TEACHERS’ BELIEFS ABOUT FORMER ELS

ABSTRACT

As the number of English Learners (ELs) in our student population grows, so does the number of former ELs, students who have been reclassified as proficient in English and reassigned from ESL and bilingual classes to general education classes. Secondary students are confronted with increased academic language demands at the same time as they are reclassified, often losing their language support services. Consequently, responsibility for supporting former ELs’ academic and language development falls to general education teachers, who may lack the necessary knowledge and skills. Nevertheless, no prior research has queried teachers about former ELs. Therefore, the purpose of this mixed methods study is to investigate the beliefs and perceptions of one district’s secondary teachers regarding the needs of their former EL students. This study also examined how the beliefs and perceptions of general education teachers compared with those of ESL teachers and evaluated the relationship between teachers’ beliefs and their classroom practices.

To address these aims, interviews and classroom observations were conducted and relevant instructional artifacts were collected. An observation form was used to document the use of sheltered instruction strategies in general education classrooms and artifacts such as student worksheets were analyzed for sheltered instruction approaches. Finally, ESL and general education teachers were interviewed about their knowledge and experience with ELs and former ELs.

Results indicated that teachers have positive attitudes about former ELs and are concerned about how comfortable they are in general education classes. Both general education and ESL teachers recognized a need for teacher collaboration and support for former ELs as they transition to GE classes. Although general education teachers were willing to provide needed
academic support to former ELs, there was little correlation between their expressed beliefs about what is best for former ELs and their actual classroom practice. Further, teachers implemented more sheltered instruction strategies than they reported. As such, it appeared that teachers were unaware of best practices, even when engaging in them. The findings of this study will be useful to policymakers, curriculum developers, and professional development providers, while also contributing to the research base by addressing the existing gap.

*Keywords:* former ELs, English learners, teacher beliefs
I thank God for the health and stamina I needed to complete this doctoral journey.

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and encouraging word was given with love and without complaint about the work that infringed on our time together. I cannot imagine a more supportive partner.
DEDICATION

To my parents, who were lifelong learners and believed in the power of education, I dedicate this work to the loving sacrifices you made for me.

To my granddaughter Quinn, I dedicate this to the life you are just beginning. I hope to see you grow and learn and become all you are meant to be.
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CHAPTER I

**Introduction and Problem Statement**

Educators must understand how language, culture and diversity impact learning in the current climate of continually shifting demographics, and projections that 64% of the nation’s population of children under age 18 will consist of racial and ethnic minorities within the next forty years (Colby & Ortman, 2015). The percentage of students enrolled in U.S. public school English Learner (EL) programs reached 10.1% in Fall of 2017 (NCES, 2020) and the number of English-learning students in New Jersey schools has increased by 17,000 since 2010 (NJDOE, 2018). These growing numbers have spurred broad efforts to consider how best to support English-learning students.

At the secondary level, defined here as grades six through twelve, teachers must support students in developing skills and strategies that will allow them to navigate the academic world. Middle and high school students must acquire proficiency in academic language in order to meet the demands of grade-level literature and content-area texts. They must have the ability to engage in classroom discourse, read academic texts, and write using academic language (Cisco & Padron, 2012; Ebe, 2012). For ELs, these academic language skills take an average of seven years to develop as compared to conversational language, which can be acquired in about two years (Cummins, 1981). For students with interrupted education or low literacy in their first language, the challenge is even greater (De Capua, 2016).

General education (GE) teachers who teach students who are racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse are sometimes left on their own to determine what will serve their students best. Unfortunately, these content-area teachers often do not have the knowledge base needed to make informed instructional decisions that support ELs’ academic language development, many
times because of limited or unavailable relevant training (de Jong, 2013; Lucas, Villegas, & Martin, 2015; Olsen, 2010; Reeves, 2006). GE teachers may not understand the principles of second language acquisition and often do not have training in the sheltered instruction techniques that provide needed scaffolding for ELs’ continued language development within content-based instruction (Karabenick & Noda, 2004; Reeves, 2006). Although many schools have English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers who may be experts in this area, prevailing structures and norms of school organizations often discourage the collaboration that can provide the development of knowledge and skills that general education teachers of ELs need, or there may be other challenges, such as insufficient time for collaboration, varying perspectives on roles, and lack of administrative support (Schneider, Huss-Lederman, & Sherlock, 2012).

Furthermore, despite a requirement in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015 that former ELLs be monitored for two years after reclassification, there are no requirements for continued classroom support as students move from the ESL/Bilingual environment to the GE context. Consequently, any transitional language development support for former ELs becomes the sole province of the GE teachers.

As in other similar districts, many of the challenges described here exist within the site for this study, the Fieldview Public School District (pseudonym). This district serves a student population that includes 31% ELs, the majority of whom claim Spanish as their home language. Students enrolled in the ESL/bilingual program at the secondary level receive daily instruction in ESL and participate in math, science, and social studies classes taught in Spanish until they are assessed as ready to move into GE classes. As students move into secondary education at the middle school level, some students may also be placed in GE content area classes before they
officially exit the bilingual program. Students who are ELs with a home language other than Spanish receive ESL instruction and are placed in GE classes.

GE teachers in this district work extensively with a growing population of transitional and former ELs in a variety of contexts. As middle and high school students move out of bilingual programs and into GE classes, greater demands are made upon them to develop the academic English skills needed to succeed in all content areas. GE teachers, therefore, have an important role in the continued academic progress of former ELs, but may not be aware of their students’ needs or how they can support students’ academic and language development. At the same time, ESL teachers must prepare their students for the transition into GE classes, where they may receive little or no targeted language support.

