs engaged with the course material, what kind of experiences and feelings they expressed about the community members when they participated to the course discussion during the seminar portion. In the previous studies, not many authors have discussed the details about the course design and how and what the PSTs talked about the ELLs. Therefore, being in the classroom gave me the opportunity to get an overall picture of what the PSTs discussed and how. For the service-learning project observations, I used the modified observation checklist used by Durgunoglu and Hughes (2010) as a guide to remind me the possible things to look for during the course of the interaction. This checklist was designed and used to observe the PSTs during their student teaching experience, so some of the items were not applicable in this study (Appendix H). The checklist was divided into four sections to describe the nature of the interaction in terms of the use of “general teaching strategies”, the use of strategies during the “delivery of the content”, the use of strategies while ELLs apply the new knowledge- “student use-application of content”, and the use of strategies for “assessment.” The instructor also asked the PSTs to reflect about their interaction using the Self-Monitoring Debrief

Checklist (Curtis, 2018). Hence, I also kept in mind the items in this checklist such as monitoring pace of speech, implementing wait-time, connecting to prior knowledge during my observation. I also used my own professional knowledge about the nature of the interactions that occurs between ELLs and native speakers of English. Additionally, I took notes for the nature of the interaction (e.g. facial expressions and body language of both interlocutors) and other strategies not mentioned in the checklists above as well as the flow of the activities. Finally, I noted the overall picture of the setting such as how many ELLs were present in each meeting and how the atmosphere of the meeting room was to provide many details about the weekly interactions as much as possible.

**Documents.** Documents are “ready-made” resources that researchers can access easily (Merriam, 2009). I collected student- and instructor-generated documents as another data collection method (Merriam, 2009). Consequently, the big part of the data came from the student-generated documents, which included weekly responses to the course content, conversation guides (activity plans) prepared to be used during the service-learning project, and reflection papers that were written after each meeting. As part of the course requirements, the PSTs wrote a language autobiography, an overall reflection for the first three weeks’ meetings, and an intercultural case study in which they closely examined a five-minute interaction with the community members. The PSTs had a chance to write about the experiences they had with these ELLs, the connections

they made to the literature/research they have read or found, and the attainments they acquired for revising their teaching philosophy. All of these documents were collected and saved in the computer in separate files.

### **Data Analysis**

Analysis of the data began after attending the first observation of the seminar portion, at the beginning of the semester. I followed several steps for the data analysis (Creswell, 2009; Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002). This section describes how I organized the data, what kind of codes I used, and how I interpreted the coded data.

**Organizing the data.** I chronologically organized the data by research methods. In other words, I had a file for the course section, and I began to place each document in this file starting with the course syllabus and pre-course survey, later added the documents as I collected them. I had separate files for instructor-generated documents, student-generated documents, observations, surveys, and interviews. Later, either by printing these artifacts or by reading them over the computer, I began analyzing the data.

**Coding the data.** I began looking at the data with the pre-course survey results and my observation notes typed up on the computer to get an idea about what was going on in each session. This helped me keep track on the PSTs' experiences during the course as well as revise my interview questions which I asked at the end of the semester. After data collection ended, I looked at the framework for preparing linguistically responsive

teachers (Lucas & Villegas, 2010) and tried to come up with codes relevant to the research question. After coming up with these codes, I first coded the interviews, and then go to the observation notes to see whether PSTs' reflections were also observed. Finally, I looked at the student-generated documents to reveal PSTs' experiences, knowledge, skills, and dispositions before and after interacting with the community members.

Codes can be generated before beginning to examine the data (i.e. deductive coding) or while reading over the data (i.e. inductive coding) (Merriam, 2009). Hence, I used both deductive and inductive coding approaches. Deriving from the literature review, the research questions, and the framework for preparing linguistically responsive teachers, a priori codes for this study were identified as “fears and concerns about working with ELLs, personal biases, cultural expectations, sentiments about the inclusion of ELLs in mainstream classrooms, feelings prior to the course, changing attitudes” (Pappamihiel, 2007, pp. 49-50); strategies used, and course impact on feelings, beliefs, and attitudes about ELLs. Moreover, I coded when the PSTs talked about their inclination for advocacy, their abilities to understand linguistic demands in texts and tasks, their application and knowledge of key principles of second language learning (Lucas & Villegas, 2010). These a priori codes were somewhat different for interviews and observations. For example, for observations, I also added codes like delivery of content,

assessment, and relational skills (which may not be generated from the interviews). For answering the ELLs' interaction with the PSTs, I used codes like "challenging issues, overall interaction, and suggestions for PSTs". Throughout this first level of descriptive coding, I constantly checked my research questions to see to what extent I could answer them. Further analysis of the data revealed several other subcodes that I did not think before: the PSTs' reflections on the use of Funds of Knowledge approach and background knowledge, on the use of conversational strategies like implementing wait-time, on the use of language as a resource.

**Interpreting the data.** I used descriptive statistics to analyze the survey data. These analyses gave me information about the pre- and post-course attitudes of the PSTs, and the changes in these attitudes, if any. I also consulted these results while looking at the qualitative data to see similarities and differences. Moreover, I also referred to these results when a relevant theme emerged. For example, the survey asked about the PSTs' beliefs about their preparation for ELLs, so I used the results on this item whenever participants mentioned their ideas about their preparation and future teaching.

For the qualitative data analysis, I retrieved the recontextualized data code by code in order to "abandon, change, re-sort, and rename" the codes to make them more meaningful (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, p. 46). Starting from answering the first research question, I tried to go beyond the codes and tried to find connections between the data



and the research questions. For example, key phrases like “at the beginning/end of the course”, “now I can”, and “I wish I had known before” were very common phrases quoted in the literature. Thus, whenever I heard or read similar phrases, which implied a change in belief or knowledge, I read the data to understand the underlying reasons for these comments. I examined the data by asking “What was the topic of that week? What may have happened so pre-service teachers said these? Was that experience the same for other participants? Did others mention about this specific incident?” These questions and others helped me interpret the data in more detail (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). Moreover, I compared my interpretations from surveys, observation notes, interviews, and documents I collected to see whether similar interpretations could be made across the data.

For answering the PSTs’ use of strategies (when and how) and their interaction with the community members, I checked the observation notes, interview, and documents. Looking across three different types of data strengthened my interpretations. Moreover, it yielded how the PSTs were (or not) able to implement the newly learned strategies or how they (could not) manage the interaction. While looking at the data to understand the PSTs’ interaction with the community members, I mostly saw PSTs’ positive feelings about the interaction as well as the feelings of nervousness and anxiety. Looking at observation notes and interviews with the ELLs helped me answer the ELLs’

perceptions on their interaction with the PSTs. Few research in the field reported on the community members' reflections on partnering with the PSTs. Thus, the findings about ELLs' perceptions about their interaction would help teacher educators consider the ELLs' reflections to modify the service-learning project.

Throughout the data analysis process, I was able to discuss the data in terms of themes and categories in detail and support them through visuals, figures, explanatory quotes, tables, and any relevant results (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007, p. 129). In other words, I used quantitative data parallel to qualitative data in that I tried to get comprehensive answers to the research questions. Reading the data over and over, I came up with different representations. For example, I categorized the data in broader themes initially based on my research questions, and later, based on the framework for preparing linguistically responsive teachers. However, the overlapping data between the subthemes let me see the data from a different perspective.

Regardless of the research questions and the framework, I categorized the data based on the core components of the course. For example, language is in the center of the course. Thus, I had a whole section on the PSTs' views on language-related issues like language as a resource and policies. Secondly, the PSTs used some instructional and conversational strategies during the meetings with the community members. Hence, the second broad theme included the data on the PSTs' knowledge, skills, and dispositions on

the use of these strategies. Thirdly, the course focused on the importance of learning about ELLs' lives, especially Funds of Knowledge. As a result, I determined the knowledge, skills, and dispositions about ELLs' lives as the third major theme. Finally, the last core feature of the course was the chance to interact with the community members. Thus, the final major theme was determined as the PSTs' knowledge, skills, and dispositions on the interaction with the community members.

### **Validity and Reliability**

Accuracy, credibility, and trustworthiness are important for any kind of study (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007). To increase the credibility of the data and to ensure its reliability, I created an audit trail by keeping journals and writing memos, and triangulated the data with different data collection methods (Merriam, 2009). In the audit trail, I kept journals and memos to describe the procedures for data collection and data analysis, and the decisions for these processes in detail (Merriam, 2009). Collecting data through various methods helped me triangulate the data. In addition to these, I provided "rich and thick descriptions" to contextualize the study so that other researchers could see the transferability of the research design and findings (Merriam, 2009).

### **Ethics, Researcher Bias, and Assumptions**

Establishing what constitutes ethical conduct is another essential aspect of a study, as it directly affects the validity and reliability of the result (Merriam, 2009). To

proceed with the study, I first received IRB approval. Apart from this, I sought permission from the course instructor and library personnel to attend the course and the conversation sessions. To introduce myself and the study to the participants, I sent an email to the PSTs enrolled in this PRELL course via course website. I also gave brief information about the study and delivered the consent forms at the end of the first class meetings.

I am myself an ELL and an ESL teacher, both of which prepared me not only to understand the ELLs' needs but also to find appropriate teaching strategies to better help them. I had also attended a very similar community-based service-learning project during my Master's studies. As a facilitator, I had interacted with the community members and prepared activity guides similar to the ones used in this PRELL class. Therefore, I considered myself a resource for the PSTs while I was designing this study, and I was planning to take a participant as observer role. However, throughout the study, I mostly took an observer as participant role. The PSTs knew that I would collect their assignments and be present to observe them throughout the semester, and I remained mostly silent throughout the observations. In other words, although I was experienced, I was not able to provide or offer help to these PSTs, especially to eliminate their nervousness before meeting the community members. For example, when one of the PSTs, Claire, indicated that a video or simulation would have helped to ease her

nervousness before the first meeting with the community members, I realized that I had missed an opportunity to share my experiences and explain what should be expected from such meetings in a simulation activity.

Apart from these, I also experienced some issues with researcher bias and perceptions about the topic of inquiry (Creswell, 2009; Merriam, 2009). As an ELL and ESL teacher, I had some difficulty being objective when reading over the data. I sometimes got frustrated to see the same comments over and over again from some of the PSTs, and suspected that they were writing these documents/assignments only to fulfill a course requirement, rather than expressing their sincere views. However, by reading the data over and over and trying to see these reflections as real personal reflections, I was able to see the data in a more objective way, which yielded richer results.

### **Chapter 4: Findings**

The aim of this qualitative study is to understand how the PSTs experienced the course, which was purposefully designed to prepare them to teach ELLs, and how they reflected on the interaction they had with the community members as part of the service-learning project. This chapter is devoted to presenting the data obtained in the study. The findings have been organized according to four broad themes relating to the PSTs' skills, knowledge, and dispositions: a) the PSTs' views on language, b) the instructional strategies they used during the interactions, c) their understanding of ELLs' lives, experiences, and knowledge, and d) the PSTs' reflections on the interaction they had with the community members. These broad themes are explained in such a way as to provide an overall picture of the PSTs' knowledge, skills, and dispositions with respect to ELLs. It is worth noting that all of the data except the pre-course survey were collected during and after the course; hence, the PSTs' prior experiences and their reflections on those experiences were identified from data collected during or after the course. To state briefly, the subthemes in each section include what the PSTs said that they already knew about ELLs, what they had learned about them (and how) in the course of the service-learning project, and how they intended to help ELLs in the future.

In order to "paint a picture" of the PST's experiences I chose to begin the findings with stories of the journeys of two of the students in the PRELL course. These portraits

are not meant to be representative of all the PST's, however, the particular students were chosen because the differences between them does shed some light on the varying experiences of all the participants in the course. These portraits highlight these two PST's experiences with ELL's prior to the PRELL course and continues with their journey throughout the semester to provide a clearer picture about the setting and the environment of the interaction.

After these two portraits, I explained the themes found across the data in more detail. The evolution of the PSTs' views on language and the language-learning process stand out as a distinctive outcome of the PSTs' involvement in the course and interaction with the community members. The first theme of the findings thus aims to present data about how the PSTs came to view English and other languages as resources, and how bilingualism was considered as an asset. The second theme is focused on the scaffolding and instructional strategies that the PSTs used during their interactions with the community members. This section is organized to highlight the PSTs' reflections on the uses of specific communicative strategies and the benefits of these strategies, and their plans to implement similar strategies in their future classrooms. Another major theme that emerges from the data is the PSTs' views of ELLs' lives, experiences, and knowledge, views which indicate their dispositions towards ELLs and their communities. The third theme presents data about the PSTs' prior knowledge concerning ELLs, their

understanding of ELLs' struggles and needs, and of the connection between identity, language, and culture. It also highlights how their views on the importance of tapping into ELLs' background knowledge developed as a result of their interaction with the community members. The fourth theme of the findings presents data related to the PSTs' interaction with the community members and what they gained from this interaction. The PSTs expressed their contentment with the interaction and their willingness to welcome ELLs in their future classrooms and to help them as much as possible. The chapter concludes with a brief summary of the findings.

### **The PSTs' Prior Experiences of Interacting with ELLs**

To understand any potential change (as part of my first research question), it was important to ascertain whether the PSTs had had prior interaction with ELLs. To determine this, pre-course and post-survey data and statements from the qualitative data were examined. In the pre-course survey, the PSTs were asked about occasions when they had interacted with ELLs before taking the course. The PSTs were given the question, "What is your interaction with ELLs?" with the options "no interaction with ELLs; tutored/taught ELLs, including student teaching; went to school with ELLs; casual acquaintances; have close friends who were ELLs; other \_\_\_\_." In the post-course survey, the PSTs also responded to the open-ended prompt, "Interaction with ELLs prior to this course." Some of the PSTs also revealed their level of interaction in their answers to post-



course survey item 3, in which they filled in the blanks in the statement, “Before having this kind of experience (i.e. the meetings) \_\_\_\_\_, and now \_\_\_\_\_.” In addition to the level of interaction, the survey asked about the PSTs’ prior exposure to other languages and their experiences in traveling to and/or living in other countries. The analysis revealed that the PSTs fell into three main groups with regard to their prior interaction: a) PSTs from immigrant families and/or with school experiences as ELLs, b) PSTs with a moderate level of interaction with ELLs, and c) PSTs with no/limited interaction with ELLs.

**PSTs from immigrant families and/or with school experiences as ELLs.** Six PSTs (Stella, Lily, Jerome, Charlotte, Ellen, and Mira) who were from immigrant families and had experiences as ELLs were placed in this group. While Lily and Ellen stated that they had tutored or taught ELLs, interestingly enough, Jerome and Stella indicated that they had had limited interaction with ELLs. Even though these two PSTs came from immigrant families and reported that their families had learned English after coming to the US, they did not consider their interaction with their families as a form of interaction with ELLs. In other words, their definition of ELLs most probably did not include their parents or close relatives as language learners, but included the language learners they had encountered in educational settings.

As for exposure to other languages and travel to other countries, Jerome and Mira had not learned their parents' native language. However, although Mira did not learn Urdu, her parents' mother tongue, she had learned Spanish at least to an intermediate level. Moreover, all of these PSTs had traveled to another country like Mexico, Italy, France, or Spain, and Ellen and Jerome had lived abroad for at least three years.

To conclude, these six PSTs had had various degrees of interaction with ELLs before meeting the community members, mostly as casual acquaintances and occasionally in the form of teacher-student relationships. On the other hand, two PSTs did not see their interaction with their own families as an example of interaction with ELLs. One conclusion to be drawn from this data is that, due to their experiences as ELLs, these six PSTs may have developed an understanding of the ways immigrants and ELLs interact with native speakers of English and lead their lives in an environment where the primary language differs from their own native language.

**PSTs with a moderate level of interaction.** The second group consisted of eight PSTs (Andrea, Shannon, Joey, Paul, Robin, Sabrina, Helen, and Melissa) who had had a moderate level of interaction with ELLs. All except Melissa had interacted with ELLs in a teacher-student relationship. In terms of their exposure to another language, Paul was a Spanish-English bilingual, while Melissa and Sabrina knew Spanish to some extent. Similarly, when it comes to travel to other countries, all but Paul and Shannon had

traveled abroad, and only Sabrina had attended a study abroad program, staying in Spain for six weeks. To sum up, the level of interaction with ELLs varied among these eight PSTs. Nearly all of them had had student-teacher relationships as well as casual interactions or close friends. Thus, it can be concluded that these PSTs may have developed an understanding of how ELLs are educated and lead their lives in the United States.

**PSTs with limited or no interaction.** The six PSTs (Claire, Rachel, Hannah, Danielle, Rebecca, and Jessica) who were placed in this group reported having had no or minimal prior interaction with ELLs. Although Hannah, Danielle, and Rebecca stated that they had gone to school with ELLs and had had casual acquaintances with them, all of these PSTs reported that they had had limited interaction with ELLs, especially in a student-teacher relationship. As for exposure to other languages and travel to other countries, Hannah and Rachel reported having learned Italian to an intermediate level. While Hannah, Rebecca, and Jessica had visited other countries like Japan, Spain, Australia, and Italia, none of them had stayed in another country for an extended period of time. Thus, it is not clear whether they had developed an understanding of ELLs and their lives and education before attending this course.

To sum up, the level of interaction with ELLs and the type of interaction prior to the course varied among the PSTs taking this course. While six PSTs had experiences as

ELLs themselves, eight PSTs had had only a moderate level of interaction, especially in their student teaching, and six PSTs had had no or limited interaction with ELLs. The next sections provide detailed results about how PSTs developed their knowledge, skills, and dispositions towards ELLs and their lives and needs.

### **The Trajectories of the PSTs Throughout the Course**

The PRELL course had the aim of improving the PSTs' knowledge, skills, and especially dispositions toward ELLs. However, the data revealed that it is hard to change dispositions even if the interaction with the ELLs occurred in one-on-one. In line with this, the PSTs' trajectories throughout this PRELL course were not the same for all of the PSTs. Considering that the PSTs' own prior experiences with the ELLs varied, it is not surprising to see the PSTs reflected on the interactions from different perspectives. However, it was still not generalizable to say that the PSTs having more prior interaction with the ELLs developed more understanding or vice versa. On the other hand, the trajectories could be grouped in terms of what they reflected on and how. Thus, two PSTs, Rebecca and Stella, was chosen as they were examples of how the PSTs reflected on their experiences.

**Rebecca's journey.** On January, 18 2017, at around 5 pm, the Douglas Public Library meeting room was full of 21 PSTs who were eager to start the PRELL course, which had the community-based service-learning project that they had never experienced

before. In a room in the basement of the library, the PSTs formed a big square in which they could see each other. Rebecca was sitting and listening carefully about the course requirements and the first discussions about language, culture, and identity after reading a couple of sections from *The House on the Mango Street*. The PSTs were talking about how they connected the reading to their lives. When it came to the discussion about the events that they were going to talk in their language autobiography, Rebecca was probably trying to make the connection between the language and the culture, and identity. Later, in the assignment, she recounted the events that affected her life: How she started dancing at 4 years old, how she struggled to continue after her grandmother passed away, and how she became a professional dancer for a sports team. Although the assignment specifically asked about the language learning experiences and their influence in their lives, she only mentioned language at the very end of the assignment.

Many of my beliefs, traditions, and languages were created through the help of my family and the art of dance. The languages being used in my house are completely different from the languages being used at dance, whether oral or physical; however, I use both of them on a daily basis and it defines who I am.

In this sense, Rebecca seemed to be challenged by the relationship between language, culture, and identity. Although she indicated that the language she used in her daily life

changed depending on what she was dealing with at that time, Rebecca did not reflect on this realization throughout the assignment nor throughout the semester.

While she was reflecting on her overall interaction with the community members, Rebecca recounted three points that she found interesting: China's one-child policy, Chinese people's resemblance to each other, and the different definitions of "a farm" for her and for the community member. Despite talking about what she learned about the member's Funds of Knowledge, which prioritizes learning the unique funds of the "others," she failed to recount the specific information she had learned about the members. Instead, she talked about very common information about China and its people. Only at the final example was she able to talk about the member's life. Rebecca was able to reconstruct her own understanding of farm, and think that people may have different perceptions about the same concepts.

Interestingly enough, in her reflections Rebecca had the habit of including the same sentences from the descriptions of the course assignments. Sometimes, she modified those sentences slightly such as she changed you to I. Whereas in others, she kept the same sentence structures, which sounded not only grammatically odd, but also gave mixed impressions about her true feelings. It was not possible to understand whether she paid attention to what she was doing, or whether she always did similar things while writing the assignments. In other words, it became hard to distinguish her real feelings

about the course and the interactions. Rebecca also kept writing the same expressions throughout the weekly reflections she wrote throughout the semester. She only changed the topics and the community member's name. For example, she always wrote, "Throughout the conversation, I made check points to make sure I spoke clearly and at a reasonable pace." It may be an acceptable way of reflection to use the same expressions and change the examples in compliance with the topics they discussed in that particular week. Nevertheless, it was impossible to understand her overall understanding of interacting with the language learners or her understanding of ELLs' different skills and needs. For instance, even though she interacted with two different community members, she wrote the same answers to the questions in the checklist "1) How do community members help you and each other? 2) What are you good at? What would you like to work on?" After her interaction with the community member each week, she wrote

As a future teacher, it's important to really understand what is being asked and explain in a matter that he'll understand. The following includes a list of what we were good at; - speaking clearly at a reasonable pace, asking politely to repeat or explain himself. The following includes a list of what we would like to work on simplifying or elaborating meanings or questions, jumping ahead instead of waiting and processing what was being said.

Apart from this, from her first meeting with the community members to her last meeting, Rebecca used the same expressions while explaining the strategies she would use in case the members could not understand her:

I made sure I spoke at a clear and reasonable pace so our community member could understand what we were asking or responding. If our community member looked puzzled by a question or response, I would ask if I needed to repeat myself or if he needed me to explain what was being said.

Similarly, she used the same descriptions to talk about the progress of the two different community members: “I think he’s becoming more comfortable and exposed to the language so he learns very quickly.” In other words, in all of these interactions, Rebecca chose to reflect on the same issues throughout the semester and to use exactly the same sentences not only in her weekly reflections but also in her other assignments. The data showed that Rebecca superficially talked about what they did and she did not explain how her knowledge, skills, and disposition toward ELLs improved reflectively or introspectively.

On the other hand, from the beginning of the course to the end of the semester (i.e. in pre- and post-course surveys), Rebecca showed willingness to have ELLs in her classroom. She also enhanced her understanding of the specific modifications of the



coursework and inclusion of the ELLs in the mainstream classrooms. However, when it came to the time needed for the language learning (5-7 years), Rebecca still thought that “ELLs should be able to acquire English within two years of enrolling in U.S. schools.” This showed that Rebecca seemed to be challenged by understanding the ELLs and their linguistic needs.

In conclusion, although Rebecca indicated that she learned a lot and was willing to have ELLs in her classroom, she did not provide evidence of understanding the ELLs, their lives, struggles, and needs. Instead, Rebecca touched upon the issues very superficially. The data showed that she was aware of the importance of interaction with the community members and ELLs, but struggled to enact this understanding in her interaction with the community members and in her reflections. She seemed to attend the course to fulfill the community-based service-learning requirements and she handed in the assignments for the sake of getting a grade. In other words, after the 14-week course, Rebecca was leaving the Douglas Public Library with what she came at the beginning, if not a little bit addition to her knowledge, skills, and disposition toward ELLs. Rebecca had the eagerness to interact with ELLs but was not able to change her stereotypical understanding of ELLs’ lives, struggles, and needs.

**Stella’s journey.** On January 18, 2017, at the other side of the big square, Stella was also listening carefully to the discussion about language, culture, and identity after

reading the sections from *The House on the Mango Street*. Although Stella was silent throughout the first class session, she was apparently excited to be part of this PRELL course, as her pre-course survey revealed her eagerness to have ELLs in her class, readiness to modify the coursework for them, and willingness to learn more about them. Stella also stated her expectation from the course: to learn “strategies for teaching ELLs and to keep them in general education classrooms, and how to incorporate all cultures into the classroom.” In other words, Stella was enthusiastic to improve herself to be more helpful for the ELLs. In the following weeks, Stella reflected on this enthusiasm more clearly. She explained how she interacted with the community members, what she learned from them, how she improved her understanding of ELLs, and what she planned to do in her future teaching. Above all, Stella was able to discover her own language learning journey and the linguistic needs of her own family members.

Having parents who had immigrated from Italy and being the first-born American in her family, Stella indicated the strong connection that she had to her Italian heritage in the language autobiography assignment completed in the second week of the course. Stella also revealed important feelings about her language learning experiences that shaped her identity. For example, she recounted that although she started to learn English at home, she was not used to hearing some colloquial expressions like “potty”. She recounted that she had heard this word for the first time in kindergarten and thought she

had heard “party,” and showed great excitement in the class, as she had thought that they were going to a party. However, Stella got very “embarrassed” when they went to the bathroom, i.e. potty. Secondly, Stella thought she was fluent in Italian. Nevertheless, when she took the Italian course in high school, she realized that she had learned Sicilian Italian, not standard Italian and felt “embarrassed” as she was boasting about speaking Italian fluently, despite being fluent in Sicilian. Stella concluded that “Despite the embarrassment knowing more than one language has brought to me throughout my life, it is something that I cherish as the most important part of my identity.” In other words, Stella mirrored the feelings expressed by many of the ELLs: feeling of inferiority not knowing English but another language. Moreover, she also shared the ELLs’ endeavors to feel empowered, as she stated that she “cherish” being bilingual.

Stella also indicated that “My culture and language will continue to grow as I grow”. This attitude was exemplified during the course by her willingness to form reciprocity with the community members and learn from them. Although at the end of the course, she suggested ways to organize the meetings better, Stella was able to learn and “grow” after these meetings. The most important gain for her was that she was able to understand the immigrant parents better, including her own.

With this realization, I made the connection that as a teacher I cannot be quick to judge a parent who may not be able to make it to parent teacher

conferences or to other school events nor can I assume that they do not want to be there or do not value their children's education. Sometimes, it is necessary for the parent to attend to other events that are still benefitting their families.

Unfortunately, the majority of the teachers in the US consider that immigrant parents are indifferent to their children's education and ignore the reasons behind these parents' absence in the school-related events. Thus, it is important to note that Stella not only gained an understanding of the immigrant parents' other vital responsibilities but also made a connection to her future teaching and a commitment to not be presumptive about parents' absence in the school related events.

Another important gain for Stella was that she made connections to her own family. Stella recognized why her mother needed her to translate the conversation, as her mother was a novice speaker of English.

Isabella spoke about how she does not like to rely on her children to always translate for her, but unfortunately she sometimes has to. This made me think of how sometimes I can be very impatient with my mother because she always needs translation as well, but Isabella helped me realize that my mother may not always want it that way, but it is necessary to get by in her daily life.

Stella was also able to understand the family dynamics more clearly. Having the responsibility to convey a message appropriately, the ELL children might feel more powerful than their parents, which may affect the parent-child relationships. Stella admitted that she understood the difficulties of her parents in their lives in the new environment after interacting with the community members.

I was only able to think of this through my point of view, as a daughter with immigrant parents, but instead I find myself looking at it through the parents' perspectives, and only now do I realize how difficult that can be.

In addition to this realization, Stella was able to improve her ways of interacting with the ELLs. Stella was able to recognize that proficient speakers are also responsible for a healthy conversation. In other words, the proficient speakers should be able to check comprehension and ask additional questions to make sure that they have understood ELLs' messages. Through analyzing a conversation for the intercultural case study assignment, Stella understood she could have implemented comprehension checks instead of guessing about what she had heard. Stella was able to develop an understanding that ELLs may be discouraged to talk when they feel that they are not understood. Thus, she made up her mind that,

As a teacher, I need to employ the face saving language consistently throughout a conversation, as well as monitor my own listening and

comprehension, so that I can encourage emergent bilinguals to continue on until we can both figure out what we want to say to each other.

In addition to these, Stella understood the Funds of Knowledge approach in deeper level, as she thought that

The process of gathering funds of knowledge means to connect to someone of a different background on a personal level and taking what you learned from that person in order to reflect on your own life, and perhaps change it, along with other lives.

In other words, Stella realized that “any person can become a valuable resource,” that help to reconstruct the information about the others, as she did about immigrant parents’ roles. Wishing that she had taken this course before the student teaching experience, Stella fully grasped the importance of Funds of Knowledge approach and ready to “[use] Funds of Knowledge from both parents and student to create lessons and units.”

To sum up, it is seen from all of these reflections on her own language learning experiences and interaction with the community members that Stella was able to enhance her understanding of ELLs’ lives, needs, and struggles. She became more welcoming to have ELLs and eager to implement the strategies she had learned throughout the semester in her future classroom. In other words, after 14 weeks, on the warm day of April 26<sup>th</sup>, Stella left the Douglas Public Library not only with a new set of skills to help ELLs but

also with the enhanced knowledge and disposition toward ELLs, especially about their lives and Funds of Knowledge.

**Conclusion.** Looking at these two journeys, it can be inferred that Rebecca was able to understand the implementation of specific strategies and the lives of the ELLs from a general perspective. Whereas, Stella was able to reflect on how interacting with the immigrant parents of the ELLs helped her improve her understanding of parental involvement in school. One thing to note is that these two different perspectives did not solely stem from coming from different backgrounds. Consequently, these two narratives were included into the findings section not only to provide information about how the course and the interaction took place, but also to provide a picture of how the PSTs saw their experience and thought about their interaction with the community members. The following sections provide further details on the PSTs' knowledge, skills, and dispositions toward ELLs' and their lives and needs.

### **The PSTs' Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions towards Language and Language Learning**

Teachers of ELLs should be aware of the fact that ELLs' linguistic abilities in their home/first languages are valuable and transferable in learning English. With that said, teachers should acknowledge other languages as a resource and incorporate them into their instruction as much as possible. In addition to the willingness to use the ELLs'

home languages to the best of their abilities, the PSTs also shared their views on other language-related issues.

**Language as a resource.** The PSTs attending this PRELL course recounted the times that they used the community members' native language as a resource while giving instruction or making the content comprehensible. Although not every PST explicitly expressed their views on the use of L1 during instruction, all of them were observed to use Google Translate, bilingual picture dictionaries, or their own knowledge of that language to make the content more meaningful. For example, the PSTs working with Chinese speakers used Google Translate and asked the community members to say or write the expressions in Chinese. Meanwhile, the PSTs working with Spanish speakers used Spanish to explain topics or ask what the ELLs wanted to learn.

Jerome, Rachel, and Sabrina worked with Valencia, a novice speaker, for more than three times. Valencia came to the United States six months ago and knew very little English. As Jerome described, "she is not able to put together sentences by herself that are more than three to five words. She requires constant prompting and translation assistance." As a result, these three PSTs mostly resorted to using Spanish and repeating words for her to demonstrate the correct pronunciation. Throughout these meetings, after greeting each other, Jerome, Rachel, and Sabrina asked Valencia what she wanted to work on. When she found a topic such as transportation, senses, and body parts in the



picture dictionary, they started working on those topics. In other words, the facilitators did not necessarily stick to the activity guides they prepared for her. Instead, they focused on the words Valencia wanted to work on at that time. These PSTs refrained from using complex sentence structures and made use of other resources like the bilingual picture dictionary. During the fifth meeting of the project, they met Valencia for the second time. The vignette below, taken from Sabrina's assignment with regards to their second meeting, is very typical of this group's interaction with Valencia in all five of their meetings.

(While discussing feelings)

Sabrina: "Hay otras paginas de palabras que prefiere practicar?"

Valencia: "Si, trabajos y sentidos".

Sabrina: \*pointing to page with "feelings" vocabulary\*

Valencia: "Ner...ner...nervous"

Sabrina: "Great!"

Valencia: "Proud...es casi lo mismo que 'confident'"

Sabrina: "Yes, great!"

(While discussing family member vocabulary)

Valencia: "Mi...mi...miss?"

Sabrina: "Miss, yes, good! Es casi lo mismo que 'señora.'"

Sabrina, Jerome, and Rachel were able to communicate with Valencia using Spanish.

They let her practice words and then appreciated her effort and success. Sabrina was willing "to communicate [with Valencia] through [her] limited Spanish language ability, as well as Spanglish," and even asserted that using Spanish helped them better communicate their "ideas across the language barrier." She also found that "[r]elating

these new English vocabulary words to pictures as well as to the word in Spanish” was helpful for “ELL[s] to understand and remember vocabulary even better.”

Jerome, who was in the same group as Sabrina, also recounted their use of Spanish. “Sabrina was able to speak some Spanish; I tried to remember some Spanish words from high school. I think Valencia appreciated that I was trying to say some things [in Spanish] grammatically off...” Jerome was aware of the importance of using ELLs’ L1 and he understood that ELLs feel more welcomed and valued when their L1 is used. Similarly, Rachel pointed out the challenges of interacting with Valencia and the resources they used to overcome these challenges as effectively as possible.

When I interact with Valencia, it is even harder to comprehend each other because of the extreme language barrier. However, I try my best to use the dictionary along with an iPhone translator, and Valencia tries her best to use as many English words as possible. Sabrina also steps in and acts as a translator [when] the resources fail to work.

Interacting with a novice speaker, Rachel was eager to use effective strategies. In addition to the dictionaries and online translators, she was also grateful to have the support of a peer who knew Spanish to some extent.

Another group found themselves using Spanish in a similar way. Seeing that Luciana was confused by the expression “I feel pain in my head”, Paul translated the

sentence into Spanish. When Luciana was able to understand that statement, they continued talking about expressing pain. Thus, Paul used Spanish so that Luciana could better understand the concept. Similarly, Joey considered Paul's translation a way to acknowledge and appreciate linguistic diversity, which was "one of many [occasions] where [they] use[d] a home experience (she speaks Spanish at home) and incorporate[d] it into the café lesson plans." In other words, Joey and his peers used Spanish not only as a tool to make the content comprehensible but also as a way to appreciate Luciana's home language.

**Attempts to learn words/phrases in ELLs' L1 during the meetings. In**

addition to using language as a resource, six PSTs explicitly stated that they were interested in learning ELLs' languages along with their cultures. They believed that this would help them form a sincere relationship with the ELLs. Helen, Danielle, and Hannah were very happy to interact with Jane, the Chinese partner, and learned a great deal from her. Helen expected to "do much of the talking," especially during the first meeting, but was surprised by Jane's willingness to teach them. "Little did I know," she observed, "that our student would be teaching us almost as much as we were teaching her..." Helen found this linguistic exchange "really interesting"; as they were "teaching her how to say phrases in English, she was also showing [them] the symbols of how those words look in Chinese." Danielle also showed interest in learning Jane's language, as they "spoke [the

Chinese words and phrases] out loud and even learned how to write them using the Chinese alphabet.”

Joey also touched upon his attempts to learn Chinese and Spanish from the community members he interacted with. He realized that the members had really liked sharing the language with them because they got to laugh at their pronunciation. Similarly, Claire wrote on her weekly reflection, “he taught us some words in Spanish today” indicating her appreciation for linguistic exchange. Finally, during one of the classroom discussions, Charlotte suggested to her peers, “let them speak to you in their language when you are able to speak their language, then they share more.” Charlotte clearly made the connection that ELLs should be encouraged to use their L1 in the classroom.

**Views on bilingualism.** Occasionally, the PSTs revealed their views on bilingualism. For example, Mira emphasized the importance of being bilingual, stating that “... it is not a disadvantage to be bilingual, as it is a difficult but rewarding task. It is important that we carry that understanding as we teach a variety of students in the future.” In other words, not only was Mira aware of the value of being bilingual, but she also highlighted the importance of encouraging students to be bilingual (to keep their home language).

Coming from immigrant families, Lily and Stella shared how their childhood experiences shaped their views of bilingualism. Although painful at the time, as they grew up, they cherished being able to speak other languages. For instance, Lily summarized her cultural and linguistic experiences this way: “I never expected these embarrassing yet exciting moments, like speaking another language, eating cultural food, and celebrating Chinese New Year, can cause such an impact on my life... Today, I take pride in speaking two languages.” Lily was aware of both the struggles and the positive aspects of coming from an immigrant background and knowing another language. Stella, who had similar feelings, declared that, “Despite the embarrassment knowing more than one language has brought to me throughout my life, it is something that I cherish as the most important part of my identity.” She was also determined to “continue to make an effort to improve on my language skills, as well as my knowledge of my culture and traditions.” It is interesting to see that these two PSTs both claim to have felt embarrassed about speaking two languages. These reflections also show how language policies can have long-lasting impacts on ELLs’ lives, and how ELLs are left to find ways to “survive” in this English-only mindset.

Two PSTs also recounted their exposure to other languages before meeting the community members. Shannon explained how she was able to learn Spanish from her roommates. “Even then [as an undergraduate] I live with two girls who speak Spanish a

lot, and so I am around them when they speak of the culture, so I picked up words that way and things like that.” Shannon expressed how she was open to interacting with people who spoke other languages and to learning their language from them. Paul also shared how he became interested in learning other languages. “Without my experience of languages beginning from my Grandfather and his brief phrases, I do not know if I would have grown to be so passionate for the Spanish language.” Paul expressed that his experiences with his grandfather led him to be willing to learn Spanish, which he now speaks fluently.

The PSTs also revealed their views of ELLs’ use of their home languages at school in pre- and post-course surveys. Item 4 asked whether “ELLs should avoid using their native language while they are at school.” Comparison of these surveys yielded an interesting result. In the pre-course survey, the PSTs had various views on ELLs’ use of L1 at school, whereas in the post-course survey, all but one PST thought that ELLs should not avoid using their home languages at school. Charlotte did not change her mind and was uncertain, which may stem from her experiences as an ELL. This stark difference showed that PSTs changed their views on the importance of maintaining the home language after attending the course. In other words, the course and meeting the community members helped them develop a welcoming approach to the use of L1 at school.

**Views on the priority of speaking English rather than the home language.**

The PSTs also reflected on language policies that prevent ELLs from maintaining their home languages. Occasionally, the PSTs touched upon the fact that learning English was prioritized by ELLs and immigrant families. For example, Andrea expressed that her ancestors, coming from Poland and Germany, had had the notion that, “You won’t speak our language, you have to speak English. You are not American if you are going to be speaking Polish or German,” and they were not able to keep their home languages. In other words, because of her family’s experience, Andrea came into the class aware of how languages other than English are treated. This anecdote also indicated Andrea’s awareness about language and power relations, as a result of which people tend to ignore home languages and prioritize learning the dominant language. Similarly, after interacting with the community members, Andrea was also surprised by her partner’s “not encouraging her youngest children to learn Spanish,” as she “thought that it would have been important to the family to preserve the language.” Andrea was aware of the importance of valuing both languages, but she encountered an ELL who had (or felt obliged to have) a different point of view on keeping the home language.

Charlotte touched upon how ELLs were left alone to learn the language, especially in educational settings. “[T]he English language learners were just pushed aside because no one took the time to truly get to know them to that degree. And, after a

while they eventually taught themselves English through conversation...” Talking about the lack of attention to ELLs in schools, Charlotte criticized the educational policies that affect ELLs’ survival in a new environment.

**Views on adopting English as an official language.** Unlike most countries, the United States does not have an official language enshrined in federal legislation (31 states have, however, adopted English as an official state language (Lui & Sokhey, 2014)). Having English as an official language established by law implies that the language of government (i.e., health care, voting, courts, education, etc.) would be in English (Lui & Sokhey, 2014). Although the necessity of establishing an official language is a matter of controversy, in the US it is mostly seen as an anti-immigrant policy (Lui & Sokhey, 2014).

The PSTs were asked to agree or disagree with the statement, “I would support legislation making English the official language of the United States” (item 16). Not surprisingly, most of the PSTs were uncertain about this issue before the course. English is the primary language used by the majority of the population and discussion of the term “official language” is not prevalent. On the other hand, after the course, while eight PSTs stated that they would not support legislative action to make English the official language, three PSTs indicated willingness to support adopting English as the official language, and eight remained uncertain. When the results were examined individually, it



emerged that ten PSTs had not changed their minds. Six of them changed from uncertain to disagree/strongly disagree; Rachel changed from uncertain to agree; and Helen changed from agree to uncertain. To sum up, the course itself did not deal directly with the question of making English the official language; nonetheless, a significant number of the PSTs changed their answer to oppose such a policy, while others remained uncertain and at least one emerged from the course newly in favor of making English the official language.

**Conclusion.** Although the PSTs attending this PRELL course were not certain about the implications of adopting English as an official language, they valued linguistic diversity, were ready to use ELLs' home languages as a resource, and developed a positive view toward incorporating ELLs' home languages in school settings. Eight PSTs indicated that the home language could be a resource in providing instructions or explaining the topics. Translating for students and letting students speak their native language when necessary were given as examples of valuing ELLs' first language. The PSTs were also willing to learn words or phrases from ELLs' home language and believed that ELLs should be able to use their home languages in school. Finally, some of the PSTs were able to criticize deficit language models and emphasize the importance of being bilingual.

**The PSTs' Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions Toward Instructional Strategies**

In order to make the language and content comprehensible to the ELLs, teachers should implement various scaffolding strategies. It is important for the teachers of ELLs to be aware of the linguistic demands of the tasks and texts they use in their instruction. They should check the appropriateness of the syntactic, semantic, and other linguistic features of the language they use throughout the lessons. Teachers can pre-teach and review the vocabulary, use simpler language for clarity, rephrase questions for comprehension, and define words in a meaningful context (Durgunoglu & Hughes, 2009). The data revealed that the PSTs attending this course used these strategies not only in their activity guides, but also throughout their interaction with the community members.

Throughout the eight weeks of meetings, Joey, Ellen, and Paul mostly interacted with two Spanish speakers with different English proficiency skills: Miranda, at low-intermediate level, and Luciana, at intermediate level. As facilitators, they asked them what they wanted to learn in the upcoming meeting, and Miranda and Luciana both indicated that they had problems in expressing themselves to medical doctors. Joey, Ellen, and Paul designed an activity guide (Appendix B) based on their interest so that the community members could use it in their lives. During the meeting they introduced the topic of talking to the medical doctors, Ellen worked with Miranda and Joey and Paul

worked with Luciana. The vignette below, which is taken from Joey's assignment, shows a part of their discussion in which they introduced the topic to Luciana.

Leaders (L) - When you talk to the doctor there are different things you can say or ask about how you feel. So, you could say, "I feel sick," or "I am in pain."

Community Member (CM) – Yes, so, you say, "I feel pain." "I feel pain" or "I don't feel well."

L – Right, so when your head hurts, you say, "I feel pain in my head."

CM – (Confused at first)

L – Me duele en la cabeza

CM – Oh, hahah, I got it, so, "there is pain in my \_\_\_\_\_ (body, head)." Or "my back has been hurting"

L – Yes, exactly! A fever is when you take your temperature and are hot (using gestures and pictures).

CM – Yes, I got it.

L- This is cut (shows picture and hand gesture).

CM – (Laughs at the gesture) Yes, I know what that is!

L – (Showed her broken leg and other vocabulary terms)

CM – (Laughs at gestures) So, this is how to pronounce headache (does gesture back to us).

L – Yes, perfect pronunciation. Try this one... earache (with gesture and picture)

CM – hearegg. Hearache... Earache (with gesture)

L – Perfect! You got it!

As this vignette shows, the PSTs started the topic by introducing it with simple explanations like "when you talk to the doctor..." to activate Luciana's prior knowledge about talking to doctors. Seeing that the community member had some knowledge about expressing pain, Paul extended the expression with an example "... you say 'I feel pain in my head.'" At this point, both Paul and Joey were aware of Luciana's facial expression

indicating that she did not get what he meant; hence, Paul provided Spanish translation for that particular expression.

Moreover, these facilitators listened carefully to Luciana's extension and examples. Then, they went on providing visuals and hand gestures to explain other complaints like a cut, a headache, an earache. They pointed to the relevant images, explained what they were, and let Luciana repeat the words. Paul also encouraged her with her pronunciation and congratulated her on being able to understand the topic. After this introduction of illnesses, they went on to role-play activities, making appointments and expressing themselves to doctors using a script. They also showed a video of the physical structure of a hospital, including the registration desk, patients' rooms, etc. After these activities, they began talking as a whole group, and then Ellen asked, "Do you have any questions about what we have learned today?" to check comprehension of the topic. Finally, the facilitators finished the meeting by talking about next week's topic. After the meeting, Ellen observed that the community members "felt a lot more comfortable now than before." Briefly, throughout their interaction, Joey, Ellen, and Paul were able to implement various scaffolding strategies to teach the topic of talking to medical doctors.

As this vignette illustrates, the PSTs used scaffolding strategies throughout their interaction with the ELLs, expressed their ideas about the usefulness of these strategies, and enunciated their plans to use them in their future teaching. These scaffolding

strategies include preparing activity guides based on the community members' proficiency levels and interests, providing appropriate vocabulary and content instruction, and clarifying misunderstood points. In addition, in the surveys, the PSTs revealed their views on the applicability of implementing several modification strategies. The rest of this section provides data on these specific scaffolding strategies and the PSTs' reflections on using them.

**Activity guides.** As part of the preparation for the meetings, each group brought activity guides, including information about the communicative goal, language functions, vocabulary to be taught, necessary adaptations for ELLs at different proficiency levels, and appropriate materials and resources (CBLL, 2017). In the first four weeks, the instructor provided these guides, but for the last four weeks, the PSTs were required to create their own activity guides (Appendix B) based on what their community member wanted to learn about. The PSTs took into account their partners' linguistic skills and interests while preparing these activity guides, and provided appropriate strategies, supporting materials, and adaptations. For example, the PSTs included sentence starters like "I have a pain in my \_\_\_\_\_" to introduce expressions to use at the doctor's office and "My favorite restaurant is \_\_\_\_\_" to talk about food and dining out.

As for the supporting materials and adaptations, the PSTs prepared additional worksheets, PowerPoints or PDF documents in which they included topic-related words

and their definitions. For advanced speakers, they used more complex sentences or spoke more naturally. Moreover, to make connections with the members' personal lives, the PSTs included pictures from multiple cultures. For example, Stella's group included pictures of food from Chinese and Hispanic culture to add variety to the materials while they were discussing dining out.

**Vocabulary and content instruction.** The PSTs put emphasis on teaching key vocabulary to their community members. Thus, they occasionally described how they taught words in their authentic conversations or as a part of their activity guides. For example, while revising Fernando's personal statement to make it clearer and more grammatical, Melissa explained the words by "using synonyms or using the word in the sentence in order to give him a better understanding of the word." While talking about Miranda's job experiences, Paul took the time to explain the words "carpet", "rug", and "mat", which Miranda struggled to differentiate. "I spent about 10 minutes and I provided examples of the three words in use and attempted to explain them the best I could." During their conversation about family and food, Rebecca needed to "simplify and elaborate" words like "older" and "elder", and "pork" and "pig".

On the other hand, the PSTs recounted times when they struggled to explain the words differently. For example, Joey admitted being challenged by reformulating the phrases. He had difficulty finding the "right words to say" to paraphrase what he said to

be clearer. In the end, Joey “had to use gestures or pictures to help” him to explain the words understandably. Joey was able to identify his challenge as well as a solution that worked well in that situation. Apart from this, during their discussion of conversation scripts about shopping at a dress store and talking about weekend plans, Claire struggled to explain the “things that everyone knows what those words mean” like being “pale” or “tan”, or having “salt and pepper” hair. ELLs acquire colloquial expressions and idioms very late in the language learning process. With that said, they need clear explanations for these phrases. However, during these meetings, the PSTs found these daily expressions as difficult to explain, as the ELLs did to understand. To sum up, even if the PSTs admitted being stuck for a moment for words to explain colloquial expressions, they were able to implement strategies like using synonyms, providing elaborations, modeling, and reformulating what they said to increase the ELLs’ comprehension to teach vocabulary and content.

**Clarifying misunderstandings.** The PSTs were also able to understand when they failed to convey their messages and discover ways to clarify their points. For instance, Robin acknowledged that her group was able to pinpoint Martina’s struggles in understanding some of the words they were discussing. After playing Heads-Up, a popular word-guessing game, Jessica said, “I noticed you became quiet and did not act out a few of the body parts. Let’s go through the list and see which ones you may not

have understood.” Thus, in the remainder of the conversation, Rebecca, Robin, and Jessica explained the meaning of eyelashes, bladder, and funny bone by rewording what they said or by showing these body parts on themselves. Later, Robin agreed that rewording was useful to lead the conversation without interruption, as she added, it “never felt like the conversation came to a halt because of it.”

As another strategy to clarify points, the PSTs used hand movements and gestures to explain words. For example, while talking about daily routines, Rachel acted out brushing her teeth to explain the concept. During the Heads-Up game, Rebecca and Jessica acted as if they were on a seesaw, since Martina could not guess the word “seesaw” during the game. Similarly, Ellen showed four with her fingers to indicate the number four during their conversation about the difference between “how much” and “how many”. On this same issue, as the recipients of the service, Luciana and Martina indicated that they were happy to see the PSTs perform actions and role-play, and advised that the PSTs incorporate these strategies as much as possible.

**Dispositions toward instructional strategies.** Witnessing the applicability of several strategies, the PSTs occasionally expressed their plans to use those strategies in their future classrooms. Joey focused on the importance of teacher reflection on interactions. He indicated that, “There is a lot that can be discovered by reviewing conversations with your students, and teachers should do this frequently to help them



grow as a professional.” Similarly, Paul found the strategies that they had learned during this course applicable in “a classroom setting for children who are just beginning to learn English,” as the meetings had aspects “that mirror working with emergent bilinguals in a school setting.” He believed that strategies such as creating lessons that are “relatively easy to understand” and implementing wait time were also important techniques for teaching ELLs in elementary schools.

Apart from Joey and Paul, four other PSTs also commented on the applicability of the instructional strategies in their future classrooms. For example, Jessica said she would remind herself that “comprehension checks and small group conversations are important in helping reciprocate back and forth with emergent bilinguals.” Jessica concluded that, “Taking the time to go over vocabulary or key phrases by repetition and explanation will make lessons go more effectively and efficiently.” Melissa saw the necessity to explain the words or concepts in various ways. Hence, she set her mind to “think of new ways to explain the same thing,” which will help her “view the same problem from multiple perspectives.” Rachel taught “grammar by relating it to the concepts Wang Yong was familiar with and by using pictures as visuals.” She indicated she did not expect to use these strategies for “the instruction of verbal explanations,” and claimed that, “This open-mindedness will also be beneficial in my instructional practices as I encounter students who come from different cultural backgrounds and learn in different ways.” Rebecca also

agreed that providing examples and modeling expectations would be helpful for ELLs, so that “they can see what is expected of them and use it as a reference/guide” when they did not understand the instructions in an activity. To put it differently, the PSTs recognized that ELLs may need explicit and direct instruction and examples to complete tasks successfully. Thus, they became willing to use various strategies like using synonyms, providing sample sentences, supporting the instruction with visuals, and implementing comprehension checks, as well as designing small-group activities.

**Willingness to modify instruction.** The PSTs also indicated their views on specific instructional modifications for ELLs in pre- and post-course surveys. The survey items asked the PSTs to indicate their agreement or disagreement with simplifying and lessening the quantity of coursework, allowing ELLs more time to complete assignments, modifying the assignments, avoiding giving a failing grade to ELLs who show effort, and advocating for these modifications.

***Simplifying coursework.*** Most of the PSTs agreed that simplifying coursework was a good idea. Interestingly, Jessica had not supported the idea of simplifying coursework for ELLs before taking this course. After the course, however, she thought simplification was a good practice. On the contrary, Joey had thought simplification was a good practice before the course, and afterward came to disagree. It can be inferred that

interaction with community members with different proficiency levels and backgrounds may have affected how the PSTs perceived the simplification of coursework.