This study seeks to understand how one district’s middle and high school GE teachers perceive the academic and language development needs of their students who are former ELs and how they understand their roles as teachers of former ELs, while also examining the perceptions of ESL teachers regarding former ELs’ readiness for and experiences in GE classes. As such, the following research questions are posed:

1. What are general education (GE) teachers’ perceptions and beliefs regarding the former ELs they teach?
2. How do GE teachers make sense of their roles in supporting former ELs’ learning?
3. How do GE and ESL teachers’ perceptions and beliefs about ELs and former ELs compare?
4. How do GE and ESL teachers’ views of their roles as teachers compare?
5. How do GE teachers’ perceptions and beliefs about former ELs correlate with their classroom practices?
CHAPTER II

Literature Review

As the number of English Learners (ELs) continues to increase across the nation and in New Jersey public schools (NCES, 2019; NJDOE, 2018), both ESL and general education teachers will face a growing need to work with ELs and former ELs in a variety of contexts. Middle and high school ELs who transition from ESL and bilingual programs into GE classes will encounter greater demands to develop the academic English skills needed to succeed in all content areas. It is increasingly important that ESL teachers prepare students for this transition and that GE teachers are prepared for their roles in supporting the continued academic progress of former ELs. As they enact these roles, teachers’ perceptions and beliefs about their students and the academic needs of ELs and former ELs can have an impact on classroom practices and students’ academic success.

I will begin by discussing the reclassification of ELs and the concerns relating to their placement in GE classes when they become former ELs. To my knowledge, no research is available in relation to GE and ESL teachers’ perceptions and beliefs about former ELs; therefore, I will review the research on GE and ESL teachers’ perceptions and beliefs about ELs. It is possible that prior findings with this population may generalize to former ELs; however, that may not be the case. Next, I will present the research on collaboration between GE and ESL teachers and then review the research on sheltered instruction, an approach to supporting language development in content area classes. I will conclude by linking the literature to the problem of practice under consideration – how the beliefs and practices of GE and ESL teachers can impact former ELs’ instruction, achievement, and academic language development, and the potential impact of this study.
From ELs to Former ELs

Former ELs are those students who, having participated in an English language development program, have been determined to be English proficient and are placed in the GE instructional program (Ardasheva, Tretter, & Kinny, 2012; Rubinstein-Ávila, 2013). Various terms are used to refer to this student population, including “redesignated”, “reclassified fluent English proficient” (R-FEP), “exited”, and “former EL.” In this document, I will refer to this group of students as former ELs. Regardless of the terminology, these students are reclassified because they are considered to be capable of learning in GE classes without any targeted language support.

Under federal guidelines detailed in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, 2015), ELLs are assessed regularly to monitor their progress in language acquisition and document their levels of English proficiency. The ESSA (2015) accountability system requires states to set their own English language proficiency indicators, which may include academic achievement results, progress toward English language proficiency, and other measures of school quality or student success (August & Slama, 2016). Although each state must have a standardized procedure for identifying ELLs and reclassifying them as English proficient, the reclassification system varies from state to state (Cimpian, Thompson, & Makowski, 2017). For example, California requires that parents of potentially reclassified students be consulted for their opinion on the readiness of the student to exit language development programs (California Department of Education, 2019). Other states, such as Massachusetts, require consideration of students’ grades, results of local and state content area assessments, and teacher input, in addition to student performance results on the state language assessment (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2019).
In New Jersey, students who are enrolled in English as a Second Language (ESL) or bilingual programs are reclassified for GE instruction based on English language proficiency assessment results in addition to other measures that can include “classroom performance; the student’s reading level in English; the judgment of the teaching staff member or members responsible for the educational program of the student; and performance on achievement tests in English” (NJAC 6A:15-1.10c). Every year, students take a commonly used assessment, the Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners 2.0 (ACCESS for ELLs 2.0), and must earn a 4.5 out of 6.0 composite score to be considered for reclassification as English proficient. This assessment was developed by the WIDA (World-class Instructional Design and Assessment) consortium of states and the Center for Applied Linguistics as a way to evaluate students’ language proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. In addition, an evaluation team completes a language observation form that documents the student’s “classroom performance; the student’s reading level in English; the judgment of the teaching staff member(s) responsible for a student’s educational program; and the student’s performance on achievement tests in English” (NJDOE, 2017, p. 150-151). This data is used to determine whether or not a student has the ability to participate in general education classes taught in English (Sugarman and Geary, 2018). Once reclassified, students are considered “former English learners” and are monitored for an additional two years to track continued academic progress, as required by Federal regulations (U. S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice, 2015).

Controversy has emerged as states have set time constraints, determined cut scores, and placed limits on access to language assistance services, particularly in states with high concentrations of EL students such as Arizona and California (Arias & Faltis, 2012; Kim &
Herman, 2012). The concerns focus on students exiting EL programs both too soon and not soon enough. Some researchers have pointed to students’ lack of readiness to handle academic coursework in English if they are reclassified too soon (Cummins, 1980; 1981; Leckie, Kaplan, & Rubinstein-Avila, 2012), while others make the case that students suffer from lack of access to GE curricula and interaction with native English-speaking peers when they remain in an EL program longer than necessary (Kim & Herman, 2012). Both circumstances can negatively impact the long-term academic performance of former English learners (Kim & Herman, 2010).