***Lessening the quantity of coursework.*** The PSTs were also asked about whether “It is a good practice to lessen the quantity of coursework for ELLs” (Item 8). Although it can be considered a good practice to require ELLs to do less work, seven of the PSTs did not consider lessening the quantity of coursework to be good practice. More interestingly, six of these PSTs had had teacher-student relationships with ELLs before this course. While it is not clear from the data why they thought as they did, it can be assumed that they had prior experiences in which ELLs had not needed course modification. They might also have observed that the community members were able to do the tasks they assigned to them efficiently.

***Allowing ELLs more time.*** The PSTs also shared their views on allowing more time to complete coursework (Item 9). Almost all held steady in their views on this type of modification, with 16 out of 18 agreeing before the course, and 15 out of 19 after. These results indicate that the majority of the PSTs had already had the idea that allowing more time would be beneficial for ELLs, and the course may have enhanced this idea. However, it is not clear why Charlotte, Ellen, Paul, and Melissa felt uncertain about the benefits of allowing more time to ELLs.

***Modifying assignments.*** The PSTs were also asked whether they agreed or disagreed that “Teachers should not modify assignments for the ELLs enrolled in mainstream classes” (item 11). Most of the PSTs disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement; they thought teachers *should* modify assignments. The most striking change was in Shannon’s view: While she previously had disagreed with not modifying assignments, she later strongly agreed that teachers should not modify assignments for ELLs in mainstream classrooms. Considering that she was very open to having ELLs and mindful about helping them, it seems that she might have misread the statement in the post-course survey, or she might have thought that ELLs would do fine without modifications.

***Avoiding giving failing grades.*** The PSTs also expressed their views of the statement, “Teachers should not give ELLs a failing grade if the students display effort” (item 10). Thirteen out of 19 PSTs were inclined not to give a failing grade to appreciate the effort. However, Jerome, Andrea, and Rachel thought that teachers could give failing grades despite ELLs’ effort in the pre-course survey, and only Andrea did not change her mind after the course. While Jerome became uncertain, Rachel joined the others who thought that teachers could appreciate the effort by not giving failing grades to the ELLs. It seemed that the course and interacting with the community members helped them to

build an understanding of the ELLs' effort and the majority of them indicated a willingness to appreciate these efforts.

***Justifying modifications.*** In item 12, the PSTs were asked to reflect on the statement, "The modification of coursework for ELLs would be difficult to justify to other students." In both pre- and post-course surveys, nearly all of the PSTs thought that they could explain the justifications to non-ELL students. Interestingly, all of the five PSTs who were uncertain came to the conclusion that modifications would be justifiable. Therefore, the course helped them all to reinforce the idea of doing some kind of modification, and helped Charlotte and Ellen think further about this issue.

In conclusion, after attending the course, the PSTs were able to improve their understanding of the need for modification. Interestingly enough, the PSTs with none/limited interaction with ELLs seemed to be more convinced about the necessity of modifications than the PSTs coming from immigrant families and the PSTs with moderate interaction with ELLs both before and after attending the course.

**Preparedness to work with ELLs.** The PSTs also revealed their perceptions about their readiness to work with ELLs. They shared how prepared they considered themselves to be to work with ELLs and how willing they were to get more training about ELLs.

***Views on preparedness.*** The PSTs were asked to assess their level of preparedness for teaching ELLs (item 13). The answers to the item varied considerably. Although 12 PSTs thought that they were not adequately trained for ELLs in the pre-course survey, in the post-course survey, eight of them indicated that they felt prepared and seven of them expressed uncertainty about having had enough training. Another interesting result is that four PSTs from the limited interaction group agreed that they had adequate training after attending the course. From this group, Hannah was uncertain, and only Claire still thought that she was not trained enough. At this point, the PSTs may have had the idea that this course adequately prepared them to work with ELLs.

***Willingness to get more training.*** The PSTs shared their attitudes toward the item, “I am interested in receiving more training in working with ELLs”. The results showed the PSTs were open to learning more about ELLs and wanted more training. While all of the PSTs agreed or strongly agreed that they would like to get more training before the course, Jerome, Jessica, and Melissa changed their views after the course. While Jerome and Jessica became uncertain, Melissa stated she was not interested in getting more training. Although it is hard to understand these changed views, Jessica and Melissa may have seen the course as sufficient for them to be prepared to teach ELLs, as they had indicated in the previous item that they had adequate training after attending the

course. Interestingly, Jerome was uncertain about both his level of training and his willingness to get more training.

In conclusion, the majority of the PSTs decided that they needed more training to work with ELLs. These PSTs might have thought that there were other things they should learn to improve themselves. As Joey and Charlotte wished they had had more courses like this one, they might also have wanted to be given the opportunity to interact with ELLs directly.

**Conclusion.** Throughout the course and their eight-week interaction with the community members, the PSTs were able to implement many appropriate strategies to help ELLs improve their language proficiency skills and convey their messages easily. Along with visuals, Google translate, and scripts to deliver the content, they were able to model, paraphrase, repeat, and role-play to make the content and the language comprehensible. They also remarked on the instructional strategies they would use in their future teaching, as well as their perceptions about specific modification strategies. In other words, after taking the course and interacting with the community members, the PSTs not only understood the strategies that would help ELLs, but also reflected on their own ways of interacting with the community members and their gains as future educators.

### **The PSTs' Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions on ELLs' Lives, Experiences, and Knowledge**

Tapping into the ELLs' background knowledge, gaining information about their lives outside school, and addressing their experiences are crucial strategies for teachers to better help ELLs. The PSTs attending this PRELL course were able to learn about the ELLs' lives and how their identity, culture, and use of language were shaped, as well as to reconsider events in their own lives that had influenced and shaped their own identities. Moreover, throughout their interaction with the community members, the PSTs tapped into the community members' prior knowledge. Additionally, the PSTs occasionally touched upon the Funds of Knowledge approach (González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005) and the benefits of using this approach in instruction.

Mira, Charlotte, and Yasmeen met Felipe for the first time in the fourth week of the service-learning project. He recently came from Honduras to the USA to stay for a couple of months. He had an intermediate level of English proficiency. During their first meeting, they began to talk about job interviews and the facilitators began the discussion by asking, "How was your previous experience interviewing for a job?" Upon his comparison of conducting a job interview in Spanish and English, the facilitators began to ask more questions about his prior experiences. This vignette, taken from Mira's



assignment, represents how Mira, Charlotte, and Yasmeen tried to elicit Felipe's prior interview experiences.

Mira: Do you feel they ask the same questions in the English and the Spanish Interviews?

Felipe: No... (rest of sentence is inaudible, however, it makes us repeat the question)

Mira: Like, do they ask you the same types of questions, so, in the Spanish interview what types of questions do they ask you?

Felipe: Spanish? Well, they say, "Tell me about your last job, what you did, what is your last job you had."

Mira: How about for the English questions, what did they ask you?

Felipe: It depends. For example, the last time job that I went to was in Honduras, they asked me a lot of questions that I didn't know. Because it was my first time applying like marketing, it was a little hard.

Mira: Did they ask you more content about marketing, like the job itself?

Felipe: Yeah!

As the vignette shows, the facilitators followed Felipe's lead in discussing job interviews. They then went on to ask further questions to identify what Felipe found difficult and find the appropriate support to improve his interview skills, especially when he needed to speak in English.

Similarly, other facilitators created opportunities to learn more about the community members' prior experiences with the aim of using that knowledge in designing and implementing their activity guides. For example, while talking about mechanics, Shannon's group asked about Fernando's prior knowledge of cars and

mechanics to start the conversation. Similarly, Stella reported that she asked “a lot of questions and took time to listen to her share her experiences” and to use that information later. Jerome and his peers modified the assignment for their partner so that “Wang Yong would talk to his students and colleagues in the lab” using these new expressions he learned from the PSTs. Claire clarified that, “Fernando just recently moved to Douglas, so I try to make him feel welcome by talking to him about weekend plans and asking him questions about his personal life.” The PSTs were eager to learn about the community members’ lives and prior experiences and to show that they were interested in them and ready to use what they learned from them in their instruction.

In addition to asking questions to learn about the community members’ prior experiences, the PSTs recognized the connection between language, identity, and culture. They also learned about the ELLs’ lives, families, and experiences and made connections to teaching. They talked about their future plans to discover the ELLs’ and their families’ experiences and knowledge, and use what they learned from their interaction to design and teach lessons accordingly. The PSTs discussed the importance of the Funds of Knowledge approach and developed their own definitions of it. Thus, the remainder of this section discusses these issues.

#### **Awareness of the connections between personal lives, identity, and language.**

The PSTs discussed the connections between personal lives, identity, and language in

their language autobiography assignment, in which they recounted certain events from their lives and the effects of these events on their identity and language. For example, Rebecca explained how she first started dancing, how she mastered it, and how she became a cheerleader for a sports team. Although she did not talk about language *per se*, Rebecca accepted that “the languages being used in my house are completely different from the languages being used at dance, whether oral or physical; however, I use both of them on a daily basis and it defines who I am.” Rebecca concluded that the different languages used in her life had affected her identity development.

Melissa, who had at various times trained to be a nurse, a teacher, and a firefighter, noted that “learning the language of each of these professions was not always an enjoyable experience,” but concluded that these experiences made her “knowledgeable in many areas where it is required.” She also felt that she had “become a better person overall and now [had] more to offer others” thanks to her willingness to leave her comfort zone. Melissa made the connection that language and identity are shaped through life experiences. She was ready to help others (ELLs in this case), as she was already used to handling difficult situations.

Noting the same connection between experience and language, Helen explained, “These stories [about learning slang, text-speak, and words related to death] in particular stick out to me because they remind me of who I am as a member of my environment.”

Helen also expressed that “the traditions that will always be close to my heart, the way I communicate with family and friends, and the way I view life based off of an experience that I had to go through” had affected her identity development. To conclude, the PSTs attempted to connect language and identity and were able to identify particular events that had affected their language use and identity before meeting the community members. Most of the events they recounted included examples from their own lives and experiences of learning pragmatic uses of English language, rather than the experience of learning a language other than English.

**The PSTs’ observations about ELLs’ different views on language, culture, and identity.** Reflecting on their interactions with the community members, the PSTs made assumptions about the community members’ lives or choices or commented on ELLs’ different views on language, culture, and identity. For example, Andrea observed that Isabella’s older children are bilingual, while her two youngest children do not speak Spanish at all. The surprising thing about this for Andrea was that Isabella “was not encouraging her youngest children to learn Spanish,” but instead that she “desire[d them] to learn more English.” Because Andrea had expected that “it would have been important to the family to preserve the language,” she could not understand why Isabella did not emphasize maintaining Spanish in her home.

Aware of the relationship between culture, identity, power, and language, Andrea recognized that “the split between her older and younger children has something to do with the environment in which they grew up.” Having learned that this family had a complex structure, especially in terms of the languages they spoke, Andrea questioned Isabella’s motivations of learning English and not feeling strong about maintaining the home language. In other words, she came to the understanding that under pressure to learn English quickly, many immigrants choose to prioritize it, while allowing their children’s knowledge of the home language to slide. Andrea also came to understand that these issues of new language acquisition are not simple, and that listening to her students’ parents would also be important.

Commenting on the same partner, Lily thought Isabella was reluctant to do things for her own well-being like get a job or pursue something out of personal interest. Interestingly, Lily attributed these concerns to Isabella’s cultural values. “I think her culture possibly encourages women to stay at home and help around the house.” Thus, seeing that Isabella felt uncomfortable doing something for herself (like coming to meetings during her family’s dinner time), Lily inferred that cultural values can prevent people from doing something for their own well-being and keep them doing things within the boundaries of the roles assigned by their particular culture.

After learning that Miranda was cooking dinner every night, Ellen observed that “household management is a big fund of knowledge, which is different in every culture.” Ellen also noted that, “This was something that amazed me, but in her culture this is normal, the mother cooks meals every single day.” In other words, instead of attributing Miranda’s willingness to cook for her family to her enjoying the role of caretaker, Ellen attributed this routine to Miranda’s culture.

Hannah commented on the relationship between Jane and her husband. Jane told them that her husband interfered in her sugar intake and took sugar away from her. Upon hearing this, Hannah said, “She [Jane] voices this [prohibition of eating sugar] as, ‘he doesn’t allow me’. This is different in American culture, because we are told that women are capable of being independent.” Instead of focusing on health issues and concerns for a loved one’s health, Hannah saw the interaction between this couple as a representation of a cultural norm.

Similarly, Charlotte recounted that her partner felt uncomfortable with TV shows that displayed complex relationships. Charlotte explained that she “attributed Lin’s views to the information she provided about her culture...” She also considered that “This reserved view was also displayed when we talked about honesty in friendships, and she said she would rather let her friend be wrong about a situation than fight about it and lose a friend.” Charlotte understood the cultural values and its effects on people’s views, but

she talked about Lin's perceptions about relationships as part of her cultural values. To put it differently, Charlotte did not consider the fact that her views could be Lin's personal ideas about relationships rather than a reflection of Chinese cultural values. Overall, the PSTs were experiencing and learning about the views and values of their participants, but there was still a tendency to simplify or essentialize these values into a single cultural statement.

**Awareness of ELL's struggles and needs.** While talking about background knowledge, the PSTs revealed their awareness of the problems that ELLs may face in their daily lives outside of educational settings. For example, during the interview, Claire articulated how she began to understand the ELLs' struggles before attending this course and how she expanded her understanding of the Funds of Knowledge approach afterward. She expressed that she was always "impressed with people who are doing [a] huge transition" by moving to another country. She was also amazed by the bravery to make the big changes in their lives, as she felt "that must really be so difficult."

***Linguistic struggles.*** Several PSTs talked about the ELLs' linguistic struggles and their influences in the ELLs' lives. For example, Claire explained that she realized her lack of awareness about ELLs in a course in the graduate school when her instructor showed them a video in Spanish and made them take a quiz in Spanish.

Oh my gosh, I cannot imagine being in a class where I don't know the language, I do not know what was really going on, and I cannot answer any of the questions. So that just opened my eyes and made me feel like, “Wow! That must be so difficult.”

Taking a test in a language she did not know made Claire understand the struggles that ELLs might undergo every day.

Similarly, coming from a country where Creole English is spoken, Charlotte knew about the ELLs' linguistic struggles. “When I moved here, I was learning how to speak American English per se, so that kind of experience like transitions and learning how to understand the lingo and stuff like that was rough...” After interacting with the community members, Charlotte explained that “... by knowing certain things about his culture, his values and family and community, we were able to be more understanding in the future of other English language learners that we may have the potential to contact with.” Moreover, during the seminar portion in the eighth week of the semester, Charlotte advised her peers to learn more about the community where they will teach.

... some of us may not be familiar with [the area we are teaching]. So, do not teach in an area where you do not know about the culture of that area.

You are hurting the kids [she sounded very sentimental and emotional as if



she was going to cry]. Travel around... Do not make assumptions about what you see [in the classroom].

Charlotte was able to make the connection that teachers need to be aware of the environment and community where students live to be more responsive to ELLs' needs. Empathizing with the ELLs, Charlotte was able to consider the community members from various angles and to develop a welcoming approach to learning more about ELLs' lives, which would directly enrich teacher-student interaction.

***Struggles in staying in the country and finding a job.*** The struggles may include difficulty in finding a job and staying legally in the country, which may be exacerbated by insufficient language proficiency. For example, pointing to ELLs' possible visa issues, Andrea stated that she was "totally and fully aware" of the difficulties of living under the pressure of staying legally in the US. "It was not like ignoring the fact that people are having trouble getting a job, [or having to] sit through an interview where they have an issue with their green card or their visa." One of the most important issues for many ELLs and their families is their eligibility to stay in the country.

Similar to these thoughts she had before meeting the community members, Andrea also indicated that "[Meeting the ELLs] really opened my eyes to the difficulty of living in a country where you are not a natural citizen, and helped us better understand where she was coming from." After interacting with the community members, Andrea

found out that not being a citizen made people's lives harder and citizenship gave people the power to overcome some daily struggles. She exemplified this understanding by referring to a community member who "has many obstacles in her way that many of us take for granted, such as simply speaking fluent English."

After interacting with Fernando, Shannon also acknowledged that they were able to "learn something new from one another". For example, she understood the difficulties of finding a job in the USA. "Although he has a lot of experience and background knowledge in the field and is a very hard worker, it is not easy for him to find work in the United States," she said of her partner. Along with reflecting on the language barriers ELLs may have, Shannon was also able to see the real-life difficulties they encounter in finding work, considering the competitive job market in the US. In other words, Shannon was aware of the fact that simply overcoming the language barrier might not be enough to overcome all the impediments to leading life in a new country.

***Family sacrifices.*** The PSTs mentioned the ELLs' family sacrifices and showed appreciation for their "survival" in a new environment. Prior to this course, Claire assumed that "Most people live in the same way that I do, with lots of resources and opportunities for me to do what I want, because I am not exposed to much else." After listening to the struggles Fernando had faced, however, Claire said that Fernando had opened her eyes and given her a "different perspective" "to see the reality of how some

people live.” Growing up in an all-white community with abundant resources, Claire was able to recognize the scarcity of resources for some people around the world only after interacting with Fernando. She found the new information interesting and improved her teaching philosophy to include background knowledge in her teaching.

Similarly, Melissa was inspired by “all Fernando has strived for and succeeded in.” She also indicated that she had “gained a lot of insight from learning about Fernando’s experiences and perspectives,” as she was able to hear the sacrifices that Fernando’s family made for the sake of his education.

The way he explained his father’s story gave me a perspective that I would not have had otherwise. I was able to begin to understand the struggles that Fernando’s parents went through in order to help him achieve all that he has.

Interacting with the community members made Melissa think more deeply about ELLs’ life struggles and experiences.

***Being subjected to stereotypes.*** The PSTs also realized that ELLs may subject to stereotypical expressions or behaviors displayed by the mainstream communities. For instance, after talking to her partner about movies and lifestyles, Mira expressed that “[W]e also learned about a new culture and how to combat stereotypes that were commonly alongside of it.” She explained, “There were statements I thought she could

pick, but never did. Our community member really explained a lot about concepts Americans believed to be true about her culture.” Having formed a reciprocal interaction with the community member, Mira was glad that, “This process [discussing personal topics and connecting to her on a deeper level] has allowed for many different types of people to meet and educate one another about the funds of knowledge that they have developed through personal experience.” After interacting with her, Mira was able to understand the struggles Chinese people may face due to stereotypes about their cultural values. Mira admitted that, “It definitely gave us a new insight into a culture we usually only read about or see in movies.” She came to realize that what she knew about a culture might not always be true. Mira also recognized that the community member “always brings a good perspective to remind all of us, we cannot generalize a culture and also that there is so much we do not know.” Having a partner from China, Mira was able to reflect on her own thoughts about Chinese people, and her partner’s having a different personality than what she had expected of a Chinese woman. In other words, by recognizing the influence of stereotypes on the ELLs’ daily lives, Mira realized that she should refrain from making generalizations or stereotyping particular cultures. Instead, she should focus solely on that individual and his/her unique ideas and beliefs.

After interacting with the community members, Stella enhanced her understanding of Funds of Knowledge, considering that “any person can become a

valuable resource.” She also “realized how important and valuable family is to the Latino culture, as well as how difficult life can be as an immigrant mother raising a family in the United States.” Stella also witnessed that the community member, Isabella, “seemed very nervous about not being with her family for dinner,” which led Stella to understand “how much Isabella valued her role as a mother and wife.” Remembering her own impatience with her ELL mother, who “always needs translation,” Stella admitted that, “Isabella helped me realize that my mother may not always want it that way, but it is necessary to get by in her daily life.” Stella was able to recognize one of the biggest struggles in immigrant family’s lives: asking their children to be their interpreters or translators, which may strain the family dynamics. More importantly, after communicating with her partner, Stella was able to see these dynamics from the perspective of an ELL mother. Stella also comprehended “the parents’ perspectives” on how parenting could be difficult in an environment where they could not speak the dominant language. Thanks to her experience with an immigrant mother, Stella improved her understanding of ELLs’ parents, who are often considered by educators to be indifferent to their children’s education (e.g. Gonzales & Gabel, 2017).

With this realization, I made the connection that as a teacher I cannot be quick to judge a parent who may not be able to make it to parent-teacher

conferences or to other school events, nor can I assume that they do not want to be there or do not value their children's education.

After meeting the community partner, who had children in US schools, Stella realized that parents' other responsibilities might hinder them from attending school-related events, a realization which will help her build better relationships with her future ELLs' parents and encourage her to create other opportunities to interact with the parents.

To state briefly, the PSTs were able to recognize that language issues may prevent people from moving forward in their lives. Moreover, they talked about the stressors in ELLs' daily lives. They acknowledged that the ELLs could be stressed about staying legally in the United States, finding jobs suitable for their qualifications, handling the stereotypical views of others, and maintaining a healthy relationship among family members. As a result of these meetings, the PSTs were able to see the immigrants' experiences first-hand and improve their teaching philosophy in terms of taking the ELLs' lives into consideration.

**Appreciation for the community members' Funds of Knowledge.** One of the aims of this course was to increase the PSTs' awareness about ELLs' lives, knowledge, and experiences. To realize this aim, the key text chosen for the course was *Funds of Knowledge: Theorizing Practices in Households, Communities, and Classrooms* by González, Moll, and Amanti (2005), which they read and discussed throughout the

semester. In this Funds of Knowledge approach, it is essential to learn about “the lives of ordinary people, their everyday activities, and what has led them to the place they find themselves” (González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005, p. 1). In this approach, it is suggested that the teachers be eager to find out “one of the household’s most useful cultural resources, an essential toolkit that households need to maintain (mediate) their well-being (p. 19).” Additionally, the teachers should have “the desire to improve teaching practice and a willingness to step out of their comfort zones to achieve that end (p. 8)” through learning more about students’ daily lives. With that said, the data reveal that the PSTs discussed the Funds of Knowledge approach and the benefits of using this approach in the instruction. On the other hand, although the PSTs began to use the term “funds of knowledge” in their reflection papers and during the interviews, several of them did not accurately reflect the essential concept behind the Funds of Knowledge approach, i.e. discovering the “useful resources” in the students’ personal lives to use them as a guide to develop curriculum. Instead, the PSTs used “funds of knowledge” in place of such terms as “background” or “prior knowledge” or culture. Thus, in the instances when they speak of “funds of knowledge” I have often used “background knowledge” or “prior experience” in paraphrasing their ideas.

During their interaction with the community members, the PSTs and the community members exchanged cultural knowledge about food, language, and daily

lives. Thus, in their reflections, the PSTs began to recount occasions when they were able to learn about the community members' background knowledge and culture. For example, Rebecca found it "really interesting" and "fascinating" to learn about the community member's "culture and beliefs from Spain" and "to see what it's like in a different country across the world." Similarly, despite interacting with the community members only twice, Joey was surprised to learn "so much about communicating with community members from different cultures," as he "really did not expect to learn so much in such a little amount of time." Joey improved his understanding of other people's prior experiences after he learned that people may not trust the police and may not call them in emergency situations, that education is important and valuable in every culture, and that people may tend to cook dishes from their cultures that they learned to cook before coming to the US. Jessica also commented that "Throughout our time talking with Ray, both my classmates and I and the community member have learned a lot about each other's cultures and cultivated a way to communicate with each other." Interacting with Ray only once helped Jessica understand the value of reciprocity. Shannon described how "There is a genuine interest between both parties regarding the history, interests, and goals of every individual involved in the conversation." As a result of this common interest, Shannon articulated that, "Every week, our group is always able to hold



enjoyable conversations with each other and we always learn something new from one another.”

Joey, too, recognized the importance of learning about students’ prior experiences after attending the course. Thinking about his life “before coming to Rutgers,” he indicated that he “did not really know a lot about the different types of backgrounds,” and thus struggled to “step back and look at their perspective and build lessons” based on their needs. During his student teaching, Joey was concerned about the ELLs who were “not keeping up with everyone else,” and wondered about the possible reasons for their lack of success. After attending this course, he admitted that, “I never thought before this class to think about their community and where they live as some possible factors that may be contributing to their grades, other than just their IQ.” Connecting family and community relations to the ELLs’ success, Joey was able to see that intelligence is not the sole predictor of school success. Instead, Joey recognized that the place and the community students lived in might influence their performance in school.

Robin claimed to “have [gained] a lot of background knowledge,” about China, as their Chinese community member had taught her a lot about Chinese culture, which she had not been very familiar with. Similarly, Sabrina observed that “[T]his fund of knowledge—about Chinese language, culture and cuisine—is one that my group members and I do not have, and it was very interesting to learn about.” Sabrina

appreciated learning about Wang Yong's language and culture, and she was "looking forward to have more experiences with this member throughout the next few weeks." In other words, the PSTs were so pleased with the interaction with the community members that they were eager to learn more about them.

Paul interacted with three different community members in the first three weeks of meetings. He agreed that, "This opportunity has provided us with many different points of view and experiences that shape how I see the community here in Douglas and my overall understanding of the significance of being an adult English Language Learner here in America..." Paul saw this interaction as an opportunity in which he improved his understanding of the community members and their experiences as language learners. Moreover, he appreciated that he learned just as much from the community members he worked with as they learned from him. Claire was amazed "at how much Fernando knew about urban planning and public policy" that she did not know anything about, and she found this exchange "really cool." Claire was able to appreciate Fernando's background knowledge in urban planning and was eager to learn from him, even though she was the native speaker and he was the ELL. Danielle also found the meetings very useful. As facilitators, they were able to "build up Jane's funds of knowledge about the English language and American culture," and in turn, Jane taught them "an equal amount about other things such as Chinese language, culture, travel and food to name a few," as well as

“new approaches that can be beneficial to teaching people the English language and even culture.” Jane (the community member) also reported on this interaction, noting that she was happy to see that the facilitators wanted to know about her country and about people coming from other countries.

To sum up, the PSTs recognized the value of exchanging knowledge with the community members and enhanced their understanding of people coming from other cultures. Although the PSTs tied the experience of learning about the ELLs’ lives to the Funds of Knowledge approach, they used the terms “background knowledge” and “funds of knowledge” interchangeably.

**Connections to teaching.** Referring back to their interaction with the community members, the PSTs emphasized that in order to increase ELLs’ participation in classroom activities, teachers should learn to incorporate the ELLs’ background knowledge into their instruction (again they used the phrase “background knowledge” interchangeably with “funds of knowledge”). For instance, Danielle declared that she intended to “embrace the funds of knowledge and learn from them, instead of trying to suppress them” and indicated willingness to use them in her teaching. “Everyone has something to bring to the table even in the classroom and we need to embrace these funds of knowledge and incorporate them into our lives.” Additionally, thinking that she and Fernando had helped each other, Melissa believed that their meetings had given her “a

better understanding of funds of knowledge in real life situations” and that Fernando was helping her to “become a better teacher.” Paul briefly stated, “In my future teaching, I will also be mindful of the culture in which my students are from.” Similarly, being eager to learn more about ELLs, Rachel stated that “knowing where a person comes from” was really important and “could lead to more cultural findings, and could even lead to reciprocal teaching about different traditions.” Understanding the teachers’ role as cultural bridges, Rachel was willing to see people from different cultures in her classroom and learn about their background knowledge.

Lily indicated eagerness to learn about her partner’s prior experiences to plan her instruction better, as well. “I was surprised that just meeting with her twice I could learn about her funds of knowledge and use that knowledge to help her further her English communication skills.” Despite the limited time they met (only one hour per week), Lily was able to value and use her partner’s knowledge. She also recounted an occasion as a result of which she understood the importance of being aware of the students’ knowledge and proficiencies. In discussing “how-to” processes using the example of recipes, Lily explained that “we provided visuals along with descriptions of the food, because we are not sure which ingredients are part of her funds of knowledge.” Lily found out that considering the community members’ prior knowledge of the topics was very beneficial, as it turned out that one of their Chinese community members did not know what a

quesadilla was. As a result, Lily concluded, “I think as a teacher I need to make sure that I do not make assumptions about my student’s understanding because that may inhibit them from learning something they truly do not understand.” Lily was able to reflect on the need to be careful in planning lessons, taking into consideration what students might or might not know.

Interacting with two different community members at the same time, Ellen was also glad “to hear two different perspectives on learning the English language from two completely different people from completely different backgrounds.” She found this variety beneficial for her future teaching: “Their funds of knowledge are so different from each other and gave me a lot to think about and consider, things that I can now use in my own classroom next year.” For example, Ellen mentioned that Miranda had reminded her about “how important doing home visits prior to or at the very beginning of the school year is” to get to know students’ responsibilities at home, like cleaning, cooking, or taking care of siblings— things “that a future teacher would certainly benefit from knowing.” Thus, upon interacting with the community members, Ellen was able not only to see that ELLs may differ in terms of their proficiency levels and background knowledge, but also to think of ways to incorporate this understanding into her teaching.

Reflecting on her own unpleasant childhood memories (of called “stupid Polish girl” on the school bus), Ellen also wished that her teachers had been interested in her

culture and had looked into her “funds of knowledge about certain aspects of life.” Ellen was now able to see how knowing ELLs’ background knowledge would make a difference in the ELLs’ lives. She admitted that, “The meetings have taught me how to think about and consider the learners’ funds of knowledge before making my lesson plans.” Thus, she also set her mind to helping her future ELLs as much as possible.

...so I have to choose my battles, make the time and make sure that everything that is important to my class as individuals and as a whole when it comes to their funds of knowledge becomes just as important to me.

Ellen emphasized that her “pride in being Polish and staying in touch with that part of me is just growing stronger and stronger each day.” In light of this, she was willing to acknowledge the individual differences in her class and was ready to deal with the challenges she would face during her teaching.

Similarly, Jerome saw the meetings as “a great opportunity to develop [his] knowledge and understanding of different cultures and language learning.” Having family members who had learned English gradually, Jerome was already “compassionate towards that particular [Hispanic] background” and advised his peers to “be genuine” while interacting with the ELLs and not to assume that they know ELLs’ culture, so as not to be superficial and offensive. After interacting with the community members, he

stated that he had learned “the importance of encouraging English language learners and tapping into their experiences so they can confidently speak about them.”

Jerome also found that “[t]he concept of funds of knowledge can be a useful idea in building relationships between educators and students who are English language learners.” For example, he recounted the challenge they had with Valencia, who was the novice speaker of English and “did not have a lot of background knowledge of American culture.” Nevertheless, knowing the importance of background knowledge, Jerome and his peers attempted to learn about her personal life, like her family and children. They found this strategy helpful, as they were able to identify her needs, like getting around town and to shopping centers, and they “changed the curriculum” to meet those needs. Thus, Jerome concluded that knowing communities closely would definitely affect his “approach to the student [coming from that background].”

Additionally, Jerome thought sending out surveys, talking to the ELLs, and sitting with them at lunch could be some ways to “learn their funds of knowledge and culture.” Moreover, as he plans to become a special education teacher, Jerome saw the importance of learning about the students’ culture, since he is “going to talk to parents constantly [during IEP meetings].” He expressed willingness to “ask questions that are better related to students’ interests, cultures, background knowledge to help [ELLs and their families] within those meetings.” All in all, thanks to his family, Jerome already sympathized with

people going through the experience of learning another language and living in another country. After the course, Jerome was able to develop new ways to learn more about ELLs' life experiences. Coming from an immigrant family and being aware of ELLs' needs, Jerome was also able to reflect on the importance of building a close connection to the ELLs' communities and use this knowledge in his teaching. He also enhanced his understanding of how things work for special education students and ELLs and became aware of other occasions that he might use the funds of knowledge approach in his future career.

Accepting being a learner as well as a teacher, Joey acknowledged that "There is always something you can learn from your own lesson and there's always something that just by talking to your community members they can teach you." Eager to learn from the students and the communities where they came from, Joey was willing to increase parents' involvement in his classroom. "I would love to invite parents in," he wrote, "to have some space like, 'Come in and come talk to me' in a little party where they can bring funds of knowledge." Although his prior lack of interaction with ELLs made it challenging for him to understand ELLs' views and use them in his lessons, he was able to think of ways to learn more about ELLs and increase their parents' involvement in classroom activities. Observing that family issues could provide clues to understand



school performance, Joey was able to emphasize the importance of addressing issues of student success from multiple perspectives.

After this experience with the community members, Claire also accepted that “everyone has something special they can bring to the table” and indicated willingness to learn more about ELLs– “... their interests, what they'd like”– to add to her instruction. Although she confirmed that “it can be difficult to bring in the funds of knowledge of each individual,” she was willing to try to “tap into a little bit in each person, in each kid so that you can bring some unique thing that you could talk about in the class.” Thus, she recognized the importance of bringing “kids’ interests into the teaching... and keeping them interested, giving them choices while teaching, and even accessing their parents’ funds of knowledge” to increase their engagement. Claire was aware of the ways to increase ELLs’ attention by learning more about their interests, lives, and families.

Although she had prior experience of teaching ELLs, Shannon enhanced her understanding of working with ELLs through this course. During the interview, Shannon explained that she had become concerned about the ELLs in her class in her student teaching experience. Shannon indicated that her cooperating teacher was not educated about ELLs, so Shannon tried to help the ELLs in one-on-one interactions when she went to that class. She was also aware of different cultural values, and indicated that “... I also don't want to overstep [and] act as if I know a bunch of things about a culture that

actually I don't... So I do not want to overstep, and have to find the medium..." Shannon knew to be respectful towards ELLs' cultural backgrounds and she avoided overgeneralizing cultures or pretending to know more about them than she did. Moreover, knowing the importance of incorporating ELLs' prior knowledge into lessons, Shannon added that "we should not dismiss it [cultural values] or act like it's not there, because there is always more we can take and grow upon." In other words, Shannon was able to recognize and appreciate different cultural values. Thus, having been sensitive to ELLs' cultural differences even before taking this course, Shannon was able to reinforce her ideas about building lessons based on students'—especially ELLs'—background knowledge and cultural values.

In addition to their self-reported willingness to use several strategies to include ELLs' prior experiences and knowledge in their instruction, during the seminar portion, the PSTs were observed to articulate their views on possible teaching strategies they found useful for their ELLs. For example, when they were asked about ways to integrate culture into schools, the PSTs suggested doing projects, preparing posters of different cultures, playing music, and taking pictures. Moreover, the PSTs expressed that they wanted to provide options for students like giving three writing prompts to choose among or using student information in word problems. To elicit more information about their funds of knowledge, the PSTs suggested talking about their culture during activities, and

conducting interest surveys and looking at them throughout the year. The PSTs also gave examples from their own student teaching experiences of how they talked about holidays, celebrated them, wore traditional clothes, talked about what other cultures celebrate (in December, for instance), and held walk-around activities with different classes assigned to represent different cultures.

Additionally, the PSTs pointed out the importance of learning about the students' families, since real households rarely conformed to stereotypes. Families' extracurricular activities showed considerable variety, and the students might have responsibilities like taking care of siblings at home. The PSTs also listed ways to learn more about households: a communication journal that can go home with emergent bilinguals, or back-to-school nights during which families are given surveys with questions to reveal the character traits of their child(ren) and information for teachers to know what is going on in the families. An International Week or Day can be organized to present facts, with parents invited to cook traditional food. Even students who are not from that culture, can be responsible to represent the culture and parents can be invited to the classrooms to share about themselves. When asked how to cross teacher-student and home-school borders, the PSTs recommended building common ground by talking about personal lives, interacting with the community outside school, and having a bulletin board about their own lives.

On the other hand, the PSTs could not provide specific ways to use Funds of Knowledge in their actual teaching. In the *Funds of Knowledge* textbook, teachers design a curriculum based on what they have learned about the households from their interviews with Latino families. However, during the PRELL course, only once did the PSTs come up with ideas for incorporating Funds of Knowledge in math or other content areas– and that was when the instructor specifically asked.

**Conclusion.** The PSTs showed enthusiasm about talking to ELLs and learning from them. Before meeting the community members, when the PSTs were asked about how language shapes identity, the only examples they could come up with were taken from their own lives. However, after attending the course and meeting with the community members, the PSTs had broadened their repertoire of examples to include another person’s experience, background knowledge, cultural values, and identity. They were also eager to learn about the ELLs’ prior experiences and design their guides accordingly. Additionally, while presenting the information to the community members, the PSTs tried to make connections to the member’s lives and saw questioning as a valuable strategy to elicit information about them. They also commented on incorporating background knowledge into instructional contexts in their future careers. Although they were able to talk about and conceptualize the Funds of Knowledge– one of the main themes of the course– the PSTs could not go beyond using the term as a substitute for

prior experiences and background knowledge. Consequently, it can be inferred that while the PSTs began the course by reflecting on themselves, they expanded their views on the relationship between language, culture, and identity after meeting community members. They also became aware of the influences of culture and prior experience in the learning process. They were able to make the connection between theory and practice in that they understood that incorporating the member's background knowledge into instruction would also enhance the quality of teaching and of their interaction with students.

### **The PSTs' Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions toward Interaction with ELLs**

The fourth theme that emerges from the data is the PSTs' knowledge, skills, and dispositions in their interaction with the community members. The data reveal the interactions they had with the community members.

**Reciprocal interactions formed during the meetings.** One of the main purposes of this course was to increase the PSTs' understanding of ELLs by giving them the chance to interact with them. As a result of this interaction, the PSTs were expected to form reciprocity with the community members (Greene, 1998). To understand how this course helped them to improve their awareness of ELLs' needs, their reflections on the service-learning project (i.e. the meetings) were examined. The data reveal that the PSTs were very glad that they had the opportunity to interact with the community members.

Helen, Hannah, and Danielle interacted with the same Chinese community member, Jane, in all of the meetings. As a Ph.D. student, Jane came to the USA with her husband, who was an assistant professor in China and a visiting professor in the US. Jane “had a decent knowledge of English,” and was a very outgoing and sociable person; the facilitators were very comfortable talking to her. Jane chose the topics she wanted to discuss and the facilitators followed her lead and interacted with her very enthusiastically. Most of the time, the conversation flowed naturally. As the vignette below shows, there was always back-and-forth communication with Jane. Helen, Hannah, and Danielle were glad that Jane was also taking the initiative in conversation.

Jane (community member): Do you drive cars?

Hannah: Yes, all of us have cars that we drive places with.

Danielle: Do you drive a lot in China?

Jane: No, no. I don’t drive. Only husband drives. I ride my bike everywhere.

Helen: Is your work close to where you live?

Jane: Yes, very close!

Hannah: Do you and your husband travel a lot?

Jane: (pause) We travel around China when we are there. We loved going to The Flying Rock and the Smoky Mountains.

Danielle: That sounds great. I just went to California recently.

Helen: I did too. I loved it there!

Jane: I’ve never been to California. My husband and I are going to Washington D.C. in a couple of weeks. We are very excited.

As the vignette illustrates, Jane was eager to learn about the facilitators and she initiated the conversation by asking them whether they drove. Then the PSTs asked consecutive

questions that were slightly related to each other. They asked about whether she drove in the US and in China, whether she lived close to her work, and about her travel experiences. They also showed interest in her experiences by saying, “That sounds great!”

Similar to this vignette, the PSTs had “enjoyable” and “informative” conversations with the community members. The PSTs all expressed their feelings about their interactions with the community members and their conceptualization of creating a safe classroom environment and developing mutual trust with ELLs. They also identified the challenges they experienced during these meetings, and made connections between what they had learned and their future teaching careers.

***Appraisal of the service-learning project.*** The PSTs were satisfied with the course and their interactions with the community members. For example, Melissa expressed that the “conversation was really entertaining,” as they were “laughing and sharing jokes” during the meetings and they were able to take the knowledge they had learned and apply it in a real situation. Paul defined the meetings as “a unique opportunity”, and Shannon was excited when she said, “Fernando came to our group on the first week of the meetings and we hit it off.” Moreover, Shannon felt “very fortunate to be able to work with Fernando and other community members from Douglas,” as she believed that, the meetings “opened up eyes for people who never had the opportunity to

work with children from diverse backgrounds.” Although Shannon had a decent level of prior interaction with ELLs, she was able to reflect on what she and her peers had gained from the experience.

Claire indicated that the meetings helped her “learn a lot about myself and made me put myself out.” Similarly, Jessica articulated that “[the meetings] took me out of my shell to force me to converse with people I do not know and help teach others about our culture.” Hannah found the “meetings were very beneficial and gave authentic experience.” Similarly, Sabrina described the meetings as “fun, educational, and mind opening.” Charlotte indicated, “that was interesting, I really liked the meetings because we were just going deeper and deeper to the process with them.” Charlotte enjoyed attending the meetings as much as she did improving her understanding of ELLs.

Jessica was also happy to go beyond her safe zone and be able to interact with ELLs comfortably. Rebecca found the meetings “a real eye-opening experience” from the very beginning of their interaction. After four meetings, indicating that she had had “a really positive experience with the meetings,” Rebecca acknowledged that she left “the class period learning something new, especially to the funds of knowledge” and expected to learn more in the upcoming weeks. Lily also described the interaction as “unique and eye-opening” and felt privileged to be interacting with the community members. Jerome defined the meetings as “a great opportunity” to learn about different cultures. Despite



having an interaction that was less authentic due to the language barrier and, as Rachel described, that was “in the form of a drill and a vocabulary exercise involving repeating specific English words,” Rachel, Sabrina, and Jerome valued the interaction.

Helen also shared that “It was exciting to see that our student was comfortable enough to bring up topics” and “ask questions about the English language when she needed to.” Helen found the interaction exciting, as she was also able to see that their “funds of knowledge are very different than” each other. She described the interaction as unique and rewarding and explained that “Our community member has helped me to become aware that it is because of the fact that we have these different funds of knowledge that we are able to grow and learn from each other.” Helen was not only able to appreciate the conversation, but also realized that she grew personally upon interacting with Jane.

In line with these statements, the community members also found the interaction informative and helpful, as they were able to practice conversational English by interacting with the native speakers. For example, Fernando was pleased that “they [the PSTs] are so kind, and they are so good.” Similarly, comparing the meetings with these PSTs to the similar ones she had attended before, Martina expressed, “I like it here, there is fun, dynamic.” The community members also found helpful to interact with three or

four different PSTs. For example, focusing on the people's changing mood, Martina observed,

In this kind of conversation, I think that you are not always on the same mood, some days you are very talkative, but sometimes you may need help, if it is not just one, but two or three, it's easier.

Martina was aware of the fact that people can have different states of mind in different days. Thus, she found helpful to have more facilitators to interact with. Wang Yong emphasized that they collaborated to find the best way to teach him. Similarly, Luciana thought the PSTs help each other to find ways, "It is different opinions... If one person thought how you came to teach another person, [they] have another idea or form of words..." Luciana was aware of the interaction and collaboration among the PSTs and found it informative.

***Self-discoveries.*** The PSTs were able to think about their own lives and perceptions and reconsider them in light of their interaction with the community members. For instance, talking about the Chinese culture and traditions and personal views on family and career, Rachel expressed that Wang Yong had helped her to learn about herself, specifically "how to be more self-aware and open-minded." She admitted to having "a narrow view of cultural knowledge, and became more aware that there are

other interpretations of the same concept.” As a result, she “became more open to different values of life and grew as an individual.”

Hannah also commented on her discoveries about her own perceptions about food and political views after interacting with Jane. When they were talking about the foods they ate, Hannah realized that there had been many things Jane mentioned that she had been unfamiliar with. She also recognized that “Jane’s funds of knowledge regarding Chinese cuisine were very different than my group members’ and mine. We are familiar with Americanized Chinese food, while she is accustomed to eating and making authentic Chinese foods.” In other words, Hannah was able to understand that places may affect specific cultural features and may lead people to reframe them depending on the circumstances in the new environment. After learning that Jane was a communist, Hannah was able to see that people may have different political views, as she asserted that, “This fund of knowledge is very different than our funds of knowledge. We live in a democratic society and that is all we know, while Jane is most familiar with a communist approach to society.” Although Hannah did not explain how this distinction affected her views about Jane, she was able to recognize the existence of different political views which directly affect people’s lives.

Claire also reported that she had learned a lot about language learning and herself through participating in the weekly meetings. More importantly, seeing that Fernando

was “so appreciative for all of the sacrifices his parents made to give him a better life,” Claire admitted that she herself “rarely take[s] the time to be thankful for the things my parents have done to ensure that I have a well-balanced, happy life.” Recognizing the abundance of the resources that she had throughout her life, Claire was able to see the importance of being thankful for family sacrifices after interacting with the community member. Robin thought that her interactions with Ray had helped her feel more confident in teaching English Language Learners: “He was so eager to learn the language as an adult; I feel that I will definitely be able to help children learn it too one day as well.”

Similarly, the community members also reflected on their perceptions about their improvements. All of the community members reported that they felt more confident to speak to the native speakers. Luciana, Felipe, and Jane admitted that they were shy before coming to the meetings, but became more confident about their speaking skills. Despite finding some of the things were very basic for their proficiency levels, Martina and Wang Yong still valued the interaction with native speakers, which provided them with the opportunity to practice their speaking skills.

***Perceived roles during interaction.*** The PSTs revealed their thoughts about the relationship they formed with the community members and the roles they assumed during these meetings. For example, seeing that the interaction as a casual and friendly one, Danielle noted that “the mutual approach compared to teacher-student approach seemed

to really benefit the whole group,” in that “Jane seemed to be more comfortable” with them, “and enjoyed talking about her travels, her home, and the foods.” Danielle also indicated that “by creating an open dialogue with her instead of a strict teacher to student lecture we were able to learn a tremendous amount from her.” Danielle came to appreciate the importance of student-centered interaction, which creates mutual understanding and reveals more personal information about the students. Similarly, Helen considered felt like she was just talking with a friend and indicated that “There was not an ‘I am the teacher and you are the student’ vibe.”

The PSTs described their perception of their roles in the post-course survey, as well. To get at the PSTs’ understandings of their roles during these meetings, the survey asked the open-ended question: “How do you describe your role(s) in the meetings? (e.g. teacher, friend, partners, etc.- write as many roles as you had). Please give an example interaction, if any.)” The responses showed that the PSTs became aware of the reciprocity of the relationship and saw themselves not only as providers of information but also as receivers of information. More importantly, the PSTs were able to create *confianza* in that they saw themselves as students, friends, partners, cheerleaders or confidants even if they interacted with the community members only for an hour per week in total of eight weeks.

**Challenges during interaction with the ELLs.** The PSTs also revealed the

challenges they faced in the course of conversation with the community members. One of the most notable features of native speakers of a language is their ability to speak the language fluently and naturally (Wright, 2010), which may create problems when these native speakers interact with learners of the language. Language learners tend to speak more slowly and need time to think about the things they are going to talk about. The PSTs struggled to monitor their pace of speech, implement wait-time, and explain colloquial expressions to the ELLs.

***Monitoring pace of speech.*** The PSTs pointed out that they had difficulty in constantly checking the pace of their speech so that the ELLs could understand them easily. On many occasions, the PSTs criticized themselves for speaking too fast, and had to remind themselves or each other to slow down. For example, for a couple of times, Mira admitted that she “would like to work on speaking more slowly and a little more clearly” to prevent misunderstandings. Similarly, Charlotte admitted to speaking fast “until Larry kept asking for clarification.” Like Charlotte, Joey reminded himself to refrain from speaking fast. Melissa also indicated, “Something next week that I want to work on is monitoring my pace when I speak.” Thus, the PSTs understood that their pace of speech affected the flow of conversation and put the burden on the community members to ask for clarifications.

Not surprisingly, the community members also reported that they struggled to

understand the PSTs when they spoke fast and urged the PSTs to be patient and speak slower. For example, Felipe was perplexed for a moment when Charlotte spoke a little fast and had to say, “Wow, I do not understand, please!” to ask her to slow down.

Similarly, in response to the interview question about his advice to the PSTs, Wang Yong urged them to speak slowly. “To become a good teacher, especially when they are teaching the ESL just, like us- English is my second language-, they should speak more slowly, just not to speak too fast.” Having trouble in understanding what the facilitators were talking about, Wang Yong advised teachers to control their pace of speech.

With that said, after a couple of meetings, the PSTs were able to understand the effects of their pace of speech on interaction and began to control it. For example, reflecting on her pace of speech every week, Rachel thought she was “sometimes too fast” during the first interaction, but was “getting better” and “much better and slower” in the following meetings. As Charlotte recounted, “[I] occasionally spoke fast, but Mira let me know to slow down,” explaining that they warned each other to speak slower and clearer. At the end of their eight-week interaction, Charlotte also declared that “I am much more mindful of the way I interact with them and to make them carry the conversation and to make sure that I am not causing any form of misunderstanding by what I say or I do.” To sum up, being native speakers of English, most of the PSTs struggled to monitor their pace of speech at the beginning of the meetings. However, they

recognized that pace of speech was a factor that might hinder successful communication between ELLs and native speakers. With practice they were able to monitor themselves and check their peers' pace of speech.

***Implementing wait time.*** ELLs may have difficulties in sharing their ideas in a conversation immediately, as speaking in another language is a cognitively demanding activity. Thus, it is recommended that teachers keep in mind that ELLs need much more time compared to their native-speaker peers to think about their answers and reply back (Wright, 2010). Referring to this concept, the PSTs also recognized that they were quick to reveal their opinions without giving the ELLs the chance to think first. For instance, Rebecca admitted, "I found myself just jumping into the conversation with a quick response instead of waiting and processing what is being said." Claire also noted that she "definitely need[ed] to work on implementing a 'wait time' for him to answer questions." She realized that Fernando took time to think "hard about how he can answer the question in a way" that the facilitators would understand. Rachel also indicated that it was hard to wait, as Valencia was a novice speaker. Reflecting on her own personality, Andrea indicated that nervousness affected her, and she could not implement wait time, but instead filled in the gaps during the activities. In other words, the PSTs grappled with implementing wait-time due to various reasons: at times it was the ELLs' proficiency level, but sometimes it was their own anxiety that prevented the PSTs from being patient



and waiting for the ELLs to find the appropriate words.

On the other hand, the PSTs also reported that they were getting used to the interaction and began implementing wait time more successfully. Witnessing that Jane “takes some time to get out her thoughts,” Hannah found that “wait time is so critical,” as she believed that “it’s just the matter of formulating the words and sentences.” Melissa discovered that several times she did not implement wait time, and then “made sure to implement wait time for the rest of the session.” Melissa was able to evaluate herself in terms of implementing wait-time and to check herself and give Fernando more time to think. Ellen indicated that they gave time to Luciana to translate for herself in order to understand the concept better, and Helen expressed that they let Jane think about the answers for the voicemail messages. Similarly, after the third meeting, Rebecca began to assess her improvement in letting her partners think about their answers and articulated the same issue in her weekly reflections after subsequent meetings.

This week, I really took time to wait and see what the community member was going to ask or respond. Not jumping in right away allowed Ryan [or Martina] to take time to respond or ask a follow up question which allowed for the conversation to move smoothly.

Rebecca had understood that wait time for ELLs is highly crucial for them to think about what they are going to say, and this in turn leads to a more natural conversation.

The community members also commented on the importance of patience and they advised the PSTs to be patient. For example, talking about the challenges of understanding what the facilitators were talking about, Wang Yong recommended that they “have patience” for ELLs. During the interview, Fernando recounted a time when an agent at a car rental company was impatient with him and spoke too fast, and even got angry at him, as he was not able to understand her clearly. Therefore, he urged the PSTs, and all native speakers, to be patient while interacting with ELLs. Indicating that the facilitators were patient with them, Jane, Martina, and Luciana recommended that they keep doing what they were doing in this class: be patient and pay attention to the level and emotions of the ELLs.