Research comparing the academic performance of former ELs with their peers is mixed, with some finding lower achievement levels among ELs (de Jong, 2004; Gándara, Rumberger, Maxwell-Jolly, & Callahan, 2003; Hill, 2018) and a disparity in academic achievement that increases as students transition from elementary to middle grades (Slama, 2014), while others do not find statistically significant differences (Ardasheva et al., 2012; Huang, Davis, & Ngamsomjan, 2017; Kim & Herman, 2012). Slama (2014) conducted a quantitative study with a sample of over 5,000 ELLs over the course of eight years of schooling in kindergarten through grade seven. The researcher examined student performance data on state standardized assessments and found that achievement of proficiency among former ELs fell from 60% and 63% for ELA and mathematics respectively in third grade to 48% in both categories in fifth grade. By comparison, the proficiency levels for their peers who were never ELs were 64% and 54% in third grade and 64% and 54% in fifth grade. Supporting the finding that former ELs continue to lag behind their GE peers, a study by Kim and Herman (2010) showed that upon reclassification former ELs initially demonstrate more rapid growth than non-ELs, but the gap between the achievement levels of these two groups is maintained across grade levels and is never completely eradicated.
Other studies affirm the persistence of this gap (Kieffer, 2008; Lesaux, 2006; Slama, 2014), often showing that ELs’ reading scores decline in the upper elementary and middle grades in comparison to their native English-speaking peers, even when both groups of students demonstrate equal reading skills in the early elementary grades. In her study, Slama (2014) also refers to the 2009 NAEP data, which shows that 29% of former ELs met reading proficiency levels in fourth grade, but only 16% of former ELs did so in eighth grade. By comparison, the reading proficiency scores for students who had never been classified as ELs equaled 34% in fourth grade and 35% in eighth grade, confirming a widening achievement gap as students progress from elementary to middle grades. The corresponding mathematics data followed a similar pattern (NCES, 2009).

This apparent decline in reading ability coincides with the increased reading demands on students as they move from elementary to middle grades and navigate more technical texts in their content area classes. The specialized academic language that students must interpret and apply in literature, mathematics, science, and social studies texts is different from the more readily acquired conversational language that may have been sufficient to support them in earlier grades (Townsend, Filippini, Collins, & Biancarosa, 2012; Zwiers, 2007; 2014). Even in the elementary grades, students who are not classified as ELs, but whose first language is not English, may require additional language support to fully access the GE curriculum (Pu, 2010).

There are other studies, however, that tell a different story, showing that former ELLs catch up to their non-EL peers, outperforming or matching their achievement (Ardasheva et al., 2012; Huang, Davis, & Ngamsomjan, 2017; Kim & Herman, 2012). Ardasheva et al. (2012) analyzed reading, mathematics, and English language proficiency data from over 18,000 students across 22 middle schools. The student population included more than 17,000 native English
speakers, 500 former ELs, and 558 current ELs. The former and current EL populations in this study were made up of mostly Spanish-speakers (47%), but also included more than 40 other home languages including Bosnian and Vietnamese. Results showed higher achievement outcomes in reading and math for former ELs in middle school grades as compared to native English speakers. The much smaller Huang et al. (2017) study supports these results, showing comparable performance in reading and writing proficiency ratings for a group of 37 bilingual students, including former ELs, and another group of 23 monolingual native English speakers.

Although the research on former ELs’ achievement is inconclusive, it is important to consider that there are many variables that may affect students’ academic achievement after transitioning from an EL program into GE classes, reclassification policies being one. The beliefs and perceptions of teachers about their roles and about their students present other variables that may affect classroom practices and student achievement.

**Teacher Beliefs and Perceptions about ELs**

The body of research on teachers’ beliefs about their students and their professional practice is extensive (Calderhead, 1996; Fives & Buehl, 2012; Pajares, 1992) and examines the relationship between teachers’ beliefs and instructional effectiveness, pedagogical practices, expectations for students, and student achievement (Archambault, Janosz, & Chouinard, 2012; Hertzog, 2011; Richardson, 1996; Schmid, 2018; Tang, Lee, & Chun, 2012). Researchers have correlated teacher expectations about student achievement and their own self-efficacy with student success (Archambault, Janosz, & Chouinard, 2012; Schmid, 2018), while studies that have attempted to demonstrate a connection between teachers’ beliefs and their instructional practices have found mixed results (Buehl & Beck, 2015). Nevertheless, it is widely held that teachers’ beliefs impact diverse aspects of teaching and learning, with extensive implications for
student academic performance even though their enactment of beliefs may be constrained by specific contexts (Fives & Buehl, 2012). Consequently, researchers have investigated the interaction of teachers’ beliefs with various situations and populations, including a substantial body of research examining teachers’ beliefs and perceptions of ELs (Lucas et al., 2015). Numerous studies have also investigated teacher identity and ELs, determining that a range of contextual factors contribute to its development (Martin & Strom, 2016). In addition, prior studies with ELs emphasize the importance of positive teacher beliefs, an understanding of English learners, and knowledge of pedagogy in order to create a positive learning environment. (Diaz, Cochran, & Karlin, 2016; Kolano & King, 2015; Salerno & Kibler, 2013). Nevertheless, there is a lack of research on teachers’ beliefs about former ELs.

Given the continued growth of the student population of ELs and former ELs, and that students take much longer to acquire proficiency in academic language as compared to conversational language, it is crucial that ESL teachers prepare their students to transition to GE classes and that teachers of former ELs acknowledge the possibility that their students may continue to benefit from language development support in GE classes. This study will undertake an examination of the beliefs and perceptions of both ESL and GE teachers regarding former ELs’ academic needs and experiences and will seek to understand how GE teachers’ beliefs and perceptions correlate with their instructional practices. This information will allow the researcher to identify areas where the two groups have similar or dissimilar beliefs and perceptions and can be valuable to policymakers, curriculum developers, and professional development planners in addressing the needs of former ELs and their teachers.
General Education (GE) Teachers

GE teachers’ conceptions of their role in the academic development of former ELs may take form during their pre-service phase, when their attitudes can be shaped by their mentor teachers (Durgunoglu & Hughes, 2010; Sugimoto, Carter, & Stoehr, 2017). One study (Durgunoglu & Hughes, 2010) of 62 pre-service teachers revealed that student teachers who have little knowledge or who feel unprepared to address the needs of ELs tend to have more negative attitudes toward them. Another study (Harrison & Lakin, 2018) demonstrated that pre-service teachers who claimed the most positive attitudes toward ELs actually held greater negative attitudes towards them as shown through an implicit association test. Through surveys, knowledge tests, and observations, several researchers also determined that the student teaching experience did little or nothing to contribute to pre-service teachers’ pedagogical knowledge about teaching ELs, and their cooperating teachers were often poor role models, who offered overly simplistic instructional prescriptions or avoided engaging English-learning students altogether (Durgunoglu & Hughes, 2010; Sugimoto et al., 2017).