In conclusion, the PSTs were able to realize that ELLs need “time to process the input and time to draw from their developing linguistic system to formulate their thoughts in English before speaking” (Wright, 2010, p. 147). As a result, the PSTs observed that their urge to speak immediately might not be comfortable for the community member. They recognized that no matter what the proficiency levels of the ELL, wait time was a helpful strategy to allow them to speak more comfortably, and in turn, to have a smoother conversation. In other words, the course turned an abstract principle (i.e. wait time) into a concrete reality; the PSTs began to see the value of it. They gradually improved themselves and appreciated and encouraged ELLs’ taking time to think about what they

were going to say.

*Adjustment to flexibility.* Due to the nature of the location and the community members' freedom to attend meetings whenever they wanted to, the PSTs were expected to be flexible about which topics they taught and to whom. The PSTs sometimes pointed out their feelings about these fluctuations. For example, after the fifth meeting session, Robin said she found it fun to start all over again learning about the two new community members who had come to the meetings for the first time. On the other hand, interacting with many ELLs, Andrea and Stella found these fluctuations as stressful since they did not have a chance to see the gradual development of a particular ELL. Instead, they needed to introduce themselves to the ELLs over and over again.

Apart from this, as a result of these fluctuations, some PSTs who did not have a partner to interact with in a given week joined other groups to see how things worked in those groups. For example, Ellen appreciated joining in a new group and seeing how they ran things. Similarly, Andrea observed that she had begun to understand other possible ways of explaining things only after visiting other groups. In other words, the PSTs were ready to meet new community members at all times and were open to learning from their peers.

*Feelings of anxiety about meeting the ELLs.* The PSTs were also challenged by their own anxiety and nervousness, especially before meeting the community members.

During the seminar, several of them showed their discomfort by expressing fear of not being able to converse with the ELLs or expecting the experience to be “overwhelming.” Moreover, in their reflection papers about the first three meetings, the PSTs articulated their prior nervousness and their relief after meeting the community members. For instance, Robin admitted that “at first, when I was reading about the meetings, I became very nervous and curious about what to expect” and she became sad about not being able to meet with a community member in the first week. Later, however, observing others made her happy and less nervous, as she was able “to see how it worked out for other groups.”

Similarly, Mira accepted that “The first time I met my community member, I was not sure what to expect when it came to her knowledge or English abilities, as the range could have varied.” In addition to her concerns about the proficiency level of the ELLs, Mira was worried about what they would talk about first or whether they would be open to sharing their personal lives. However, after beginning the conversation, she acknowledged that “as quickly as that fear appeared, it also disappeared.” In other words, despite being uncomfortable with the uncertainties, Mira was able to manage her discomfort and interact with her partners easily.

Jessica admitted that she was “so apprehensive of what would occur throughout the hour-long conversation.” Her apprehension only increased, as their group could not

meet with a community member in the first week. As she described it, “That whole week, I was nervous and tried to think of ways to be prepared.” However, she was able to find a way to relax herself by thinking that “it wouldn’t be so bad. Just to converse and be natural.” She proved herself right after her first interaction: “The second week, when we met our community member, Ray, for the first time, it eased my nerves and actually was a lot of fun to converse.”

Danielle also explained that “I wasn’t sure how exactly we would be able to communicate with our new friend or connect with her,” as she admitted to being one of those people who “might think that communicating and connecting to someone who is from somewhere so different might be difficult.” Later, however, she realized that “through the use of certain strategies, we were able to learn a lot about Jane and her funds of knowledge.” Thus, these PSTs were able to overcome their nervousness by observing others, reminding themselves to be natural, and implementing some communication strategies.

Unlike these three PSTs, who were able to overcome their stress and nervousness, Andrea felt uncomfortable in nearly all of her meetings with ELLs.

Very honestly, the conversation cafés make me extremely nervous and I don’t look forward to them. I am rarely nervous in a classroom full of children and feel confident in my abilities as a teacher, but interacting with

adults who I don't know anything about tends to bring about some social anxiety for me.

Connecting this nervousness to her own personality, Andrea was not able to relieve herself from her anxiety, even though she was aware of the fact that this feeling affected her interaction with the community members. After her third meeting, Andrea said, “my nervousness affects my pace and I feel pretty lost on how to teach someone to speak English.”

Andrea also found it challenging to think about language pragmatics, as she had never been taught which parts of language people struggled with. In addition to feeling nervous about interacting with adults, not being sure about what to teach the ELLs increased her anxiety. By the end of the semester, however, Andrea was able to relax a little bit about what to teach, especially after observing other groups. She admitted that observing other groups “was the turnaround for me, it was like watching what other people are doing. Kind of like sitting through one conversation and being, oh OK.”

Andrea was able to see how interactions occurred in different groups and then she was able to relax in her own interactions and feel less anxious.

**The knowledge of ELLs' individual differences and the language learning process.** The language-learning process is affected by ELLs' individual differences like intelligence, language learning aptitude, learning styles, personality, attitude and

motivation, identity and ethnic group affiliations, and learner beliefs (Lightbown & Spada, 2005). Hence, it is highly crucial for teachers to know their ELLs thoroughly to be able to judge their English skills appropriately and support their needs accordingly. The data reveal that the PSTs commented on the ELLs' individual differences in terms of their affective filter, intelligence, and motivation and investment. Moreover, the PSTs talked about the community members' language abilities in social and academic language and they discussed the methods that the community members used to negotiate meaning and co-construct knowledge.

***Affective filter.*** Krashen (1982) has claimed that ELLs learn best when they feel confident and have low anxiety. The PSTs were asked to comment on ELLs' possible struggles with anxiety. Three PSTs shared that ELLs may feel embarrassed during conversation with native speakers. For example, Melissa thought that, "Some people may be self-conscious about their accent or inability to communicate their thought." Stella also agreed that, "It can be very easy for emergent bilingual students to become discouraged while speaking to proficient speakers of English." Stella was able to recognize that ELLs may avoid speaking more if "they cannot seem to find the right words or mispronounce something" and when they "place the blame on themselves for not speaking English well enough." Similarly, Ellen recounted that "During whole-group participation Miranda never wants to speak because she says that she is embarrassed that

she has an accent and that she does not pronounce words correctly and also that she will get the wrong answer.” Consequently, the PSTs were able to understand that ELLs’ perceptions of their own proficiency levels may cause them to feel nervous during an interaction and influence their further participation in the conversation.

Going one step further, Charlotte criticized native speakers of English, stating that “Sometimes as more fluent speakers, we tend to place the burden on the English language learners to achieve understanding in a conversation.” In other words, Charlotte became aware of the fact that native speakers may not feel responsible for any misunderstanding in conversation. She also believed that this lack of awareness makes the ELLs “suffer embarrassment, shame, and feelings of inferiority, and opt for debilitating silence.” Charlotte had become aware of the power dynamics in a conversation and recognized the responsibilities that native speakers should take when interacting with ELLs.

***Intelligence.*** Jessica and Hannah talked about how lack of language proficiency can be confused with intellectual disability. For example, Jessica argued that ELLs cannot be considered unintelligent just because there are times “where it becomes difficult to pinpoint a word and have to express and explain themselves.” Similarly, Hannah stated:

While teaching emergent bilingual students, it is easy to assume that they may have a learning disability or simply do not comprehend what you are



saying. Just because an individual cannot get their words out does not mean they are struggling intellectually; it means they are struggling with the language— there is a difference.

Another important issue in language education is the difficulty in differentiating whether students need language support or special education support. In this sense, Jessica and Hannah were able to consider that lack of proficiency in a language can be a cause of school failure, but the student need not be identified as a special education student simply on account of that failure.

*PSTs' appreciation for ELLs' efforts to learn English.* Claire was amazed at the ELLs' efforts and willingness to come to those weekly meetings: "... I just think what's really amazing was that they took the time to come out and they had to put themselves into uncomfortable situations and meet these random people..." Claire was able to recognize the difficulties of learning a language and the stresses that ELLs would bear while learning the language.

Similarly, Paul appreciated the ELLs' effort to learn the language. "Olga, Miranda, and Luciana all put their best effort forward when participating in the meetings" and were "very open and welcoming" in sharing their "personal information and describing their daily lives, likes and interests," he observed. Paul was able to understand that ELLs try very hard to do their best to learn the language. He also noted about

Luciana, “Many times it [pronunciation and fluency] is excellent compared to her current use of the English language and this confirmation again shows her overall engagement and willingness to improve.” Thus, Paul was able to realize how ELLs feel encouraged and motivated as they see improvement in their language skills.

Rachel also appreciated her partner’s efforts to learn the language, “Valencia requested to practice this specific topic, so this initiation is showing her investment and her desire to learn.... Valencia shows great investment in her learning because she has been present and always tries her best in pronouncing words...” Rachel recognized Valencia’s efforts to come to the meetings. Similarly, Jerome observed Valencia’s improvement as a result of her effort and motivation. “She did fairly well considering the few sessions we had with her. She tried her best! But she never seemed defeated or discouraged, which was a great observation. It seemed she enjoyed her time with us.” Jerome was able to recognize how much effort the ELLs put into learning the language.

On this issue, all of the community members interviewed indicated that they felt they had improved as a result of the PSTs’ continuous encouragement. For instance, Felipe admitted that the encouragement the PSTs gave, saying things like “Wow, you do it better and better...,” increased his willingness to do more to improve his English, as well as to keep coming to the meetings. The ELLs recommended that the PSTs be encouraging and appreciative no matter what the ELLs could or could not do. All in all,

the PSTs were able to understand the motivational issues for ELLs and were able to provide them the welcoming environment that the community members wanted to feel during the meetings.

***ELLs' linguistic skills.*** Teachers should know that speaking a language requires competencies in different sets of language skills. Being conscious of this fact allows them to effectively address students' needs in these competencies. For example, Sabrina recounted that "Valencia struggles with pronouncing the /i/ phoneme in English because in Spanish, the letter "i" is pronounced like the letter /e/ in English." In other words, Sabrina was able to pinpoint her partner's struggles and was aware of the fact that ELLs may have negative transfer from their home languages, which makes it difficult for ELLs to learn specific linguistic features.

Apart from Sabrina, three PSTs reflected on whether their partners were competent in social and academic language. Speaking about Fernando, an advanced ELL, Shannon observed his strengths and weaknesses in social and academic language. She stated that "Fernando struggled with putting his thoughts into words when communicating with native English speakers." Shannon was able to see why he was concerned about his language skills, since "although he had the specific knowledge about public policy, it was still extremely difficult for him to adapt to his social environment when going on interviews and applying to graduate school." Similarly, Claire was happy

to see that Fernando, who is highly proficient in social settings, had improved the language skills that he had chosen to work on. She concluded that “although someone might appear to be well-spoken in English, there might be areas of life that he or she is not fully integrated in.” Claire could see Fernando was good at social interaction, but not comfortable enough when talking to a doctor or writing a personal statement. In other words, Shannon and Claire understood that ELLs may be fully proficient in one skill, but still need improvement in another, even if they have expert knowledge about their field of study.

The PSTs also saw that ELLs may improve their academic skills, but lack knowledge of grammar or colloquial expressions. For example, Claire talked about Wang Yong’s confusion over everyday expressions, even though he was an advanced speaker of English: “... Wang Yong was confused about what being ‘pale’ meant and he didn’t understand the comparison of tan to pale.” Jerome also commented on Wang Yong’s being able to speak “understandable English”, but not being “always grammatically correct with some of the phonics and grammar and so on.” Shannon also shared how Wang Yong was able to use commas correctly once they taught him how: “...we would model how to use commas and every time after that he noticed that he was missing commas, he was able to add them himself. That was cool, he knew how to do that after.” Shannon and Claire were able to address Wang Yong’s errors with commas and were

happy to see that he was able to apply this new information quickly. In other words, the PSTs were able to see the ELLs' struggles in explaining themselves without grammar errors or understanding colloquial expressions even when they were proficient in their overall English skills. They were also able to develop an understanding of how ELLs construct their knowledge about the language.

***ELLs' strategic competence.*** Strategic competence refers to the ELLs' "ability to use coping strategies in unfamiliar contexts when imperfect knowledge of rules (or factors that limit their application) may lead to a breakdown in communication" (Wright, 2010, p. 34). It is important for teachers to understand how ELLs cope with miscommunication. For example, Melissa emphasized that Fernando was "able to express when he is confused and unclear quite clearly." Moreover, Melissa stated that "he is willing to work with me and others in order to help clear up miscommunications and be able to clearly understand the information that is presented." Melissa recognized that Fernando was comfortable asking for help when he did not understand something during the conversation and was eager to fix these problems in his language skills.

Two PSTs also touched upon how ELLs may give the impression that they have understood the conversation although they did not understand it. For example, talking about an intermediate English speaker, Charlotte identified that, "This person is not at the

same level [with us] and his English proficiency is different than yours, and yes, they are nodding their head, but that does not necessarily mean that they understand what you are saying.” Similarly, Andrea also observed that “Taylor was the type of person who smiles and nods instead of saying that she does not understand.” Only when they continued the discussion were the facilitators able to see that she did not understand. Thus, Andrea described her as a person who “knows how to fake it to seem like she knows what is going on.” The PSTs realized that ELLs may be reluctant to show their lack of understanding during a conversation and may need to be taught to ask for help to clarify issues they did not understand.

*Awareness of the duration of the language-learning process.* Teachers of ELLs should understand that five to seven years are required to learn a language proficiently (Cummins, 2000). Such an awareness can help teachers revise their expectations for ELLs and may lead them to modify their lesson plans based on these expectations. In pre- and post-course surveys the PSTs were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement, “ELLs should be able to acquire English within two years of enrolling in U.S. schools.” Comparison of the surveys yielded interesting results. Before attending the course, the seven of PSTs thought that ELLs should not be expected to learn English in two years. However, after interacting with the community members, they changed their views to uncertain. It can be inferred that the course did not provide a clear picture of the

time required to learn English, especially academic language. Another possible interpretation is that the PSTs may have seen ELLs' improvement over such a short period of time and gotten confused about what they knew about language learning and what they observed in these meetings.

To state briefly, it is highly crucial for teachers to understand that ELLs have different language abilities and personalities and that these can affect their language-learning process. While the PSTs seemed to get confused about the time required to learn a language proficiently after meeting with the community members, they were able to reflect on the issues affecting ELLs' language-related strengths and weaknesses, including their individual differences, abilities in different language domains, and strategic competence during interactions.

**Strategies used to create a welcoming environment for the community members.** The PSTs expressed the importance of creating a safe environment for the ELLs. They talked about giving ELLs control over the topic of discussion, implementing face-saving strategies, and creating mutual trust/*confianza* in order to form a welcoming environment.

***Community members' control over topics.*** It is important for ELLs to be able to communicate comfortably. One of the ways to create this comfort is letting them have control over the topic of conversation (Dooley, 2009). The PSTs took into consideration

what their partners asked to learn about. For example, Rebecca's partner, Martina, wanted to learn how to leave a voice message; thus, Rebecca's group planned their activities around making phone calls and leaving voicemail. Rebecca, Jessica, and Robin, along with Martina, wrote scripts for the situations and then role-played those scripts. Similarly, Jerome's group focused on words that Valencia needed to use regarding transportation and sewing. Other groups prepared guides to help ELLs for job interviews. Referring to Dooley (2009), the PSTs acknowledged the importance of letting the community members choose what they wanted to work on. For example, Hannah expressed that "instead of essentially 'ignoring' her interest [to talk about food or travel/means of transportation], we went along with it, answered her questions and let our conversation go in that path." As a result of this lead, Hannah indicated that they had had a more "natural conversation" and "a more comfortable environment."

About the same interaction, Helen accepted that Jane's control over the topic helped them keep up the flow of their conversation. Helen also emphasized the importance of implementing student-led discussion and student control over topic, as it "creates more engagement and further learning on both the student side and teacher side." Similarly, Robin indicated that they allowed Martina "to have room to speak freely and even control the conversation at many points," with the aim of making "her feel comfortable throughout the instruction." Thus, Helen, Danielle, and Hannah were flexible



about letting Jane take control over the topics of discussion.

Mira, Charlotte, and Yasmeen integrated a blog-writing activity in each meeting, as Mira described, based on Felipe's "desire to specifically improve on his reading and writing skills". Mira also expressed, "The blog writing activity gave him an outlet to practice his writing and reading while it also gave him the control to write about whatever he may choose." Similarly, Charlotte concluded that, "By making room in conversations for him to speak and taking in his incorrect or incomplete responses, we extended the conversation." Thus, taking Felipe's interest in improving his reading and writing skills, Mira, Charlotte, and Yasmeen provided the support Felipe needed and witnessed that Felipe felt comfortable speaking more.

Joey stated that "[l]etting Luciana choose the topic really promoted her engagement." They formed "a positive relationship" and they had a more engaged conversation, as they took her interest into account. Reflecting on the same interaction with Luciana, Paul stated that "Luciana was able to relate the topic to her own health and create a personal connection," which helped Luciana internalize the topic. Melissa also agreed that her team gave Fernando the chance to decide the topic of conversation, "We fed off of Fernando's energy when we discussed what he felt was the most important issue at that time..." and she found that "Fernando seems to be very engaged in our discussions and activities because he plays a large role in what the topic is." Melissa was

able to see the importance of taking into account the learner's interest to create a more engaging conversation. To sum up, the PSTs were able to see that letting the community members decide on the topics of discussion expanded their conversation and let them form a good relationship.

***Face-saving strategies.*** The PSTs also realized that ELLs may need to know some strategies to implement when they do not understand what their interlocutors are talking about (Dooley, 2009). Referring to these strategies, the PSTs provided the ELLs with some tips to make them sound more natural during their interactions with native speakers, more specifically during job interviews. For instance, Charlotte recounted that as a team, they provided the community members with “another way to ask someone a question would be to say ‘Can I ask you a question?’” With this clarification, the facilitators aimed to teach her more appropriate phrases to use during the course of a conversation with a native speaker. Charlotte and her group members were able to see that ELLs may need explicit instruction to formulate more pragmatic utterances and were able to provide the community members guidance about how to say things in a more appropriate manner.

Being aware of the importance of sounding proficient in a job interview, Andrea and her peers gave “Felipe some ‘face saving’ ideas for his next interviews such as responding with, ‘Give me a moment to think about that.’” Andrea believed that “This

will help him slow down and process the questions he is being asked so that he can produce an appropriate response and also maintain his dignity.” Andrea and her peers recognized that ELLs need time to get their ideas together. Hence, they provided him with important and appropriate communication strategies that he can use during a job interview to take more time to think about what he is going to say. In the post-course interview, referring to this tip, Felipe noted that the facilitators made him feel comfortable for his future interviews: “They gave me some advice like I can take my time if I don’t know [the words], and [tell them] ‘please give me time’, ‘please, can you repeat that?’, so that I can understand it in the second time.”

***Reflections on missed opportunities.*** The PSTs also indicated what kind of strategies they should have used during these meetings so that both parties could have had a better experience. For example, Lily praised the fact that “Clara felt comfortable to just jump into the conversation and ask [what quesadilla is].” However, she also found this “jump” non-pragmatic, as she believed that “Sometimes long pauses or abrupt comments may allow people in our society to feel uncomfortable because it is not the ‘norm’.” Lily wished that she had taught “them different phrases that can allow them to act like proficient speakers of a language.” Therefore, she aimed to “teach Angel and Clara at the next meeting how to respond if they are unsure or need a repetition of a phrase.”

Stella narrated the time when she was not able to implement face-saving strategies appropriately, because she could not understand when her partner was talking about Amazon Alexa, referring to the voice assistant as “Alessa”.

I tried to pull out words that I could understand and relate them to a funny video I had seen myself, which I then described to her to see if that was what she was talking about. Unfortunately, this strategy did not work... According to Dooley, however, this strategy that I used would have been better had I not “imposed my own guess” and instead asked a question, such as “Who is Alessa?” (Dooley, pg. 502).

Stella was able to see herself as the source of this miscommunication and was able to understand that asking more questions instead of guessing what the community member was saying would have been more useful for the flow of conversation. Reflecting on a moment when she missed being able to implement face-saving strategies, Stella was determined that “As a teacher, I need to employ the face-saving language consistently throughout a conversation, as well as monitor my own listening and comprehension.” By doing these things, she believed, “I can encourage emergent bilinguals to continue on until we can both figure out what we want to say to each other.”

Working with Valencia, Jerome regretted that “We could have used fixing strategies more by possibly prompting her by asking her to confirm or deny specific

difficulties she was having like pronouncing certain phonemes that might conflict with her native language.” Jerome was aware that ELLs have difficulties in getting over negative transfer from the previously learned language. Thus, he thought that “If she is able to indicate specific difficulties by our questioning, we would be able to implement these strategies more than we did.” Similarly, Hannah also criticized herself for not being able to ask about Jane’s feelings about her experience.

Within this same conversation, right before Jane asked us about driving, we were talking about maps and directions. We had Jane, on a map, tell us how to get to a location that we requested. One thing that we should have done differently was to have her reflect. We didn’t ask her what problems she thought she had or how she felt doing that specific activity.

Hannah was able to see the importance of reflection in one’s learning experience and regretted that they did not ask Jane whether she had any problems completing the activity.

Danielle also expressed that they could have implemented more comprehension checks so that Jane would have been sure that they had understood her. Danielle remembered that “Jane said recently she feels sad when she thinks people don’t understand her” and concluded that “Maybe we should be using it more to make sure Jane knows we are comprehending [what she said].” Being aware of the community

members' linguistic skills and their concerns about their proficiency levels, the PSTs concluded that using more comprehension checks would have been better to make the ELLs more comfortable. Moreover, they thought they could have taught the community members more pragmatic norms so that they could overcome their shyness and embarrassment.

**Future plans to create a safe environment for ELLs.** The data reveal that the PSTs presented their future plans to use what they had learned from the course to create a safe environment to increase ELLs' participation. For instance, Andrea stated her willingness to improve her teaching by signing up for this course: "It was kind of a goal for me to sign up for this course instead of signing up for a course that my cohort is in, because I wanted this for myself." Andrea was aware of the needs and took action by taking this course to become more knowledgeable about ELLs and learn ways to be more helpful to them. Her goals in teaching include, "Allowing room for the ELL to speak more (which may require more prompting) and making sure to check for mutual understanding. [Those] are two things that I will definitely take away from this experience and use in the classroom." Andrea was able to grasp what factors can influence a conversation and how teachers or native speakers can help ELLs engage in a conversation more successfully.

Similarly, Jessica said that “as a future educator, I have to remind myself that comprehension checks and small group conversations are important in helping reciprocate back-and-forth with emergent bilinguals.” Moreover, Jessica listed other strategies that can be used to increase ELLs’ participation: “make small group instruction to help build on the students’ funds of knowledge by allowing the student to have room in the conversation and taking a little control of the topic.”

In addition to these strategies, the PSTs talked about how they would create a safe classroom environment for the ELLs and how they would build mutual trust with them. They presented their views on ELLs’ inclusion in mainstream classrooms. Finally, the data reveal that the PSTs were hesitant to share the knowledge they gained in this course and service-learning project.

***Safe classroom environment.*** One of the themes that emerged related to the interaction with the community members was that the PSTs developed inclinations to create safe classroom environments for ELLs so that the ELLs could participate in class activities more effectively. For example, Paul pointed out that they were able to “assess the learner's overall engagement, and provide further more advancing questions and framework for conversations” by making the community members “feel comfortable to ask questions.” Similarly, Melissa believed that, “When teaching bilinguals, it is important to have a welcoming and friendly environment.” For example, after being

unable to understand what Fernando was saying about his health problem, Melissa explained that she did not pretend that she knew what Javier was saying. Instead, she reported that she asked for clarification, and thought that “without clarifying, I may not have helped him as much as I had.” Thus, she thought being honest with the students would create a safer environment for them. Moreover, considering the ELLs’ being “self-conscious about their accent or inability to communicate their thoughts,” Melissa emphasized the importance of “hav[ing] a classroom that is warm and makes students feel comfortable.” Paying attention to ways the ELLs’ blamed themselves for not speaking proficiently, Melissa was able to understand how this feeling can be eliminated through creating a safe environment. As a result, ELLs can speak up without feeling embarrassed or discouraged.

During their conversation, Charlotte and her peers learned about Felipe’s personal life, like his relationship to his brothers and his perceptions of language learning and other daily life problems. Charlotte felt that their main aim in the meetings, as facilitators, was to “create a space where he felt safe and comfortable enough to share his linguistic and cultural differences.” Thinking about this experience and classroom discussions, Charlotte identified the need to “provide an environment that is free from stereotypes, bias, and prejudice so that the language learners feel safe enough to share.” She concluded that this will also “help [ELLs and proficient English speakers] build the



strategic competence in terms of cultural and linguistic contexts.” Charlotte was aware of the importance of creating a safe place for ELLs, as it increases their participation in the conversation. She also found it helpful to teach native speakers how to interact with ELLs by engaging in intercultural communication. Likewise, Danielle also referred to the importance of implementing conversational strategies (Dooley, 2009) and her willingness to implement them in her teaching as well as to “guide other students in doing so [implementing face-saving strategies] to create peer communications and even further development...”

Jerome also listed ways of increasing participation and student success.

The implications for giving students who are ELLs the best opportunities to succeed is for teachers to make the session learner-driven based on her desires, encourage her and prompt her often, and do it in a small group or one-on-one setting to “save face.”

Thus, at the conclusion of the course, the PSTs appeared more prepared to create a safe environment to increase ELLs’ and their non-ELL peers’ mutual understanding and further interaction in their classrooms.

Witnessing Miranda’s shyness to talk in whole-group discussions, Ellen expressed that their “main goal was to make sure that Miranda felt safe” during the meetings. Considering the misunderstandings and “the differences between the funds of knowledge

of the participants”, Ellen emphasized the importance of creating a safe space for ELLs. She stated that, “... I will take [the Funds of Knowledge approach] into my classroom and apply to my teaching for not just ELL students but for all students to make [my] classroom a safe space to learn and to make mistakes.” Ellen had come to understand the necessity of creating safe and comfortable classrooms to make mistakes and learn from them, as well as taking into consideration the students’ Funds of Knowledge.

***Mutual trust/Confianza.*** By the end of the course, the PSTs showed a willingness to create mutual trust/*confianza* between ELLs and themselves. For example, Helen found that “This mutual trust is a necessity in order to get to know your students and establish which methods of teaching work best” and assured herself that “*Confianza* is something that I will strive my best to create when teaching emergent bilingual students, and all students in general.” Similarly, Shannon came to believe that building mutual trust is important so that ELLs can feel encouraged to participate more. She also set her mind on helping ELLs feel confident “every time they walk into real life situations outside of the classroom.” Similarly, Andrea pointed out her future plans for teaching ELLs: “Allowing room for the ELL to speak more (which may require more prompting) and making sure to check for mutual understanding are two things that I will definitely take away from this experience and use in the classroom.” The PSTs were eager to gain ELLs’ trust so that they could join the conversation easily, even outside the class.

Danielle also emphasized the importance of building mutual trust, as she was able to see its benefits during her interaction with Jane.

Mutual trust allows for further development of learning and greater conversations. We want to make sure that Jane, just like any other student, feels safe and open to talk to us, engage and ask questions, because it will allow us to better understand each other and how to better help them learn... doing so has further extended our rapport and our ability to help her become a more fluent emergent bilingual.

Danielle observed that building *confianza* helped Jane speak more comfortably, and improved her speaking skills. To state it briefly, the PSTs had understood the importance of providing more opportunities and scaffolding for ELLs to participate in the class and implementing comprehension checks to be sure that they understand what the ELLs were talking about. Moreover, being eager to create mutual trust, the PSTs believed that this would help them find effective teaching strategies to help ELLs and other students.

***Inclusion of ELLs in mainstream classrooms.*** The PSTs showed a willingness to welcome and help ELLs who would be in their classrooms and shared their future plans for helping ELLs. For example, Danielle, sure that she would have ELLs in her classroom, remarked that “Implementing these strategies into my future classroom and taking part in my future teacher reflection as well will help me better educate the

emergent bilinguals I will undoubtedly have.” Similarly, by talking about the strategies that would be helpful for ELLs, Stella indicated that she was ready to have ELLs in her classroom. In addition to statements like these, the PSTs indicated their willingness to have ELLs in their classrooms in pre- and post-course surveys, as well. Moreover, the PSTs indicated their views on the time it takes for teachers to help ELLs, as well as their readiness to welcome ELLs into their own classrooms.

*Positive atmosphere.* As a general tendency, most of the PSTs enhanced their positive views about ELLs’ presence in their classroom, as they thought ELLs’ inclusion in the mainstream classroom would create a positive atmosphere. However, a closer look at the findings yields interesting results. For example, in the pre-course survey, Charlotte thought that the inclusion of ELLs would not create a positive educational atmosphere, but in the post-course survey, she strongly agreed that it would create a positive atmosphere. Coming from an ELL background, it was interesting to see that Charlotte had not initially thought that inclusion of ELLs would create a positive atmosphere. In this case, she might have thought about the issue from a different perspective; her own experiences as an ELL may have affected her view. She had previously asserted that ELLs were left alone to learn the language in a mainstream classroom. Hence, she may have thought that ELLs should be in a separate classroom so that they could get the necessary attention and learn the language more easily. However, it appears that the

experience of working with ELLs changed her mind about inclusion, and she later encouraged the presence of ELLs in the mainstream classroom.

*Benefits for all students.* The majority of the PSTs thought that putting ELLs in mainstream classrooms would benefit all students. On the other hand, Jerome, who came from an immigrant family, had been uncertain about the benefits of inclusion prior to the course, and still did not think that inclusion of ELLs would benefit all students after attending the course. Although he was aware of ELLs' lives and needs, Jerome did not further explain his thinking on the matter. Another striking result is that while Jessica strongly agreed that inclusion would be beneficial for all students in the pre-course survey, she rejected this view after attending the course. Although it is hard to understand the changes in Jerome's and Jessica's views, it can be inferred that they may have felt uncomfortable interacting with community members with different proficiency levels in the same environment.

*Time to place ELLs in mainstream classrooms.* The PSTs also expressed their opinions about whether ELLs should wait to be included in the mainstream classroom until they attain a minimum proficiency level. The comparison of pre- and post-course answers to this item yields interesting results. While in the pre-course survey 8 out of 18 PSTs agreed that ELLs should wait until they attain minimum proficiency in English, after attending the course all but one changed their views to either "uncertain" or

“disagree”. In other words, the PSTs might have understood that ELLs could improve their skills in a short amount of time, as the community members did in their one-hour-a-week interaction in eight weeks. Thus, the PSTs might have concluded that ELLs could be put into the same classroom with their non-ELL peers without waiting to learn English at a minimum level.

Another interesting finding was that Jerome thought that ELLs should wait until they attained a minimum level of proficiency. Taken together with the other two items above, it seems that Jerome might have thought that ELLs feel overwhelmed and embarrassed in front of their non-ELL peers. He also believed that “student engagement, which can come from being empowered by preemptive or fixing strategies, is universally agreed upon to be necessary for learning to occur.” In other words, he thought that ELLs should be in a safe environment so that they could feel empowered and learn. As a result, he may have believed that ELLs should gain a minimum of English proficiency before being placed in mainstream classes, where they would then feel safe enough to participate in the activities. Thus, he might have thought ELLs might not benefit from being in a mainstream classroom until they attained a certain degree of proficiency.

In conclusion, after attending this course and interacting with community members, the majority of the PSTs were able to understand the benefits of inclusion of ELLs in mainstream classrooms. However, a few changes in views or unexpected

answers on the survey items indicate that PSTs' personal experiences and beliefs may have played a role in their understanding of ELLs' inclusion in mainstream classrooms before they attain a minimum level of proficiency.

*Sufficiency of time for teachers.* The PSTs were also asked to reflect on the statement, "Mainstream teachers do not have enough time to deal with the needs of ELLs" (item 6). In the pre-course survey, 13 PSTs, and in the post-course survey, 10 PSTs disagreed with the assertion that teachers do not have time to attend to ELLs' needs. However, when the results were closely examined individually, it became clear that Rebecca and Paul, who initially disagreed with the statement, had later agreed that teachers do not have time for ELLs' needs. Moreover, Andrea and Shannon became uncertain about the time constraints. In other words, it can be inferred that the course and interaction with ELLs led some PSTs to think about the needs of ELLs and how much time they would need to meet them. They may have seen that ELLs need special care that can take up much more time, especially considering the current demands of the educational system and testing issues.

*Having ELLs in their classroom.* The PSTs indicated their openness to teaching ELLs in their classrooms (item 15). Not surprisingly, all of the PSTs agreed or strongly agreed to welcome ELLs in their classrooms. This openness to having ELLs in their

classrooms reflected the fact that the PSTs had already had a welcoming stance toward ELLs. After attending the course, this idea was further reinforced.

One thing to note is that although all of the PSTs agreed to have ELLs in their classrooms, they had varying opinions on the specific modifications for ELLs and the ethical concerns raised by these modifications (as discussed in the “instructional strategies” section above) as well as on the likelihood of having enough time to help ELLs. The PSTs also reacted differently to the benefits of inclusion of ELLs in mainstream classrooms, even though all of them intended to welcome ELLs in their classrooms. To sum up, it can be inferred that the PSTs all had good intentions of welcoming ELLs into their classrooms, but not all of them were aware of the additional roles they would need to take on if they actually did have ELLs in their classroom.

***Hesitation to implement and share the knowledge.*** Although all of the students recommended this course to other PSTs, the data reveal that several PSTs were hesitant to accept the applicability of some of the strategies that they had learned from participating in the course and the service-learning project to real-life classrooms. For example, Jerome and Andrea indicated that the course did not provide specific teaching strategies that work best with ELLs. Jerome claimed, “I do not feel like we really learned teaching strategies to help students who are ELLs, and I know we learned using visuals and that obvious stuff...” However, he was concerned about learning more about specific



teaching strategies to be used for ELLs, as he wondered "... but how can I teach a kid that comes from Peru... how do I teach him differences between what is letter 'j' in English or the letter 'y' in English, they are similar, but actually they are totally different sounds." He became aware of this drawback from his interaction with Valencia, as he stated that Valencia struggled with such features of the English language that differed from the Spanish language. Thus, he wished they had talked more about teaching strategies that they could use to help ELLs. Charlotte found the home visits that were detailed in the Funds of Knowledge approach (Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti, 2005) "very unrealistic and not applicable." Jessica wondered in the post-course survey how these strategies they had learned would work with younger ELLs. In addition to these concerns over further applicability, interestingly, three out of six interviewees expressed hesitation about sharing what they had learned from this course, given that they would be novice teachers in their future work environments. For example, Joey indicated that home visits could be hard to implement, as "a lot of times it is overstepping some boundaries" and he thought sharing what he learned might be hard in the first years of teaching. Joey admitted that he would wait to get tenure before voicing his insights about ELLs and the Funds of Knowledge approach. "I do not want to stir up the pot... for something that the school is not ready for or something like that. But definitely in school, I will definitely be interested in doing a program." Similarly, Jerome also mentioned that districts had a role

in what to implement in schools, “in my district, you can go home, meet kids and see them... but I think that depends on the district you worked in...”

Admitting that “not everyone is receptive to [new] knowledge,” Charlotte also had very similar thoughts about waiting to take action in support of ELLs at the school level until the circumstances were right.

If the opportunity just comes up, I will share with others. At the same time, as I'm going to be a new teacher, you have to put yourself in a position that you don't want to necessarily cause too much... you don't want to stir anything up within your district or anything like that...

Hesitant to share what she learned from this course as a new teacher, Charlotte indicated that she would wait for the right time. “You will look for opportunities where you can provide your insights, experience, and knowledge into something... you can let them know what you know, what type of resources and stuff like that.” In conclusion, despite being very eager to do something to implement what they learned from this course, these PSTs admitted that they would be reluctant to articulate their plans about a school- or district-wide activity until they got tenure.

**Conclusion.** The PSTs were very positive about interacting with the community members; they enjoyed and learned a lot from their partners. They were also flexible about the circumstances, like not always having a partner to interact with or not doing the

activities they had prepared. On the other hand, five out of 20 PSTs reflected on their anxiety about meeting the community members and interacting with them. These PSTs were anxious about these meetings because they had not had similar experiences before, and they did not know how they would initiate the conversations or what to expect from them. Nevertheless, if their apprehensive feelings were not relieved immediately upon meeting their conversation partners, they did dissipate over the course of the semester. In the end, all of the participants valued this interaction and found it rewarding and eye-opening and were eager to welcome ELLs in their future classrooms.

### **Summary of the Findings**

The aim of this study was to examine whether a course specifically devoted to teaching ELLs would be helpful in enhancing PSTs' knowledge, skills, and dispositions toward ELLs. The data reveal valuable information about the course and the experiences of the PSTs and throughout their interaction. The first thing to note is that all of the participants found the experience informative, eye-opening, and rewarding. The PSTs were able to enhance their knowledge, skills, and dispositions with respect to concepts of language, instructional strategies, Funds of Knowledge, and reciprocity.

The PSTs were also able to identify the language demands of the tasks and activities they employed and appropriately scaffold the community members with various strategies to make the content comprehensible. They implemented preemptive and fixing

strategies (Dooley, 2009) to maintain the flow of conversation. The PSTs used comprehension checks, waited for a while to let the community members think, and checked their own pace of speech so that the community members could understand what they had said. Although the PSTs did not reflect on what kind of scaffolding strategies they had learned after the course, they did reflect on how preemptive and fixing strategies helped them to interact with the community members more effectively. The PSTs also modified tasks depending on the community members' linguistic abilities. In other words, the PSTs used ELLs' L1 when necessary, introduced vocabulary meaningfully, clarified topics manageably, and prepared their activity guides appropriately. The data also reveal that, although the PSTs came to varying conclusions on ethical issues and the question of modifying coursework for ELLs, they all became more aware of ELLs' needs and open to having them in their classrooms.

Additionally, the PSTs gained an appreciation for the community members' lives and background knowledge. The PSTs were able to pinpoint the challenges that ELLs face in their daily lives, especially those stemming from language barriers. While a couple of the PSTs focused on the family's struggles and determination to provide their children with educational opportunities, others focused on the difficulties newcomers may face, ranging from finding a job to combating cultural stereotypes. And one of the PSTs reflected on how it is important to look for possible reasons for poor school

performance other than intelligence. More of the students expressed concerns over ELLs' daily struggles and needs after meeting community members and talking about these issues throughout the semester. The PSTs tended to use the terms "background knowledge" and "funds of knowledge" interchangeably, and few of them shared concrete examples of its application in their instruction. Nevertheless, the PSTs were able to understand and internalize the Funds of Knowledge approach and its benefits in teaching ELLs.

Attending this service-learning project gave the PSTs an opportunity to develop an understanding of reciprocity and the importance of creating a safe and comfortable environment for ELLs. They were also able to enhance their understanding about their own perceptions about their own lives. Finally, they found that building mutual trust and forming friendlier relationships with ELLs was rewarding in itself and an effective way of helping them to communicate comfortably. In conclusion, the PSTs attending this course not only enhanced the positive orientations they had towards ELLs, but also developed an inclination to advocate for ELLs and their needs, especially in educational settings— although they did perceive some institutional barriers to their doing so.

## **Chapter 5: Discussion, Implications, and Recommendations**

This qualitative research aims to reveal the PSTs' experiences both in a course specifically devoted to teaching ELLs and in their interaction with adult ELLs during a community-based service-learning project that was part of the course. This chapter includes a brief summary of the key findings of the study, a discussion of those findings with connections to current research, and some thoughts on the limitations of the study. The chapter also discusses the work's implications for teacher educators, as well as recommendations for future research.

### **The Key Findings of the Study**

The results show that the PSTs improved their understanding of ELLs, their lives, struggles, and needs. They began to use the conversation strategies they had learned from the course reading materials during their interaction with the community members. They also built reciprocity with their conversation partners and saw the value of interacting with the ELLs in a "friendly" environment. Although some of the PSTs reported being unsure of how they would apply the knowledge and skills they gained from this interaction in their future classrooms, the PSTs all showed a willingness to advocate for ELLs. They articulated plans to incorporate ELLs' background knowledge into their classrooms and to create a safe environment for ELLs to participate in activities comfortably. They were also willing to attend/receive future training to learn more about

teaching strategies to help ELLs better. As a result, this course, which was specifically devoted to teaching ELLs, helped the PSTs better understand their own orientations towards ELLs, gave the PSTs a chance to reflect on their own beliefs about ELL instruction, and enhanced their use of conversation strategies while interacting with ELLs.

### **Discussion**

This section is organized according to the themes found in the literature review (Chapter 2). In the first subsection, results concerning the PSTs' attitudes towards and beliefs about ELLs are discussed, followed by a subsection dealing with the PSTs' experiences in the community-based service-learning project. The final subsection discusses the conversational and scaffolding strategies that were used to improve the ELLs' speaking and listening skills/oral language development.

**The PSTs' attitudes and beliefs toward ELLs.** The primary aim of this PRELL course was to improve the PSTs' dispositions toward ELLs by providing them with the opportunity to interact with community members who were also ELLs. The PSTs empathized more with the ELLs and their needs after attending this specially designed course (Ferguson & Boudeaux, 2015). In keeping with previous research findings (Pappamihiel, 2007; Regalla, 2013), the PSTs were pleased with the experience. As a result of taking the PRELL course, the PSTs felt themselves better equipped to

understand the experiences of ELLs, their lives, struggles, and needs. Moreover, contrary to the PSTs in Pappamihel (2007) who considered working with ELLs an extra burden, most of the PSTs participating in the present study thought that mainstream teachers have enough time to deal with the needs of ELLs.

The PSTs' prior interaction with ELLs ranged from a high level of interaction—due to being ELLs or coming from immigrant families themselves—to a moderate level of interaction reflecting student-teaching experience with ELLs, to limited or no interaction as a result of being born and raised in exclusively English-speaking communities. The data revealed, however, that before attending the course the PSTs were already willing to have ELLs in their classrooms; they considered that they had become more prepared to help ELLs effectively after attending the course. On the other hand, Dixon et al. (2016) and Toros and Tackett (2016) found that the level of interaction or knowledge affected PSTs' attitudes towards and beliefs about ELLs. In these previous studies, PSTs who had more language learning experience (Dixon et al., 2016) or who had prior coursework (Toros & Tackett, 2016) were more welcoming of the inclusion of ELLs in the classroom, compared to those who did not have either language learning experience or prior coursework concerning ELLs.

The PSTs in this PRELL course believed in the importance of maintaining home languages and giving ELLs the freedom to speak their languages in school settings. This



finding differed from the prior study conducted by Torok and Aguilar (2000), in which the researchers found that the PSTs had contrasting views on language issues. Although the participants in that study thought it was important to maintain the home language and become fluent in a second language, they thought that ELLs should not be allowed to speak another language while in school (p. 26). One possible explanation for the discrepancy is that the quality of interaction with ELLs matters: the PSTs in the present study engaged in one-on-one interaction with the community members for eight weeks, whereas in Torok and Aguilar (2000), the PSTs attended only one community event, at which they observed interactions and cross-cultural communication. Moreover, the course in their study was designed to increase awareness about diverse communities and did not focus solely on ELLs', as did the PRELL course in the present study.

Apart from learning about the community members, the PSTs also made discoveries about themselves, similar to what was found in Pappamihiel (2007). The PSTs attending this PRELL course were able to better understand their own views on language, identity, and culture, as well as increasing their appreciation for the resources available to them in their own lives. The PSTs in the present study also reflected on their roles during the meetings. They reported that they formed friendly relationships and came to perceive themselves as friends, teachers, students, and confidants of the community members. Forming this relationship resulted in more reciprocal interaction with the

community members; both parties learned from each other (e.g. Greene, 1998; Droppert, 2013; Palpacuer-Lee, Curtis, & Curran, 2018). The PSTs were also able to learn from the challenges they faced in the course of their interactions with the community members. At first, the PSTs found it challenging to monitor the pace of their speech and implement wait-time (Hooks, 2008), but they gradually learned how to be patient and speak slowly.

In addition, the PSTs became more appreciative of the ELLs' efforts to learn English and of the ways individual differences affect the language-learning process, a finding shared by Pappamihel (2007) and Palpacuer-Lee, Curtis, and Curran (2018). The PSTs recognized the importance of creating a safe environment and found that giving learners the power to choose topics of discussion and providing them with communicative strategies helped them feel more comfortable about their language proficiency (Dooley, 2009; Walqui, 2006; Wright, 2016). Using Dooley's article as a resource, the PSTs were able to recognize that native speakers are also responsible for the flow of conversation. Examining their interactions in light of Dooley's article, the PSTs commented on strategies they might have used during their interactions.

Another distinctive result that contrasted with the existing research concerns adopting English as an official/government language. After taking the PRELL course, eight out of 19 PSTs became not sure about the implications of adopting English as an official language, eight of them disagreed with adopting English as an official language,

and only two supported the notion. On the other hand, Hutchinson (2013) reported that 20 out of 25 PSTs in her study agreed that it would be a good idea to establish English as the official language. Although the structure of the courses in the two studies seems similar, they differed in terms of the PSTs' interaction with ELLs. The results in the present study show that close interaction with community members and learning about their lives may have helped the PSTs attending the course to see the importance of valuing other languages or at least to begin to question their own views on language policies. To sum up, the structure of the course and the service-learning project influence the PSTs' understanding of the language-related issues. The present study indicates that having personal/one-on-one interaction with community members/ELLs increases the PSTs' knowledge, skills, and dispositions towards use of L1 in instruction, bilingualism, and linguistic diversity.

In their examination of how teacher education programs, curriculum, and coursework prepare PSTs for ELLs, Premier and Miller (2010) found that these programs failed to prepare linguistically responsive teachers. The PRELL course examined in the present study, however, helped the PSTs develop positive dispositions towards ELLs. Nonetheless, the data also reveal that three of the PSTs reported feeling hesitant to share the knowledge they had learned in this course in their future workplaces. The prior research reviewed for this study did not reveal any hesitancy on the part of PSTs to share

what they had learned in their future jobs. There may be several reasons for this: the PSTs in those studies may not have been asked explicitly whether they would share what they had learned (in the current study, the PSTs were explicitly asked about their future plans); the PSTs in the previous studies may have been inclined to write only positive things, as the data came from PSTs' self-reports mostly written for course assignments; or the PSTs in the present study may have felt more confident sharing their feelings. Although only three PSTs indicated such hesitancy during the interview, it is still worth paying attention to, since there may have been other PSTs who felt the same. The study thus underscores the importance of listening to PSTs' comments about their experience with the course and the ELLs.

To sum up, the PSTs found their interaction with the ELLs very eye-opening. They came away from the experience able to understand the ELLs' struggles and needs, the importance of environment in the language-learning process, and the necessity of being careful about the pace of speech and wait-time. In other words, the course was efficient in terms of improving the PSTs' positive attitudes and beliefs towards ELLs.

**The service-learning projects to prepare PSTs for diverse communities.** The data reveal that the PSTs learned a lot from the experiences they had with the community members. As is seen in the literature (e.g. Bollin, 2007, Szente, 2008; Droppert, 2013), PSTs in such programs discover the cultural and linguistic variety that exists in diverse

communities. More specifically, the PSTs in the previous studies observed that they had to leave “their comfort zones” while interacting with the community members (González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005; Regalla, 2013). They also became happy with the ELLs’ achievements (Palpacuer-Lee, Curtis, & Curran, 2018) and encouraged them to do more. Both the PSTs and the community members in the present service-learning project not only improved their conversation skills, but also created a safe and friendly environment in which they talked freely about their private lives (Johnson & Owen, 2013).

Interacting with adult community members helped the PSTs recognize their own beliefs about diverse populations and revise those beliefs based on what they had learned from the experience (Palpacuer-Lee & Curtis, 2017; Palpacuer-Lee, Curtis, & Curran, 2018). In line with Bollin (2007) and Rodriguez and Vaughs (2015), the PSTs became aware of their own stereotypes about ELLs’ families, such as the belief that immigrant parents are ignorant of or unconcerned with their children’s education. The PSTs realized the importance of knowing families and students better (Hooks, 2008; Glazier, Able, & Charpentier, 2014; Figueora, Suh, & Byrnes, 2015). At the end of the course, the PSTs stated that they had become more open to learning about their students’ families and willing to increase parental involvement by inviting parents into their classrooms. For example, after the experience with the ELLs in this course, one of the PSTs, Ellen,

discovered that it is important for teachers to learn about their students' responsibilities at home, like taking care of siblings, which may prevent them from doing their homework.

More importantly, the level of interaction in service-learning projects matters (Glazier, Able, & Charpentier, 2014). Glazier, Able, and Charpentier (2014) compared two types of service-learning projects. In one of the projects, PSTs in an Elementary Education program interacted with community members in their (the community members') homes. The PSTs were given different responsibilities, like helping with the children's assignments or babysitting when the parents had errands to run. In the other project, PSTs in a Master of Arts in Teaching program assisted teachers at a Summer School. The researchers found that the PSTs working closely with the community members improved their knowledge and dispositions about ELLs more than the PSTs who were assigned to assist the teachers in the Summer School. The present study also appears to support the argument that PSTs need closer interaction with the communities and with ELLs in order to improve their understanding of ELLs' lives and needs.

Another important theme discussed throughout the semester was the application of Funds of Knowledge. The PSTs referred to the concept throughout the semester, as each week they read and discussed the book *Funds of Knowledge: Theorizing Practices in Households, Communities, and Classrooms* by Gonzalez, Moll, and Amanti (2005). As a result, the PSTs not only began to use the term "Funds of Knowledge", but also

commented on its influence in their interaction and understanding of ELLs and their lives (González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005; Reyes, DaSilva Iddings, & Feller, 2016). However, closer analysis of the PSTs' use of the term reveals that the PSTs were using the term "Funds of Knowledge" interchangeably with "background knowledge". For example, some of the PSTs defined their Chinese partners' food preferences as a fund of knowledge, rather than seeing them as background knowledge or prior experience. For example, in her overall reflection, Danielle indicated that as facilitators, they aimed to "build up the community members' funds of knowledge about the English language and American culture." This statement reflected a shallow understanding of the concept (Oughton, 2010). More importantly, it seems that the PSTs could not fully grasp the applicability of the Funds of Knowledge concept, leading one of the PSTs, Charlotte, to describe the notion as "very superficial and not applicable".

While interacting with the community members did help the PSTs see the possible struggles and needs of ELLs, the PSTs were unable to provide specific examples of how they could apply the Funds of Knowledge approach in their lessons. This finding differs from that of the studies compiled in González, Moll, and Amanti (2005), which examine the application of the Funds of Knowledge approach. In the studies cited in that book, the teachers made home visits and conducted interviews with families in order to learn about their lives and then use that knowledge as a guide for curriculum design. In

one of the studies, for instance, the families were found to be highly knowledgeable about horses, and the teacher designed a curriculum around that topic across content areas.

Although the PSTs in the present study were not expected to create a detailed plan of that type in this PRELL course, they, by contrast, could not come up with anything of the sort, despite several attempts on the instructor's part to elicit possible applications of the Funds of Knowledge approach in classrooms. A similar result is also found in Reyes, DaSilva Iddings, and Feller (2016), in which the PSTs could not come up with real life applications of the approach for their future teaching plans.

It is, however, important to note the methodological differences among these studies. In the studies included in González et al., the participants were already teachers who had worked with many ELLs and were willing to learn more about the ELLs' families in order to use the information in their classrooms. In the study of Reyes et al. and in the current study, the participants were PSTs who were still in the process of learning about ELLs and coming to terms with their own perceptions and beliefs about ELLs and their lives. Thus, this inability to turn theory to practice may have stemmed from the PSTs' inexperience in teaching ELLs and their lack of prior interaction with ELLs in educational settings. The results thus show that if PSTs are expected to provide curriculum-related examples to demonstrate their conceptual understanding of the Funds



of Knowledge approach, it is important to encourage them to think more deeply and identify more achievable plans for their future teaching.