One study (Polat & Mahalingappa, 2013) comparing 195 pre-service and in-service teachers showed that, while the two groups shared some beliefs, there were significant areas of divergence. Both groups had positive and welcoming responses about including ELs in content area classes, affirming the results of a study carried out earlier by Reeves (2006). Both groups also believed that ELs should be included in GE classes, but only the in-service teachers agreed that content teachers do not have time to deal with the needs of ELs in their classes. The pre-service participants indicated that content teachers are responsible for ELs’ language development, while in-service teachers claimed that ESL teachers are responsible. A previous study (Polat, 2010) with a similar population demonstrated that, although neither group had
strong positive feelings about their competence for supporting ELs, in-service teachers felt more
competent regarding their linguistic knowledge and their ability to support ELs’ literacy and
academic development than did their pre-service peers.

Research conducted with 425 Florida teachers indicated even more negative attitudes
toward ELLs (Vazquez-Montilla, Just, & Triscari, 2014). In this study, teachers agreed that
learning English is more important than learning content and more important than maintaining
the home language. Respondents also believed that having ELs in their classrooms is
“detrimental to the learning of other students” (p. 583) and that teachers should not have to
adjust their instruction or receive training to meet the needs of ELs. Teachers may also
discourage or even prohibit their students from using their first language in the classroom
(Mellom, Straubhaar, Balderas, Ariail, & Portes, 2017; Reeves, 2006) despite research that
shows the benefits of leveraging the use of the first language to acquire the second language
(Goldenberg & Coleman, 2010).

Several other studies (Olsen, 2010; Russell, 2012; Walker et al., 2004; Yoon, 2008) have
shown that GE teachers fail to see a role for themselves in supporting ELs, because they have the
opinion that it is only the responsibility of ESL teachers to support English language
development, even though they may not fully understand what ESL teachers do (Hansen-Thomas
& Cavagnetto, 2010). In reporting on a three-year ethnographic study, one researcher noted that
ESL students were viewed to be “the responsibility of the ESL program and teacher” (Harklau,
2000). This attitude was prevalent across other studies, including a mixed method study that
surveyed 422 mainstream teachers in a Great Plains state (Walker et al., 2004). Researchers in
this study report “numerous” voluntary survey comments that explicitly stated that ELs should
be “the sole responsibility of the ESL teacher” (p. 145). Other comments also indicated that GE
teachers should only be responsible for GE students. Teachers who do not recognize a role for themselves in the language development of their ESL students are unlikely to adjust their instruction, even though the success of their students may depend upon it (Olsen, 2010).

One case study (Yoon, 2008) of three middle school English language arts teachers and their English-learning students illustrates how teachers’ views about themselves as educators of ELs can impact ELLs’ positioning as powerful or powerless students. During multiple, in-depth, individual interviews over one semester, teachers stated their beliefs about how much responsibility they had to support their English-learning students. During observations in the classrooms of two teachers who distanced themselves from this responsibility, the teachers were not observed adapting instruction for ELs or providing any additional support. The teachers often did not approach or call on ELs and “relinquished . . . responsibility for teaching ELLs” to the ESL teacher (Yoon, 2008, p. 509). In these classrooms, the focal EL students were often disengaged and positioned themselves as powerless. In interviews, the students expressed how they struggled in the class and one student even commented that the teacher did not like her. In contrast, ELs in the classroom of a teacher who viewed herself as a teacher for all children and adapted her instructional approaches to support ELs, positioned themselves as active learners and expressed positive attitudes about the class when interviewed. Similar results were found in a recent study of ELs, which showed that students wanted their teachers to understand and encourage them and that they recognized the impact their teachers’ beliefs had on their learning (Diaz et al., 2016).

The Harklau (2000) study also suggests that teachers’ perceptions of ELs and their affirmations of ELLs’ academic abilities, notwithstanding the students’ actual performance, can impact how ELs form their own identities of themselves as students. This study examined the
transition of ELs from high school to community college. In high school, the students were largely viewed in a positive light and the supporting attitudes of their teachers contributed to students’ believing in themselves as successful and holding positive attitudes about school. At the community college, the students found themselves enrolled in ESL classes along with recent adult immigrants, whose educational experiences outside the U.S. were very different from theirs, and their instructors failed to acknowledge that some of the students had been in the U.S., speaking English, for six or more years. Instructors also expressed their belief that U.S. educated ELs lacked academic and linguistic preparation, and adopted poor academic and behavioral habits. This mismatch led the students in this study to resist their characterization as non-proficient and to display behaviors such as not completing work and telling instructors that the class was boring.

Few studies have investigated teachers’ views of ELs’ qualities as students; however, one study of 50 high school English teachers did provide some insights (Cho & Christenbury, 2009). The quantitative portion of the study found that only 22% of participants believed that ELs’ lack of motivation was a challenge. Responses to an open-ended item on the survey supported this view, as respondents described their students as “highly motivated” and “hard workers.” This study, as well as others, focused primarily on teachers’ attitudes and beliefs about their own instructional practices and training rather than the qualities that ELs bring to the classroom.