To sum up, the community-based service learning project integrated with this course proved to be a unique and transformative experience. In addition to increasing and revising their knowledge, skills, and dispositions toward ELLs and their families, the PSTs were able to enhance their understanding of ELLs' struggles and needs. They also began to understand the concept of Funds of Knowledge. However, they could not go beyond a general understanding and could not envision the application of the approach in real classrooms. The PSTs in the present study mostly suggested organizing multicultural events as a way to honor ELLs' Funds of Knowledge, rather than incorporating the parents' Funds of Knowledge into curriculum and lesson plans. It would appear that in community-based projects like this, during which the PSTs have close contact with ELLs and community members, the PSTs still need more prompting to think about how they can integrate Funds of Knowledge into their instruction.

#### **The instructional strategies to improve communication/conversation**

**strategies.** The service-learning project aimed to provide community members who are ELLs with the opportunity to interact with native speakers of English to improve their English skills. As facilitators of these meetings, the PSTs were able to implement the scaffolding strategies they had learned from course readings and course discussions. The

PSTs gave the ELLs control over the topic, implemented comprehension checks, and asked for clarification, all of which they had learned from their discussion of intercultural conversation strategies (Dooley, 2009). More importantly, the PSTs discovered the importance of implementing these strategies, which enhanced the depth of their conversations. In other words, first reading an article and then analyzing a conversation segment using the article increased the PSTs' awareness of communication strategies. Moreover, they were able to understand that the responsibility for fluent conversation does not rest solely with the ELLs, but that the native speakers also play a large role in keeping the conversation going.

The PSTs were also able to understand that ELLs' emotions and efforts are important to consider while interacting with them and when designing and implementing appropriate instructional strategies for them. The data derived from the present study show that the strategies mentioned in the Dooley's article are applicable and useful and should be added to courses intended to introduce PSTs to appropriate ELL-teaching strategies. The previous research cited in the literature review did not provide detailed information about the course materials used or their effects on the PSTs' learning or experience. The present study shows that course materials are also important to consider if teacher educators aim to increase PSTs' awareness of ELLs (Daniel, 2014; Pappamihel, 2007).

The data reveal that the PSTs attending this course were also able to learn that ELLs' home languages or L1s are resources in learning a new language (Wright, 2016). In a result similar to that of a study conducted by Karathanos (2010), the PSTs in the present study came to view language as a resource, became aware of the benefits of using L1 in instruction, and showed willingness to exchange languages and provide multilingual materials when necessary. This result contradicts the findings of Hutchinson (2013). Reporting on PSTs' experiences during a course about ELLs which also had a requirement of 10 hours of classroom observation, Hutchinson (2013) indicated that the PSTs in her study were still uncertain about the use of ELLs' L1. One possible reason for the discrepancy could be the type of interaction with the ELLs. In the present course, the PSTs had one-on-one interaction with the ELLs, whereas in Hutchinson, the PSTs observed a classroom, but did not necessarily interact with the ELLs. Another consideration might be that during the classroom observations, the PSTs in Hutchinson (2013) observed that the ELLs tended to rely on translations and did not show enough effort at learning the language. During the meetings of the present study, on the other hand, the entire aim was for the ELLs to practice English. Thus, the PSTs participating in this present study resorted to translation only when they could not explain a topic in their initial attempts, e.g. when the PST Paul provided a translation for the phrase "my head hurts."

The PSTs also used repetitions and restatements in their conversations, which have been found in the literature to be effective strategies (Facella, Rampino, & Shea, 2005; Lucero, 2014). The PSTs in the present study employed questions with the purpose described in Kim (2010) and engaged with the community members in a manner similar to the Response Protocol developed by Mohr and Mohr (2007).

All of these specific strategies led both the facilitators and the community members to have efficient and enjoyable conversations throughout the weeks. Although the previous studies were conducted in PK-8 classrooms, the teachers in those previous studies used similar strategies to the ones used by the PSTs in this study for adult ELLs. This similarity of strategies used showed that ELLs need constant repetition of words and reformulation of expressions, no matter how old they are. Thus, the study also contributes to the literature on effective ways of teaching adult ELLs.

The PSTs also indicated willingness to implement these strategies in their future classrooms. Moreover, contrary to what Reeves (2006) has found, the PSTs in the present study were not only willing to welcome ELLs in their classrooms, but also willing to modify their manner of instruction. Although several of the PSTs were uncertain about the value of implementing specific modifications, such as allowing ELLs more time or lessening the quantity of coursework, the PSTs in this PRELL course were ready to

advocate for modifications and believed that they would be able to justify them to the ELLs' non-ELL peers.

Finally, in keeping with the existing literature on self-efficacy (Durgunoglu & Hughes), the majority of the PSTs in the present study did not find the course sufficient to prepare them to work with ELLs and expressed a desire for further training. At the end of the course, several of the PSTs still felt that they lacked the specific skills to teach ELLs. For example, Jerome indicated that he had not learned how to teach his conversation partner, Valencia, the differences between two similar letters that have different sounds in Spanish and English. Similarly, the PSTs questioned how the strategies they learned from working with adult ELLs could be used in working with younger ELLs. However, the data reveal that the PSTs were using effective conversational strategies which have also been found to be helpful in elementary school classrooms. It can be said that for some of the PSTs, the course did not provide a clear picture of the similarities between teaching young and adult ELLs. As a result, some of them came away with a sense of uncertainty as to how prepared they were to work with ELLs.

### **Limitations**

One major limitation of the study is that 18 out of the 20 PSTs came from the special education concentration: their views and perceptions may not be generalizable to

PSTs specialized in other concentrations. Since I cannot speak Spanish, I chose community members who were at least intermediate-level speakers of English. Thus, I was not able to interview Valencia, the one novice speaker, to learn her experiences. Also, due to time constraints, I was only able to observe one course that was specifically designed to teach ELLs. It might have been more informative to conduct the study in different locations or to include multiple similar courses. Additionally, although I tried to collect data using various methods, the bulk of the data came from self-reports written by the PSTs. Since these were graded course assignments, the PSTs might have included statements just for the sake of the grade, rather than revealing their true beliefs about the course and their interaction with the ELLs. Although the interviews yielded similar data to the self-reports, follow-up interviews or surveys could have been conducted to see whether the PSTs held on to their enhanced views about ELLs and community members and to see whether they retained the information and had a chance to apply it in their classrooms.

### **Implications and Recommendations**

The study has very clear implications for teacher educators, school administrators, and community organizations.

**For teacher educators.** The main aim of this study is to explain how the PSTs experience and learn from a course and a service-learning project designed to improve

their preparation for working with ELLs. Such an understanding will help to guide teacher educators in improving their teacher education programs. The study provides valuable information for teacher educators about the efficacy of incorporating service-learning projects into their programs, as well as the design of courses preparing PSTs to work with ELLs.

To begin with, the PSTs found this community-based service-learning project very informative, as they were able to interact with community members and learn about ELLs' experiences firsthand. Providing the opportunity to interact with community members is crucial, given that the PSTs in the present course indicated that they had little experience of interaction with ELLs, unless they had happened to encounter them in their student teaching. The PSTs also mentioned that meeting adults who had children in the schools helped them understand the family issues and to appreciate the value the parents placed on their children's education.

It is therefore advisable that teacher educators find ways to incorporate service-learning projects that increase future teachers' opportunities to interact with linguistically and culturally diverse populations. Teacher educators should also encourage PSTs to learn about the local communities in the areas where they study or where they are planning to teach. Just as the PSTs expressed a willingness to have more interaction with the ELLs, the community members attending this service-learning project also wished to

have more frequent meetings with the PSTs. Teacher educators should thus look for ways to increase the number of hours and locations devoted to service learning, so that community members have more chances to interact with PSTs.

In addition, the PSTs said they wished they had had more such opportunities in their previous courses in their teacher education program. The PRELL course that is the subject of the present study is intended to be taken at the very end of the program, which makes it difficult for PSTs to learn more about ELLs' needs and apply what they learn in a real classroom environment. Some of the PSTs in the present study had had no interaction with ELLs before attending this course. Adding projects of this type earlier in the program would be more helpful to the PSTs.

Apart from increasing the quantity of service-learning projects, teacher educators should be careful about designing the course and selecting the appropriate course materials. In nearly all of their assignments, the PSTs referred to the Funds of Knowledge concept (González, Moll, Amanti, 2005) and the conversational strategies to consider while interacting with ELLs (Dooley, 2009) without citing any additional resources. For example, the PSTs reported that they recognized the effects of implementing conversational strategies like asking clarification questions. Some of the PSTs, however, commented that they had not learned specific strategies to help ELLs in the classroom, other than the fixing and pre-emptive strategies discussed in Dooley (2009). They were



able to modify their instruction and use other instructional strategies, but the strategies they implemented were not specifically taught in the course— rather, they were strategies that they already knew or happened upon intuitively.

After completing data collection, I had the opportunity to teach a section of the same course I had studied. In response to my findings in which the PSTs wished to be introduced to specific teaching strategies, I looked at the syllabi of the same course taught in previous years. I have seen that some instructors used another textbook to talk about those specific strategies. Thus, I incorporated readings from the book titled *Foundations for Teaching English Language Learners: Research, Theory, Policy, and Practice* by Wright (2010). This textbook included separate chapters on various topics with regards to ELLs' education such as assessment, teaching listening and speaking, and primary language support. The PSTs taking my section of the course in Spring 2018 indicated that they learned a lot of different teaching strategies to implement in their evaluations of the course. In other words, they confirmed that they were informed about a resource that they could resort to. I believe that it would be valuable to continue to include new resources that introduce the PSTs to specific teaching strategies.

Another important feature of the service-learning project is the self-reflection about the practice (Acquah & Commins, 2015; Brookfield, 1995). Although the PRELL course in 2017 required the PSTs to fill the self-monitoring checklist (Curtis, 2018), they

only checked the boxes and included comments next to the items. Moreover, the instructor did not allocate time to reflect on what they did or how the interaction was after each meeting as a whole class. Three of the PSTs interviewed indicated that whole class reflection in addition to self-reflection would have been beneficial to listen to other groups in order to learn about the strategies they used. Those PSTs indicated that they worked with very advanced ELLs while other groups worked with less proficient English speakers. Thus, they wished to hear how the groups interacting with the novice speakers managed their meeting.

In the spring 2018 course I included a whole class reflection time for five to ten minutes after each meeting in addition to other options for self-reflection like writing a memo to a friend and reflecting on the interaction using a Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2000; 2004; 2008). The PSTs found these reflection activities very useful, as they listened to the different experiences of other groups. Consequently, teacher educators should emphasize the importance of reflection process and encourage them to cogitate upon their experiences as much as possible.

Although the PSTs were able to understand the Funds of Knowledge approach and its benefits for the classroom environment in a general way, they could not reflect this understanding in a practical sense. The PSTs could not provide examples of ways to use the Funds of Knowledge approach as a tool to guide their lesson planning and

curriculum design. In the future, it would be preferable that PSTs be asked explicitly to consider various ways of learning more about their student's families in order to deepen their conceptualization of the Funds of Knowledge approach. Teacher educators should also provide PSTs with opportunities to discuss specific applications of the Funds of Knowledge approach to curriculum design and lesson planning, even if this might require more time or coursework for the educators and the PSTs.

Some of the PSTs mentioned that although it was nice to interact with the same person in all of the meetings, they found it redundant, as they thought that they had learned enough about their conversation partners' lives. These PSTs indicated that they had struggled to keep moving forward in the conversation. On the other hand, some of the PSTs did not have regular ELLs coming to their group. Instead of moving forward in the language-learning process with a single learner, these PSTs needed to start over and over again from the beginning (introducing themselves, talking about their hobbies, etc.), and often felt nervous. That said, the teacher educators should be cognizant of these fluctuations in the community members' participation, and should find ways to balance the level of interaction with community members. In addition, teacher educators should seek ways to increase the level of participation in these service-learning projects. Thought should be given to the incentives that will increase ELL participation. This happened in the Spring 2018 in that the participation of the community members was too

low in that only four members were able to come despite the efforts of the program organizers to increase participation. Thus, the PSTs were indicating to establish a more effective system to communicate with the ELLs, so that the community members can have easier access to both the teacher educators and the PSTs.

**Implications for Turkey.** This kind of community-based service learning projects can also be implemented in educational institutions around the world, especially in the countries that accept immigrants in excessive numbers. For example, Turkey is not very different from the USA when it comes to the demographic distribution in that nearly one third of the population come from various backgrounds like Kurds, Zazas, Syrian refugees and so on. However, the medium of instruction is only in Turkish. Considering the increasing number of the school aged children and youth coming from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, it is important to prepare the monolingual Turkish teachers for the multilingual students.

With the recent changes in teacher education programs, community-based courses have been incorporated into the teacher education departments in Turkey. Thus, pilot and comprehensive studies can be conducted to help the PSTs prepare for these diverse community members. In other words, teacher educators in countries like Turkey can reach out to community organizations trying to help immigrant populations and find ways and provide resources to organize service-learning projects similar to the meetings

organized in this PRELL course. Organizations like UNESCO and United Nations can be reached to provide resources and funding for such kind of activities in these countries.

Teacher educators can also introduce the PSTs with the Fund of Knowledge approach and help the PSTs improve their understanding and the implementation of it in the curriculum and lesson plans. Additionally, Foreign Language Education departments can implement these projects to help people who are trying to English as a foreign language to improve their English skills. To state briefly, the community-based service-learning projects can be organized not only to teach the mainstream language to the immigrant emergent bilinguals, but also to teach English to the people who are trying to learn English.

**For school administrators.** Although this study concerns the improvement of pre-service teacher education programs, it offers valuable lessons for school administrators, as well. Initially, the PSTs expressed their unwillingness to share the knowledge they gained from this course with the schools where they would be working as first-year teachers. School administrations should make sure that novice teachers feel safe sharing the information they bring with them from their teacher education programs, especially the newest applications that are not commonly implemented in school settings. Apart from this, based on what they had observed during their student teaching, the PSTs also spoke of the scarcity of time and resources for teachers to help ELLs better. School

administrators should provide clear information about the available resources and time for teachers to use. In addition, school administrators who have substantial numbers of ELLs in their schools could improve their connections with teacher education programs. They might seek more opportunities to provide service to teacher education programs, so that PSTs can come to their schools and learn more about ELLs.

**For community organizations and universities.** The study reveals that the PSTs and the community members formed a reciprocal interaction and learned from each other, which also shows the necessity of organizing such events more frequently. This is highly crucial in increasing awareness among PSTs, as most of the PSTs do not have the chance to meet families coming from diverse backgrounds unless they attend multicultural colleges/universities like the one the PSTs in the present study attend. Universities can play a crucial role in providing support for ELL's in the community in a way that is mutually beneficial because it is equally beneficial for their PST's. Since many community-based organizations are working with limited resources, it is recommended that universities look for opportunities to partner and provide community organizations with access to their students, their expertise and other resources that could help them organize similar activities. It is also recommended that community based organizations be receptive to these partnership opportunities since it ultimately provides a level of support for their constituents.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

This study is highly replicable in other locations (although it is important to have a back-up plan in case the number of community members coming to the meetings is so low as to jeopardize the effectiveness of the meetings). Other than that, a researcher could modify the course content to include specific strategies for teaching ELLs and see whether this addition makes a difference in the PSTs' preparation. Additionally, since the present study did not focus primarily on the differing effects of the course on PSTs with different levels of prior interaction with ELLs, a study could be specifically designed to reveal whether the PSTs' prior interaction has an influence on or relationship to the PSTs' increase in knowledge, skills, and dispositions toward ELLs. Depending on the results, modifications in the course content and the service-learning project could be made, and the course content tailored to the PSTs' background knowledge about working with ELLs.

As mentioned in the "Limitations" section, a follow-up data collection method might be used to see whether the PSTs' knowledge, skills, and dispositions persisted and whether the PSTs use the new information in their new educational settings. If it should emerge that PSTs later experience problems in applying the information, the reasons for this can be sought and the necessary adaptations or modifications made to increase the effectiveness of the course. Finally, more ELL voices should be incorporated to

understand their needs better, as the present study is one of but a few to incorporate the ELLs' voice in the research. In this study, the community members had valuable insights not only for the PSTs but also for the CC organizers. Thus, in future studies of the effects of service-learning projects, the ELLs should be considered active participants.

Last, but not the least, the teacher preparation for diverse communities is an important issue which needs to be addressed not only in the US but also around the world. Thus, a similar course design with a similar community-based service learning project can be examined to see the applicability of service-learning projects in teacher education programs in other countries, but also reveal how PSTs can benefit from such projects organized in different settings, to teach languages other than English.



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## Appendix A- PRELL Course Syllabus

**Preparation for English Language Learnings (PRELL)****Spring 2017 / 3 Credits / Wednesdays, 4:30-7:10PM**

**Course Description:** The course provides a foundation for teaching English Language Learners (ELLs) or Emerging Bilinguals (EB) in K-12 schools. The course is designed to facilitate students' co-construction of knowledge about ELL or EB students through exposure to scholarship and by developing relationships with members of our local community. This course includes a service-learning component, in which we offer adult English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction with the goal of seeing theory in action. We will discuss lesson-planning strategies, as well as research-based strategies for facilitating conversations in English, with emergent bilinguals. The course will also focus on developing graduate-level academic writing and presentation skills. Throughout the course, students will be given many opportunities to reflect upon and develop their pedagogical approach to teaching ELLs/EBs, which they will use as a foundation for their practice as they serve ESL and bilingual students and work to foster the success of all students.

**Learning Goals:**

The goals of the course are (1) to demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of emergent bilinguals; (2) to practice and acquire intercultural teaching strategies for English learners; (3) to develop significant knowledge of research in education, intersections with systemic issues, research-to-practice issues, and challenges that affect the education of English learners; (4) to hone knowledge, skills and dispositions to facilitate English learners' full participation in communities and classrooms, proficiency in English, and content-area knowledge; and (5) to practice professional collaboration and lesson planning.

The course is intended to facilitate reflection about learners and learning, accommodations for diverse learners, and the design of standards-based, relevant, inclusive, and interdisciplinary instruction. Students will reflect on four primary questions relating to these topics. These questions address both the New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers (2014) and the Standards from the Council for the Accreditation of Education Professionals (2013):

1. How do children, adolescents and adults develop and learn in a variety of school, family and community contexts? How can teachers provide

- opportunities that support students' intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development? (NJPST, Standard 2)
2. What does it mean to practice culturally-responsive teaching? (NJPST, Standard 3).
  3. How can we create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation? (NJPST, Standard 3; CAEP Standard 1.1 and 1.2).
  4. What instructional strategies can support learners to develop deep understandings of content areas and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways? (NJPST, Standard 8; CAEP, Standard 1.1, 1.2, and 1.6)

#### **Required Course Materials:**

1. González, N., Moll, L. & Amanti, C. (2005). *Funds of Knowledge: Theorizing Practices in Households, Communities and Classrooms*. Mahwah, NJ: Taylor & Francis. ISBN: 9780805849189.
2. Access to the course website.

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#### ***Course Grading Policy:***

<b><i>Grade</i></b>	<b><i>Percent</i></b>
A	95.00 – 100.0
B+	90.00 – 94.99
B	85.00 – 89.99
C+	80.00 – 84.99
C	75.00 – 79.99
F	Below 75.

- 1) *In-Class and Community Engagement (40%)*
- 2) *Intercultural Inquiry (60%)*
  - a) *Series of Four Inquiries (40%)*
  - b) *Final Presentation (20%)*

#### ***Description of Activities:***

##### ***1. In-Class & Community Participation (40 Points):***

1.1. ***In-Class:*** Students are expected to complete assigned readings **prior to class**. In class, you will actively participate in learning and teaching activities, including reading,

discussions, workshopping, chapter presentations (sign up on week 2 to be discussion facilitator), responding to questionnaires, lesson discussion, conversation guide design, etc. Written assignments given in class and oral participation are included in your participation grade.

1.2. **Community-Based:** We have the opportunity to work with adult English learners and families in our community in the Douglas Public Library. These meetings afford us with first-hand knowledge of the language development of emergent bilinguals of various ages, and of different academic and language experiences. Key to this experience is learning about the issues that parents and their children may encounter in their language-learning processes.

1.2.1. Your instructor will provide a full conversation guide on the first meeting with community partners, and activities for the next three weekly meetings. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with these guides and activities each week. Subsequently, you will design the entire conversation session and submit online to the course website.

1.2.2. Each week, you will reflect and take notes after meeting with our community partners. You will be asked to submit your notes (they will be returned to you), and you will need them to write your final reflection paper.

**Care, respect and integrity** in exchanges with peers, instructors, and community members apply to your written and spoken interactions in the classroom and at community sites. Care and respect include: evidence of collaboration with your peers, evidence of your preparation and focused attention on face-to-face conversational work with community members. Use of cell phones and laptops requires permission. Your participation grade is negatively affected by 2 points in each instance of lack of preparation, texting, interrupting, or otherwise inappropriate behavior.

2. ***Intercultural Inquiry (60 Points):*** This inquiry involves research and reflection on intercultural communication throughout the semester, *culminating in a poster/laptop presentation on the last day of class. Detailed descriptions of each assignment are provided in Assignments on Sakai. You must complete each of the following small-scale inquiries this semester, prior to the final presentation:*

2.1. Language and Culture Autobiography 10%. The purpose of this autobiographical essay is to examine the vast linguistic and cultural diversity in our classroom, and to help you position yourselves as multilingual and multicultural subjects. Through the examination of our own cultural and linguistic journeys, we will learn about the roles of languages, cultures and traditions in our own lives. *Due January 25, at noon.*

2.2. The Ethnography of a Place in Douglas 10%. The purpose of this mini-ethnography is to familiarize yourself with the Douglas community, through an ethnographic observation of several of its landmarks and central places. In conducting this ethnographic small-scale research, you will enter the familiar world of your conversation partners and thus get ready for our first meeting. As a future teacher, it is important you gain an understanding of your school community. The observation skills you will use for this assignment will be useful skills on the job market and beyond. Your ethnography should be a 2-minute podcast. You incorporate sounds and images captured on site, your own voice as narrative, and include music. It is recommended you use GarageBand or any other audio software to produce your audio ethnography of a place. *Due February 8, at noon.* You will share your ethnography in class the following week.

2.3. Reflection on Self-Monitoring and Community Contributions 10%. The purpose of this essay is to reflect on the ways that community members contribute to conversations, to each other's language learning, and to your learning. Through this reflection, you will apply a *funds of knowledge* framework to consider perspectives, resources, networks, and contributions to the Conversation Café experience. You may use the "Self-Monitoring Checklist" that will be provided to you to generate notes for this essay. *Due March 10, at noon.*

2.4 Intercultural Case Study 10%. The purpose of this assignment is to allow you to apply course content knowledge and intercultural experiences towards developing your intercultural praxis. In this paper, you will analyze one interaction with a conversation partner as a case study. Your goal is to 'unpack' an interaction, an encounter in order to comprehend and add theoretical insights to your conversation partner. This assignment requires that you use notes from your conversation(s). *Due April 6, at noon.*

2.5. Intercultural Inquiry Presentation 20%. You will prepare a poster or laptop presentation that includes 3 artifacts; each artifact being selected from any three (of four) small-scale inquiries you choose. There are two aspects to this presentation: the poster, and the presentation. A) Your poster could be a physical poster that you can tape on the walls, or a single PowerPoint slide that you display on your laptop. Your poster or slide should include three items, each representing an aspect of the inquiries you have conducted. B) Your five-minute presentation is a rehearsed and polished talk in which you present your three artifacts and what you have learnt this semester through your inquiries and experiences in New Brunswick. *You will present on April 26 or May 3<sup>rd</sup>.*

### **Other Course Requirements:**

- Check your institution email REGULARLY! Correspondence will be sent from me to you via the school platform or by email.



- All assignments must be turned in on time to receive full credit. The assignment grade will be lowered, for example from A to B+, etc., for each day an assignment is late.
- Complete the on-line module, *Working with Minors*.
- Our community conversation partners expect to meet with teachers, and we are meeting at a school. Please wear professional clothing.
- Sign up to lead discussions. A discussion sign-up will be distributed the second week of class.
- Wear professional clothing. Our community conversations partners expect to meet with teachers.

**Academic Integrity Policy:** Principles of academic integrity uphold the reputation of the university and the value of the degrees awarded to its students. Visit school website for a full explanation of policies.

**Attendance Policy:** *Students are required to attend every class and community session. One excused-documented absence will be accepted. It is reasonable to be absent if you are ill or have a serious conflict. However, religious observance or other serious needs must be communicated in advance, and documentation of illness must be provided. More than one absence from class, excused or not, will affect your grade in this way: your final grade will be lowered by one half letter grade (for instance from A to B+). Three or more absences (regardless of absences being excused) are likely to necessitate repeating the course. Habitual lateness will affect your grade (three times late = 1 absence). Class begins at 4:30PM sharp, plan to arrive a few minutes early.*

### ***Seminars: How to Prepare***

Seminars will take place in the meeting room of the Douglas Public Library. There will be a sign-up sheet at the door, and you should sign in every week before heading to your tables.

1. Please bring a copy of the textbook, the reading and your notes.
2. If there are assignments due that day, please bring two hard copies. Keep one, and give your instructor the second copy.
3. If you are a Discussion Facilitator that night, please bring a copy of your presentation outline for your instructor.