Although two of the largest studies to examine teacher attitudes toward ELs (Karabenick & Noda, 2004; Reeves, 2006) were conducted more than ten years ago, their findings provide a foundation from which to consider more recent results. One researcher surveyed 279 high school subject-area teachers from four high schools in a large southeastern city and found that more than 70% of the respondents “welcomed ELs into their classrooms” and they believed having
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ELs in their classrooms “created a positive educational atmosphere” (Reeves, 2006). At the same time, however, 82% of these respondents claimed they did not have the knowledge or skill to work with English-learning students and 90% said they had received no specific training for teaching ELs, while only 53% were interested in receiving training to improve in this area. These results seem to clash with one another as, on one hand, a majority of teachers report a positive attitude toward ELs in their mainstream classes, but on the other hand, almost half reject the opportunity to improve their ability to address students’ academic needs, despite their acknowledgement of their own lack of expertise and training in this area. This is particularly surprising in light of the fact that almost 78% of respondents indicated that they had taught ELs.

The second study, conducted in a large suburban district, points to the need for relevant professional development for general education teachers who work with ELs (Karabenick & Noda, 2004). The setting for this study was a district of 15,000 students, with ELs composing one-third of the student population. At the request of the district, researchers conducted a comprehensive needs assessment survey of 729 teachers to inform their professional development recommendations for district general education teachers of ELs. The researchers looked specifically for differences between teachers who were more accepting of ELs in their classroom and those who were less accepting. Similar to the Reeves (2006) study, 70% of teacher participants agreed that ELs are welcome in their classrooms, but here, too, we observe seemingly contradictory findings, with only 43% claiming they would like to have ELs in their classroom. Karabenick and Noda (2004) determined that teachers generally had positive attitudes toward ELs, but teachers were also significantly less confident in their ability to teach ELs than other students. These results highlight a need for training general education teachers in the relevant knowledge and skills for teaching ELs. A year-long study of secondary content teachers
enrolled in an ESL program showed that teachers’ negative views of students’ use of their first language decreased by the end of the training program (Song & Samimy, 2015). The researchers also found that teachers became more strongly in favor of ELs’ simultaneously learning language and content knowledge. Another study of general education teachers who participated in an ESL training program demonstrated that teachers reported high levels of preparedness and effectiveness in teaching ELs after receiving specific training (Coady, Harper, & de Jong, 2011). In some cases, this training may also impact teachers’ beliefs about ELs and improve their understanding of students’ diversity of needs (Kolan & King, 2015).

Although teachers may not prioritize training for effectively teaching ELs, they may still recognize the importance of addressing students’ social and emotional needs. A recent study found that two mainstream teachers of ELs highly valued their roles in making students feel comfortable and included in the classroom (Martin, 2019). The teachers prioritized this role over that of facilitating ELs’ academic and linguistic development. One teacher framed the importance students’ comfort in terms of socialization while the other teacher connected their comfort level to their ability to learn. Since this study focused on primary teachers and ELs, it is unclear if this will hold true for secondary teachers and their former EL students.

An additional concern is that teachers may not believe that a rigorous curriculum is appropriate for ELs (Olsen, 2010; Murphy & Torff, 2019; Russell, 2012; Walker et al., 2004; Yoon, 2008). Although there is a paucity of research on this issue, one experimental study of 205 teachers showed lower support for using rigorous activities for ELs than with GE students (Murphy & Torff, 2019). Although one possible reason for this result is that teachers do not feel prepared to facilitate more rigorous learning activities with ELs, the outcome was the same for teachers with ESL certification, who have had specialized training. Another possible explanation
could be the belief that learning English is more important than learning content (Vazquez-Montilla, Just, & Triscari, 2014). There is also the possibility of implicit bias on the part of teachers, who see ELLs as less capable of handling difficult material that requires critical thinking. For example, Riley (2015) has shown that teachers’ academic decision-making can be negatively affected when students are known to be part of an ESL program. Additionally, a subsequent study that investigated both teachers’ and students’ perspectives on ELs’ school experiences found that the two groups’ perceptions differed widely and students described how teachers’ perceptions and actions greatly influenced their attitudes toward learning (Shim & Shur, 2018).

Although these studies provide some insight into how general education teachers view their roles in supporting ELs in their classrooms, they focus on students who continue to receive ESL support instruction or who are enrolled in other specialized EL programs. The current study will expand on these findings by focusing on former ELs – students who have exited an ESL program. By examining how GE teachers perceive the academic needs of former ELs, this study can provide the basis on which to begin considering if teachers’ beliefs and perceptions of former ELs are the same or different as their beliefs and perceptions of ELs who are still enrolled in English language development programs. These findings can provide relevant insights to educators as they evaluate the academic progress of former ELs and may also be useful to decision makers in the areas of programming, curriculum, and professional development.

**ESL Teachers**

As compared to GE teachers, much less research has been conducted on the perceptions and beliefs of ESL teachers about their students. Furthermore, to my knowledge, no studies have examined ESL teachers’ beliefs about what their students’ experiences in general education
classes will be once they are reclassified. The research that has investigated ESL teachers’
beliefs has focused primarily on the effectiveness of the academic preparation of ESL teachers
(Baecher, 2012; Coady, Harper, & deJong, 2011; Durgunoglu & Hughes, 2010; Farrell, 2019) or
how teachers’ beliefs affect their pedagogical choices (Farrell & Bennis, 2013; Polat, 2010; Tran,
2015).

In keeping with the research presented earlier that connected teacher training with greater
self-efficacy, one might expect that ESL teachers would have strong positive beliefs about their
effectiveness for preparing their students for general education placements due to their
specialized training. Some research supports the idea that obtaining ESL certification
significantly enhances teachers’ sense of efficacy with regard to teaching ELs (Coady, Harper, &
de Jong, 2011; Tran, 2015). Other studies indicate, however, that ESL teachers feel
underprepared to meet the needs of their students and are overwhelmed by the requirements of
their jobs (Baecher, 2012; Farrell, 2019). A mixed methods study (Baecher, 2012) of 77 certified
ESL teachers who had graduated from a university TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of
Other Languages) program in the northeastern U.S. revealed that teachers did not feel confident
about meeting the needs of their ELs and, in particular, were concerned about the low literacy
levels and motivation of their students.

Due to their enhanced knowledge of second language acquisition, it would also be
reasonable to assume that ESL teachers understand the importance of leveraging the power of
students’ first language in the classroom. However, ESL teachers sometimes see students’ use of
their home language as a hindrance to learning English and succeeding academically (Shim,
2014).
Studies that have focused on how ESL teachers perceive and enact their job responsibilities have found that throughout their careers, from pre-service to veteran, ESL teachers view their roles as advocates for their students as an integral part of their jobs (Fogle & Moser, 2017; Linville, 2016 & 2020; Trickett, Rukhtskiy, Jeong, Gnkoava, Oberoi, Weinstein, & Delgado, 2012). In a study of 15 urban high school teachers certified to teach ELs, participants reported performing many outside-the-classroom activities, including interceding on the behalf of students with mainstream teachers, working with the school administration to match students with supportive teachers, helping students learn to navigate unfamiliar school or community processes, providing food and supplies, developing programs, and many others (Trickett et al., 2012). A much larger study of 511 ESL teachers found similar results with the vast majority of participants reporting engagement in the same types of advocacy activities (Linville, 2020). This more recent study further determined that ESL teachers’ actions were primarily related to school-based issues, reaching beyond school issues to impact broader policies far less often.

**General Education and ESL Teacher Collaboration**

Research shows that teacher collaboration has positive effects on both teachers and students. Studies demonstrate that greater teacher growth is linked to high quality teacher collaboration (Ronfeldt, Farmer, McQueen, & Grissom, 2015) and higher levels of student achievement are linked to collaborative teacher practices (Barber & Moursheed, 2009; DuFour, 2011; Louis & Marks, 1998; Ronfeldt, et al., 2015). Findings also indicate that collaboration among teachers can influence instructional improvement if teachers develop bonds that unite them in a shared purpose and a common vision of responsibility for student learning (Achinstein, 2002; Timperley, 2005). Communities of practice, operating within an agreed-upon set of norms, can foster these conditions.
Communities of practice are learning partnerships related to a domain of practice. Through a network of social connections, participants learn together by making meaning within a specific domain, or discipline (Farnsworth, Kleanthous & Wenger-Traynor, 2016; Lave & Wenger, 1991). The power of communities of practice in schools rests in their emergence as situated social networks that focus collaborative learning on instructional improvement and student learning. For these collaborative communities to be successful, they must be supported by the organizational structure and administrative authority of the school (Cobb, McClain, de Silva Lamberg & Dean, 2003).

Although there is no research focusing on GE and ESL teacher collaboration for the purpose of supporting former ELs, there is significant research for this type of collaboration relating to ELs. The research regarding GE and ESL teacher collaboration is in alignment with that on teachers in general. Collaboration between these two groups of teachers is linked to instructional improvement for ELs (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010; Pardini, 2006; Russell, 2012; Verplaetse, Ferraro, & Anderberg, 2012). Studies also demonstrate that when ESL and content-area teachers collaborate, ELs improve in academic achievement (Bell & Walker, 2012; Davison, 2006; Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010; Walker, et al., 2004). There are many examples of ESL teachers becoming instructional leaders in their schools and districts by collaborating with mainstream teachers through participation in communities of practice, coaching, and other professional development activities (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010; Pardini, 2006; Peercy & Martin-Beltran, 2012). All of these examples highlight the need for these two groups of teachers to collaborate on teaching practices to be successful in supporting ELs.

An important outcome of collaboration between these two groups of teachers is equitable access to the curriculum for ELs (Russell, 2012; Valdes, 2001). While students may take seven
years or more to acquire proficiency in academic English, this obstacle cannot become a reason for ELs to lag behind their counterparts in content-area knowledge. Through collaboration with ESL teachers, content-area teachers can learn how to consider and address the sociocultural, linguistic, academic, and cognitive dimensions of ELs in their lessons (Perez & Holmes, 2010), thereby recognizing the strengths of the students and providing access points to the mainstream curriculum.

**Sheltered Instruction**

Sheltered Instruction (SI) is “an approach for teaching content to English language learners in strategic ways that make the subject matter concepts comprehensible while promoting the students’ English language development” (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2000, p. 1). The Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP®) was developed over a period of seven years during which the researchers collaborated with teachers to codify best practices for sheltered instruction based on research literature and teacher experience (Echevarria, et al., 2000; 2013). A study was conducted to examine the reliability and validity of SIOP® (Guarino, Echevarria, Short, Schick, Forbes, & Rueda, 2001). Guarino et al. (2001), using a single blind design, had four raters analyze six videos of classroom instruction for the three SIOP® dimensions: preparation, instruction, and review/evaluation. The raters evaluated the SIOP® lessons more highly than the non-SIOP lessons (mean 5.8 and 2.4 with a maximum 7). Univariate tests found statistical significance between SIOP and non-SIOP lessons with a 95% correct classification rate. The researchers (Guarino et al., 2001) claim these results are evidence that the SIOP® instrument is a highly reliable and valid measure of sheltered instruction (Echevarria et al., 2000; Kareva & Echevarria, 2013; Short, Fidelman, & Louguit, 2012). Subsequent studies aimed to tie SIOP implementation to increased student achievement (Echevarria, Short, & Powers, 2006;
Echevarria, Richards-Tutor, Chinn, & Ratleff, 2011; McIntyre, E., Kyle, D., Chen, C-T., Muñoz, M. & Beldon, S., 2010; Short, et al., 2012) and showed significant differences between student achievement in SIOP® classes and those in non-SIOP® classes.