### **The meetings: How to Prepare**

The nights we are participating in the meetings with the community members, our schedule will be as follows:

4.50-5.45 – Regular seminar

5.45-6.00 – Set up for the meetings

6.00-7.00 – The meetings

7.00-7.10 – Debrief

1. Please bring 2 copies of the Activity Guide for that night. You will keep 1 copy and you will give 1 copy to a conversation partner. Make sure you have support materials available.
2. Bring supplies such as extra paper and pens, laptops to show pictures, share music or movie, etc.) are permitted. We will have wireless access while at the Douglas library.
3. Please bring your copy of the Self-monitoring checklist/Participation Debrief

<b>Discussion Topics, Required Readings and Assignment Due Dates</b>			
<b>Week</b>	<b>Class Date</b>	<b>Discussion Topic</b>	<b>Readings / Activities</b>
1	18 January	The arc of the course. Intercultural inquiry as a basis for reflective practice.	Syllabus, course expectations, assignments and rubrics. Completion of pre-course surveys. Intro to The meetings. Autobiographies and Language Journeys Timeline.
<b><i>Due January 25, 12 Noon. Language and Culture Autobiography. Bring a copy to class for our discussion.</i></b>			
2	25 January	What is language? Culture? Who are Emergent bilinguals?	Discussion: González, Moll, & Nanti (2005), Chapters 1 and 2 and García, Kleifgen, & Falchi (2008) from English language learners to emergent bilinguals, pg. 6-17  Share: Your Language and Culture Autobiography.  Activity: This Is Me! Life Puzzle.
3	01 February	In the context of global migration, or an encounter with a different culture, what adaptations do people make?	Discussion: González et al., (2005). Chapters 4, <i>Funds of Knowledge for Teaching</i> ; and Vuong, (2016). Surrendering. <i>New Yorker Magazine</i> , June 6/13. Video: <i>Immersion</i> .  Activity: <i>Understanding the Context of Language</i>
<b><i>Due February 08, 12 Noon. Your plan for Ethnography of a Place.</i></b>			
4	08 February	Why focus on intercultural conversation? What does it mean to monitor our participation in a conversation? What is language-learning for?	Discussion: Dooley, K. (2009). Intercultural conversation: Building understanding together. <i>Journal of Adolescent &amp; Adult Literacy</i> , 52(6), 497-506; and Blommaert, J. (2015). <i>Teaching the Language that Makes Me Happy</i> .  Self-monitoring checklist

			Activity: Reports on ideas for multi-ethnography
<b><i>Due February 15, 12 Noon. Ethnography of a Place, Present in Class</i></b>			
5	15 February	What are our representations of cultures/communities/our community partners?  How do we honor community <i>investment</i> in learning a new language?	Discussion: González et al., 2005, Chapter 6, <i>La Visita</i> ; and Bonny Arton (2013) blog:  Share: Ethnographies of Place
6	22 February <b>Meeting 1!</b>	How do we support language learning through policy and practice?	Discussion: García, Kleifgen, & Luchi (2008) From English language learners to emergent bilinguals, pg. 47  Activity: Self-Monitoring, Reflection, and Conversation Guides. Goley's model of reflection.
<b><i>Due February 28, 12 Noon. Draft your first activity plan for the meeting 5. (use the Activity Plan Template as a guide). Bring a copy to class on March 01</i></b>			
7	01 March <b>Meeting 2!</b>	How do we tap into students' funds of knowledge?  Participating in and facilitating conversations.	Discussion: González et al., 2005, Chapter 7, <i>Beyond Beads and Batters</i> .  Workshop: Refine Individual Activity Plans.
8	08 March <b>Meeting 3!</b>	What do teachers need to know about parent involvement?  Planning, participating in and facilitating conversations.	Discussion: González et al., 2005, Chapter 8, <i>Empowering Parents</i> , and Baquedano-López, Alexander, & Fernandez (2013). Equity Issues in Parental and Community Involvement Schools: What teacher Educators Need to Know.  Workshop: Rehearse introducing our activity and get feedback in small groups. Adapting your conversation.
<b><i>Due March 10, 12 Noon. Reflection on Self-Monitoring and Community Contributions.</i></b>			
March 11-19, Spring Break. No class March 15, no community placements this week.			

9	22 March <b>Meeting 4!</b>	How can teachers incorporate funds of knowledge into culturally-responsive curricula?	Discussion: González et al., 2005, chapter 9, <i>Home is Where the Heart</i> Workshop: Analyze a formal ESL activity guide.  Workshop: Plan for Week 5 Conversation Café
10	29 March <b>Meeting 5!</b>	Continue week 9 discussion	Discussion: González et al., 2005, chapter 10, <i>Border Crossing</i> .  Workshop: Plan for Week 6 Conversation Café
11	04 April <b>Meeting 6!</b>	How is funds of knowledge a collaborative approach to teaching?	Discussion: González et al., 2005, chapter 12, <i>Funds of Knowledge and Family Ethnography</i> .  Workshop: Time to rehearse your finished, individual conversation guides.
<b><i>Due April 06, 12 Noon. Intercultural Case Study. Bring copy to class on April 19.</i></b>			
12	12 April <b>Meeting 7!</b>	What did we learn from working with adults and families in the community?	Discussion: González et al., 2005, chapter 14, <i>Reflections</i> .
13	19 April <b>Meeting 8!</b>	Becoming a sympathetic interlocutor and English conversation facilitator. Review and conclusions.	Reflections on working with adults and families in the community. Final meeting and Celebrations.
14	26 April	Final presentations.	

**Rubric: Assignment 2.1****(Rubrics for All Assignments Will Be Provided)**

	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Some Progress Toward Goals	Does Not Meet Expectations
	<b>4 Points</b>	<b>3 Points</b>	<b>2 Points</b>	<b>1 Point</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	The introduction is inviting, states	The introduction	The introduction states the main	There is no clear

	the main topic, and previews the structure of the paper.	states the main topic and previews the structure of the paper.	topic but does not adequately preview the structure of the paper.	introduction of the topic or the structure of the paper.
<b>Organization</b>	Details are in logical order and keep the reader interested. Required information included.	Details are in logical order. There is included information on required topics.	Some details are not in logical order, confusing the reader. Required information included.	Little sense that the writing is organized.
<b>Content Analysis</b>	Connections between stories, events, and self are clear; connections are reported with creativity.	Events and stories are connected to the topic, analysis outlines connections between self and events.	Need for more supporting information, better organization.	Seemingly random collection of information.
<b>Voice</b>	Descriptions are both vivid and engaging, text flows.	Descriptions are vivid. Occasional inaccurate choice of words.	Writing communicates ideas with many inaccurate choices, lacks punch.	Author uses limited vocabulary, jargon, or clichés.
<b>Evidence of Care in Presentation</b>	Evidence of careful proofing, attention to syntax, typewritten, 12-point Times New Roman, double-space, following APA format.	Very few errors, paper typed as required, 12-point Times New Roman, double-space, following APA format.	Some misspelling, grammatical or syntactic errors, some format errors.	Proofing is not evident, does not follow APA and other essay structure requirements.

**Prompt:** Autobiographies are first-person narratives, accounts of someone's life as told by this person. Autobiographies are stories about you, written by you, from your perspective. Autobiographies are filtered: the way the self is introduced is carefully orchestrated by the writer, and is the result of several creative steps. These include introspection, analysis, organization, and several iterations of writing.

**Purpose:** We will examine the linguistic and cultural diversity in our classroom, and help you position yourselves as multilingual and multicultural subjects. Through the examination of our own cultural and linguistic experiences, we will learn about the importance of languages, cultures and traditions to ourselves, and to others. To complete this assignment, use the questions below to help prepare your language and culture autobiographies. Answer as many or as few questions as you wish, and share only what you are comfortable sharing with the class and your instructor.

**Outcome:** Your language autobiography should be no less than 2 pages, double-spaced, times new roman 12pt font, 1" margins. If you choose to include pictures that illustrate the items and stories you share in your paper, it should be longer.

- Step 1: Introspection. Ask yourself some questions Your autobiography will be a story of your relationship with languages and cultures, and how these experiences have shaped who you are. You need to start somewhere:
  - Your first name: How did you come by this name? Does it have a cultural or family significance? What is the origin of your last name? Are there naming traditions in your family?
  - Start with primary demographic categories: your age, gender, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, parental status, marriage status, sexual orientation, education level, etc.
  - Think about your environment, how it has shaped you and how you have shaped it: where did you grow up? Where did you go to school? Who was/is in your family? What are your favorite places? What are the happiest/most important/ saddest moments of your life? What is/are your first language(s)? What was your first job? What is your career goal? How would you define success?
  - Think about the role of languages and cultures in your life: When was your first encounter with another *languaculture*? In what ways has your culture been taught to you? What objects or artifacts are or have been important to you? How would you describe your style? When did you

learn how to read and write? In what ways are languages and cultures part of your career goals?

- Think about stories that have passed on to you about your parents, grandparents, etc. What do you know about their lives and traditions (schooling, marriage, leisure activities, attitude towards death, war, rites of passage, etc.)?
- Step 2: Select stories. Consider the stories that go along with your answers to the questions above. Select three to five stories that illustrate your answers and make up a chronological timeline of your life as a language user and a cultural being. There might be one story that stands out to you as meaningful and you might want to focus on this one. You can choose to write about one experience in detail and in-depth, or about several experiences (3-5) that are significant to you.
- Step 3: Organization and writing. Once you have decided which stories you will share, start creating an outline for your autobiography. Include titles, quotes, photos, vignettes, and write out the general ideas for each section. Begin thinking about your introduction and your conclusion. Note that you can complete introduction and conclusion at the end. As you write your story, make sure you reflect on how these experiences have shaped who you are as an individual and as a member of languages and cultural communities.

**You do not have to answer all the questions in Step 1.** These are merely examples of areas that you may choose to explore.

Please use the APA format (see

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/> for general guidelines).



## Appendix B- Activity Planning: Constructing Cultural Knowledge

This guide was modified by Joey, Ellen, and Paul, the PSTs participated in the PRELL course.

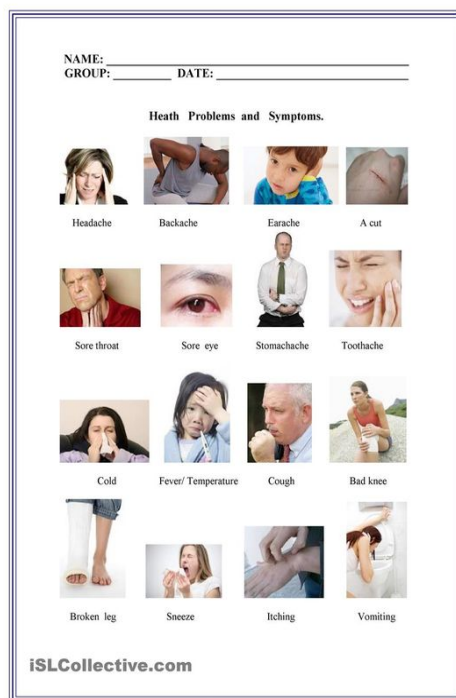
<b>Title:</b> Talking to the doctor.	
<b>Communicative Goal:</b> We use language to communicate with doctors, hospital staff, and to discuss well-being.	
<b>Focal Language Feature(s):</b> What language features (such as <b>grammar, pronunciation, pragmatics, vocabulary</b> ) support this goal? Focus on only one or two. Vocabulary: I feel ____, My son/daughter feels ____, My ____ hurts. Grammar: <b>I have</b> and <b>I have not</b>	
<b>Introduction to Participants:</b> How will you briefly explain the activity <b>TO</b> the audience? Today we are going to the doctor's office. We are going to walk you through a doctor's' office and tell you some things you may need to know to make your visit a pleasant one.	
<b>Vocabulary or Concepts to be Elicited or Reviewed:</b> How will you ask participants to contribute?	
Virus, sick, medicine, fever, cough, sore throat, bruise, cut, broken bone, sprain? IDK what we want to focus on	
To promote participation, we will ask participants to use the sentence starters to begin conversation:  I feel _____ My son/daughter feels _____ There is pain _____. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stomach, head, throat, back.</li> </ul> Facilitators will prompt how to use the sentence starters with the endings.	Hello, my _____ hurts. I feel _____. My son/ daughter feels _____.  Once participants are comfortable using phrases, facilitator and participants will participate in a role play where facilitator will act as a

<p>To continue conversation and with higher level speakers, Facilitator will prompt participants to use the sentence starters with various modalities.</p> <p>My _____ does not feel well.</p> <p>My _____ has been hurting.</p> <p>There has been pain in my _____.</p>	<p>doctor and participants will be visiting the office.</p> <p>Doctor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How are you feeling?</li> <li>● What is hurting?</li> <li>● How long has this been hurting?</li> <li>● Have you taken any medicine?</li> </ul> <p>Patient:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● This has been hurting for _____.</li> <li>● I have had pain for _____.</li> <li>● I have taken Advil.</li> <li>● I have not taken medicine.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Adaptation for Fluent / Knowledgeable Speakers:</b> What adaptations will <b>YOU</b> make? Notice that instructions for student facilitators use verbs such as INVITE, OFFER, INCLUDE.</p> <p>For fluent/knowledgeable speakers we will promote prior knowledge and how they would communicate with a doctor. We would then address any grammar or vocabulary miscues.</p> <p>Additionally, we can promote more advanced vocabulary and/or phrases.</p> <p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F6XIbH73B2w">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F6XIbH73B2w</a></p> <p>Maybe we could talk about the virtual tour of doctors office</p>	
<p><b>Adaptation for Novice Speakers:</b> How will you adapt your language, and the activity, so that novice speakers can participate? Notice that instructions for student facilitators use verbs such as MODEL, DEMONSTRATE, ILLUSTRATE, REPEAT, POINT.</p> <p>Model: I feel _____. My _____ hurts. It has hurt for _____.</p> <p>I do, we do, you do. Model where Facilitator will model the skill, participants try the skill in small group or with facilitator, participants will complete the activity independently without prompting and support.</p>	

**Support Materials:** Handouts incorporate opportunities for listening and speaking, reading and writing! Handouts should illustrate the activity and support novice speakers, as well as provide opportunities for conversation. Do you need chart paper, markers, technology?

We will include pictures and visuals into our lesson that walk through the different parts of being at the doctors.

We can also include sentences with word banks for more knowledgeable speakers.



## Appendix C- Self-Monitoring/Participation Checklist and Debrief

**Practice intercultural conversation strategies we discussed in class.** At the end of each conversation session, use this checklist to evaluate your participation. Choose one or two “self-checks” to focus on each week. Think about:

- 1) How do community members help you and each other?
- 2) What are you good at? What would you like to work on?

**A. Monitor amount and pace of speech.** Did I ....

- ☐ speak clearly and at a reasonable pace?
- ☐ implement "wait time" (count to about 7, silently, as you wait for community members' contributions)?
- ☐ dominate the conversation or spend a lot of time “explaining”?
- ☐ employ comprehension checks?
  - Did I speak too quickly?
  - Would anyone like me to repeat that?
- ☐ monitor my own listening and comprehension with sensitivity?
  - I'm not sure I understood. Could you say that again?

**B. Monitor contributions.** What did I accomplish when I was speaking? Did I ...

- ☐ model a language feature (grammar, intonation, pragmatics)?  
Example: "I'm and I am. They sound almost alike. North American speakers are more likely to use the short version, I'm."
- ☐ model a clear and specific example?  
Example: "I like to listen to music. How about you?"
- ☐ contribute authentic examples from my life and elaborate on the conversation by asking follow-up questions?
  - How about you?
  - ... What kind of, how do you, do you think?

**C. Invite and recognize contributions of the group.** Participation by community members may be uneven. That's okay. Remember there is learning going on when people are quiet, too (“silent period,” listening to and observing the routine).

- ☐ Invite participants to contribute, ask questions, and leave room to opt out.
  - What does ‘community’ mean to you?
  - If you would like to give an example, now or later, that's fine.
  - Would anyone else like to say something now?
- ☐ Recognize contributions of community members:

- Write contributions of participants and share with the table group
- Offer fluent participants opportunities to provide examples for the group, provide quick translations for novice speakers, write on chart paper or whiteboard
- Say thank you! (For the example, the word, the question, for helping me with that).

**Author's Note:** Inspired by Dooley, K. (2009). Intercultural conversation: Building understanding together. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 52(6), 497–506.

## Appendix D- Data collection timeline and the Data Sources

<b>Data Collection Method</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Participants</b>
Pre-course survey	<i>January 2017-</i> Before semester starts students notified about the study and received the survey online and in class.	19 PSTs who enrolled in the course and agreed to participate in the study.
Observation	<i>January 2017- May 2017:</i> Twelve out of 15 course meetings.	Whole class
Documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- language autobiography</li> <li>- overall reflection on the service-learning project</li> <li>- weekly reflections on the interactions with the ELLs</li> <li>- intercultural case study</li> </ul>	<i>January 2017- May 2017</i>	All relevant documents from the PSTs
Post- Course Survey	<i>May 2017-</i> During the last meeting of the PRELL course, participants received the post-course survey.	19 PSTs who enrolled in the course and agreed to participate in the study.
Individual Interviews	<i>May 2017-</i> At the end of the semester.	Six PSTs and six ELLs

## Appendix E- Pre- and post-course surveys

**Part I: Please read each statement and place a check in the box that best describes your opinion. (1=Strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=uncertain, 4= agree, 5=strongly disagree)**

1. The inclusion of ELLs in mainstream classes creates a positive educational atmosphere.
2. The inclusion of ELLs in mainstream classes benefits all students.
3. ELLs should not be included in mainstream classes until they attain a minimum level of English proficiency.
4. ELLs should avoid using their native language while at school.
5. ELLs should be able to acquire English within two years of enrolling in U.S. schools.
6. Mainstream teachers do not have enough time to deal with the needs of ELLs
7. It is a good practice to simplify coursework for ELLs.
8. It is a good practice to lessen the quantity of coursework for ELLs.
9. It is a good practice to allow ELLs more time to complete coursework.
10. Teachers should not give ELLs a failing grade if the students display effort.
11. Teachers should not modify assignments for the ELLs enrolled in subject-area classes.
12. The modification of coursework for ELLs would be difficult to justify to other students.
13. I have adequate training to work with ELLs.
14. I am interested in receiving more training in working with ELLs.

15. I would welcome the inclusion of ELLs in my class.

16. I would support legislation making English the official language of the United States.

**Part II: Demographic Information**

Gender: Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_

Major: \_\_\_\_\_

Ethnicity: Caucasian \_\_\_\_\_ African American \_\_\_\_\_ Hispanic/ Latino(a) \_\_\_\_\_  
Asian \_\_\_\_\_ Native American \_\_\_\_\_ Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

1. Do you speak a language other than English?

a. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ What language(s) can you speak? What is your proficiency level in each language you speak? \_\_\_\_\_

b. No \_\_\_\_\_

2. Other than this course, "Teaching English Language Learners", have you taken any courses or received training related to ELLs, language acquisition, diversity, and/ or language and culture?

a. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ What were those courses or training?

\_\_\_\_\_

b. No \_\_\_\_\_ What could be the reasons for that? (e.g. no courses were offered, I was not informed about them, I did not know I could take them, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Have you ever traveled outside of U.S.?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, what countries have you visited? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Have you traveled to a country where English is not the primary language? (If yes, please indicate the country.)

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Have you ever lived in a country where English is not the primary language? (If yes, please indicate how long you stayed there.)

\_\_\_\_\_

6. What is your interaction with English language learners? Check the ones apply.



- I taught/ tutored ELL(s) (including student-teaching)
  - I have close friend(s) who were ELLs.
  - I went to school with ELL(s).
  - I had casual acquaintances.
  - I have not had any opportunities to interact with ELLs.
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
7. A. What do you expect to learn from this course? (IN PRE-COURSE SURVEY)

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**Post-course survey open-ended questions:**

**A. Please add your comments about the Conversation Café meetings.**

- How do you describe your role(s) in your Conversation Café meetings? (e.g. teacher, friend, partners, etc.- write as many roles as you had). Please give an example interaction, if any.
- What were the challenges for you while interacting with ELLs? How could you handle them?
- Before having this kind of experience (i.e. the meetings)  
\_\_\_\_\_, and now  
\_\_\_\_\_.

**B. Please add your comments about the course.**

- What do you think about the course materials? the discussion sessions? the course assignments?
- How well this course matched your expectations?
- What teaching strategies for working with ELLs have you learned throughout this course?
- Do you think you will be able to use the knowledge you gained from this course in your future teaching? How?
- How useful do you think this course will be for your career? In what ways?

- Would you recommend this course to others? Why or why not?
- When do you think is the best time to take this course? Why?  
At the beginning of the teacher education program?  
Immediately before student teaching?  
During student teaching?  
After student teaching?
- How would it be different for you if you had taken this course before your student teaching?
- What suggestions you have for improving the course (content, materials, instruction, etc.)?

Participant Information (Your information is strictly confidential; it will not be shared with anybody)

Name or initials:	E-mail (optional):
Bachelor's in:	Specialization area at the GSE:
Languages other than English and proficiency in each:	Countries visited or lived:
Current employment, if any (how long have you been working there?)	Interaction with ELLs prior to this course:

## Appendix F- Interview questions for the PSTs

**How were your feelings about ELLs before interacting with them so closely? Have you ever thought about ELLs' schooling, their linguistic or academic needs?**

1. How were your feelings after meeting them, especially after each meeting? Have you learned anything new that you can incorporate into your teaching or help your personal growth?
2. What was the most challenging thing for you during Conversation Café meetings? What would have been helpful for you to advance in the face of these challenges?
3. What do you think about Funds of Knowledge approach?
4. How applicable/ useful it is in designing lesson plans, giving instructions, or getting to know students better.
  - a. What are your future plans for using the Funds of Knowledge approach in your future teaching, if any? How?
5. How would the course been different if there had been no experience like Conversation Café meetings?
6. After taking this course, how comfortable/ prepared do you consider yourself to work with ELLs from now on? Why? What helped you? What did not help you?
7. In this question think about the seminar portion and service learning project separately: What is your biggest takeaway from the seminar portion? The Conversation Café?
8. Final comments and recommendations for the course content or any other issue.

## Appendix G- Interview questions for the community members/ELLs

Thank you for participating in this interview. The aim of this study is to learn the experiences you had during these weekly sessions you had attended. I would be very glad if you could share your experiences with me. It will take approximately 30 minutes depending on your answers. Shall we start?

1. How long have you been in the USA? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What language(s) do you speak other than English?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Now we are going to talk about your interactions in these meetings.

1. How was your interaction with the partner(s) you worked with?  
Probe: Do you remember how you and your partners talked/interacted on the first time? On the last time? What do you think was different for you?
2. What did you do in the Conversation Café each week? How were your feelings about these topics? (How did you feel after each meeting?)
3. Can you tell me of a time where it was a bit difficult? (You can tell the reasons and what happened at the end, and things like that).
4. What advice would you give to your conversation partners who are going to work with English language learners?
5. How would you describe your overall experience with the conversation partners and the Conversation Café meetings?

Thank you so much for your time. I really appreciate your valuable feedback.

Appendix H- Observation Guide<sup>2</sup>

Pre-service teacher's Initials \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_ Conversation topic \_\_\_\_\_

Number of ELL Students in interaction \_\_\_\_\_

Language backgrounds of ELL students \_\_\_\_\_

Peer with other pre-service teacher: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

<b><i>General Teaching Strategies</i></b>	<b><i>Delivery of Content</i></b>
Used a bilingual aide to help an ELL student in class	<b>Used concrete demonstrations in teaching</b>
Promotes students' questions and inquiry	<b>Used graphic organizers</b>
Listens to students and responds accordingly	<b>Linked new concepts to personal experiences</b>
Plans activities for small groups and individuals	<b>Provide multicultural content in the materials used</b>
Students interact freely with teacher	Model note-taking strategies
Provides a well-known routine in class	Teacher moving around class-acknowledging all students
Highlight and model procedural knowledge	
Used peer tutoring strategies	<b>Provided scaffolding such as to support ELL student</b>
Used cooperative learning strategies	<b>Provided supplementary materials</b>
<b>Used visual reminders of the day's activities</b>	Guide students in writing an outline before drafting an essay
<b>Used computer software and technology</b>	<b>Provided brainstorming activities</b>
Used Buddy read activities	Provided anticipated guides
<b>Provided wait-time before response</b>	<b>Used background knowledge to motivate comprehension</b>
<b>Provided KWL charts</b>	<b>Pre-teach vocabulary words</b>
<b>Re-teaching concepts based on assessment</b>	<b>Provided think aloud</b>

<sup>2</sup> Bolded items will be more applicable to the setting for observation in this study. However, I will keep in mind all items listed here, and look for some others, as well.

	<b>Provide opportunities to think about the underlying framework</b> <b>Guided students to construct meaning from text</b>
<b><i>Student Use – Application of Content</i></b> Model procedural knowledge (explicitly teaching how to do a task) Provided extra practice during activities <b>Incorporated manipulative for hands-on instruction</b> <b>Breaking tasks into smaller activities</b> <b>Provided supplementary materials</b> Guide students in writing an outline before writing an assignment Guided students to construct meaning from text Provide opportunities to think about the underlying framework	<b><i>Assessment</i></b> <b>Asked if students had questions</b> <b>Asked for a summary of content</b> Asked small group for a report Had students complete a project Provided a test Provided a quiz <b>Listened to a report from student</b> Teacher evaluated a project Teacher evaluated a problem set
<b><i>Language Strategies</i></b> <b>Used nonverbal gestures to help aid ELL students</b> <b>Used simpler language for clarity</b> <b>Read aloud important information</b> <b>Provided alternative ways of giving feedback</b> <b>Rephrased questions for comprehension</b> <b>Used concrete language rather than idiomatic language</b> <b>Defined words in meaningful language</b> <b>Defined words in meaningful context</b> <b>Asked questions that require new and elaborated responses</b> <b>Provided a vocabulary review</b> <b>Provide analogies to adjust speech</b>	<b><i>Relational Skills</i></b> <b>Smiling</b> <b>Eye- contact</b> <b>Asking questions</b> <b>Matched affect</b> <b>Positive communication</b>

**Write the description of the session:** Take notes throughout the session, and write a summary what the PSTs did throughout the observation.