Despite these findings, other researchers have questioned claims that SIOP® is a scientifically validated framework (Crawford & Adelman Reyes, 2015; Krashen, 2013). Concerns include the inclusion of elements that reflect two conflicting theories of second language acquisition, small sample sizes, modest effect sizes, and flaws in methodology in several of the studies (Echevarria et al, 2006; Echevarria et al., 2011; Guarino et al., 2001; McIntyre et al., 2010; Short et al., 2012). Although Krashen claims that there are other validated models of sheltered instruction (Dupuy, 2000; Krashen, 1991), the studies he references also have shortcomings. For example, Dupuy presents the research on Content Based Instruction (CBI), but there are four different models and the research is primarily focused on post-secondary contexts. Dupuy concludes that much more research is needed to validate CBI as an effective instructional approach. Krashen’s (1991) review of research on sheltered instruction fails to include specific, observable instructional elements, but simply names two “crucial characteristics”: (1) the class is composed only of second language learners and (2) the instructional focus is on content, not language (Krashen, 1991, p. 183). These are broad characteristics that are not comparable to the specific instructional strategies provided in the SIOP® model, which has been widely accepted in schools in the U.S. and internationally (Luster, 2011; McIntyre et al, 2010). There is only one other sheltered observation protocol, to my knowledge: the Classroom Quality for English Language Learners (CQELL) model, which only addresses elementary Language Arts instruction (Goldenberg, Coleman, & Amabisca, 2010; Goldenberg, Coleman, Reese, Haertel, & Rodriguez-Mojica, 2012).
Connecting Research to the Problem of Practice

As the population of ELs grows, so too does the population of former ELs who are placed in GE classes. Developing a deeper understanding of the perceptions of ESL and GE teachers regarding former ELs, particularly their role in students’ continued academic development, can inform decisions about professional development, curriculum, student placement, and other relevant policies. Examining ESL teachers’ conceptions of former ELs’ experiences as they are reclassified into GE classes can provide insight into how ESL teachers are preparing their students for this transition, while exploring GE teachers’ perceptions of former ELs’ academic needs can inform our understanding of how students are supported in GE classrooms.

Although the body of research on best practices for supporting ELs’ language and content knowledge development is generally in agreement, research shows that former ELs may get little academic scaffolding in GE classes (Leckie et al., 2013). Effective scaffolding can include: building background knowledge; using comprehensible input; explicit teaching of academic language, including but not limited to vocabulary; leveraging the use of students’ first language; teaching and using specific strategies for comprehension; providing opportunities for language use through interaction; and using culturally responsive teaching methods (de Jong, 2013; Goldenberg & Coleman, 2010; Peercy, 2011; Zwiers, 2014). GE teachers may be unaware of these approaches for supporting ELs and may also lack the training needed to develop this pedagogical knowledge (Karabenick & Noda, 2004; Reeves, 2006).

Middle and high school content-area teachers, in particular, provide a largely untapped resource for supporting former ELs’ continued academic language development. Subjects such as language arts, science, history, and mathematics are often taught in isolation from each other and the rest of the curriculum. These disciplines require knowledge and skill with academic
language, and therefore can make rich contributions to students’ experiences in oral and written English (Zwiers, 2014). Language arts and social studies, in particular, provide rich, literacy-based contexts for language learning; therefore, this study will focus on these two content areas. Studies such as this, focusing on developing a more expansive view of the role of GE teachers in former ELs’ academic and language development, make significant contributions to this field.

Although substantial research has been conducted on the impact of teachers’ beliefs and perceptions of their students on instructional practices in the GE and ESL contexts, no research, to my knowledge, has focused on the former EL population in GE classrooms. The present study will address this gap in the research and will be guided by the following research questions:

1. What are general education (GE) teachers’ perceptions and beliefs regarding the former ELs they teach?
2. How do GE teachers make sense of their roles in supporting former ELs’ learning?
3. How do GE and ESL teachers’ perceptions and beliefs about former ELs compare?
4. How do GE and ESL teachers’ views of their roles as teachers of ELs and former ELLs compare?
5. How do general education teachers’ perceptions and beliefs about former ELs correlate with their classroom practices?

**Theoretical Framework**

The aim of this study is to examine how teachers’ beliefs and perceptions of their students and of their roles as teachers of ELs and former ELs compare across the general education and ESL contexts, and how these beliefs and perceptions correlate with practices in the general education classroom. The theoretical lenses guiding this study are Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory and model (Bronfenbrenner, 1989, 2005) and Vygotskian Sociocultural
Theory (Lantolf, Thorne, & Poehner, 2015). The former will provide a framework for interpreting teachers’ stated and enacted beliefs, while the latter will inform analysis of findings related to the experiences that shape teachers’ enactment of their roles as educators of ELs and former ELs.

A large body of research points to the influence of teachers’ beliefs on their instructional decision-making and effectiveness (Fives & Buehl, 2012; Pajares, 1992; Richardson, 1996). However, some research also indicates that teachers do not always enact practices that are consistent with their stated beliefs (Lee, 2009; Liu, 2011). In order to consider the complexity of the interaction of beliefs and practices across multiple contexts, Bronfenbrenner’s (1989) ecological model, which encompasses the internal and external conditions that impact beliefs and practices, will provide a framework for interpreting the findings in this study. This model will permit interpretation of the findings of this study within the context of teachers’ experiences and interactions in environments ranging from the personal to the professional and public. Since ecological systems theory proposes that each environment impacts the rest, this study will examine how interactions across all contexts impact the development of teachers’ beliefs and their perceptions and enactment of their teaching roles.

Bronfenbrenner (2005) suggests that beliefs and practices interact across five different levels: the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem. Central to the microsystem is the individual and the strong internal beliefs about knowledge and self. These beliefs interact with one another at the mesosystem level. Outside elements within contexts that include the individual are introduced at the level of the exosystem. The macrosystem represents the larger context that contains the first three levels but operates on a broader scale. Finally, the chronosystem relates to factors that take place over time. Examining teachers’ beliefs through
this framework will allow for an analysis of teachers’ beliefs within the context of their own experiences, classroom environment, school culture, and other outside factors, such as district and state policies (See Figure 1, Appendix A).

A sociocultural perspective also frames classrooms as situated learning environments within schools, which are within other organizational structures such as districts and communities (Hawkins, 2019). Examining the experiences of teachers and students through a sociocultural theoretical framework requires a consideration of all facets of the teaching and learning context and their inter-relationships. In order to understand the ways in which teachers view their students and perceive their own identities, attention must be paid to the contextualized spaces in which teachers enact their practice.

The key premise of sociocultural theory (SCT) is that knowledge is constructed through social activities (Vygotsky, 1978). These activities, which include cultural experiences such as language, shape one’s identity and beliefs (Ortega, 2015). As it relates to second language acquisition (SLA), SCT proposes that language learning arises from the social interactions we experience (Lantolf et al., 2015). Furthermore, this learning is conscious and goal-oriented. Hawkins (2004) proposes that seven core constructs can guide our thinking about classrooms as complex social systems that support learners’ language development.

**Communities of Learners / Communities of Practice**

A classroom may be a community of learners, where members interact around shared knowledge and expertise. This construct emphasizes student engagement in interactive activities along with scaffolding and resources to support access for all (Hawkins, 2019). Communities of practice orient around a shared area of interest, activities, and information to learn from one another and improve their practice (Wenger, 1998). Both communities are based on social
participation in which knowledge is distributed across members through their interaction (Hawkins, 2004).

**Zone of Proximal Development / Apprenticeship**

As defined by Vygotsky, the Zone of Proximal Development is “the difference between what a person can achieve when acting alone and what the same person can accomplish when acting with support from someone else and/or cultural artifacts” (Lantolf, 2000). As an apprentice, a learner interacts with someone with more expertise to acquire the next level of skill or knowledge (Hawkins, 2004). Lave and Wenger (1991) propose that learners who are new to the community may begin on the periphery, gradually being inducted into its practices until these apprentices are full participants.

**Multiple Social Languages**

Hawkins (2004) presents the idea that many social languages exist that reflect the identities and activities in use, as opposed to the dichotomous languages proposed by Cummins (1986) of basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). English learners may acquire multiple social languages as well as the knowledge of the various contexts in which each language is appropriate. The use of various social languages can communicate speakers’ identities in sociocultural contexts and these multiple forms of language come together in classrooms, within schools that have their own academic languages.

**Identities / Positioning**

Students and teachers bring into the classroom an understanding of their place in various social contexts within their culture and community as well as the school and classroom. Like languages, participants may recruit multiple identities to fit specific situations and environments.
(Hawkins, 2004). To support ELs’ positioning as participating students, teachers must be aware of how their social interactions contribute to students’ co-construction of their identities.

**Power / Status**

Classroom interactions are situated within larger contexts imbued with socially constructed values that impart power and privilege to particular concepts, identities, and beliefs. To an extent, students’ ability to enact their participatory identities rely on the value and power systems that exist in classrooms. Messages of status communicated through texts, curricula, and other material resources also may support one social group over another (Hawkins, 2004).

**Multiple literacies**

Communicating through multiple media and modes is an integral aspect of literacy beyond reading and writing traditional text. To be truly literate in the 21st century, students must be able to design and interpret multimodal messages in order to interact with diverse groups. Students must have access to the technological resources that allow them to construct messages and critically consume information in order to successfully negotiate our contemporary world (Hawkins, 2004 & 2019).

**Classroom as ecology**

The classroom is a complex ecosystem situated within the larger ecosystems of school, district, and community. The beliefs, practices, languages, identities, and resources of a classroom may create an environment that supports or hinders the development of a learner (Hawkins, 2004). These and other components of the classroom ecology can support ELs through culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy in which teachers know their learners; use appropriate instructional strategies; validate student identities; have an awareness of power
and status differentials; and incorporate into their practice the knowledge and skills that learners bring with them to the classroom (Hawkins, 2019).

It is through this sociocultural lens that this study examines how teacher participants situate themselves within a community of practice, investigates how they come to terms with their roles as teachers of former ELs, and considers their beliefs and practices as they relate to the continued academic and language development of their former EL students. Teachers’ practices will be examined within the classroom community of learners as well as the schools’ communities of practice.

In accordance with SCT, GE teachers can maximize the effectiveness of their instruction for former ELs through designing and implementing planned and purposeful learning through social interactions and use of the language and concepts of the content. The learning goals, including language objectives, would be explicitly stated along with measurable outcomes. The instructional plan would also consider students’ Zone of Proximal Development through differentiated learning plans and the use of former ELs’ first language as a mediating tool.

There are four features of sheltered instruction that directly apply to the tenets of SCT: (a) intentional grouping, (b) interaction and discussion, (c) application activities, and (d) student use of L1. Intentional grouping along with interaction and discussion represent purposeful social interactions, while application activities represent student use of content knowledge, concepts and language. This study will pay particular attention to these aspects of sheltered instruction.
CHAPTER III

Methodology

This mixed methods study aims to explore the beliefs and perceptions that contribute to the academic relationship between middle and high school ESL and general education teachers and their EL and former EL students in one district. The study examines how general education teachers perceive former ELs’ academic needs within the general education context and how ESL teachers envision the academic experiences of their former students once they are enrolled in general education classes.

Tashakkori and Creswell (2007) define mixed methods research as that “in which the investigator collects and analyzes data, integrates the findings, and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches or methods in a single study or program of inquiry” (p. 4). A mixed methods approach is appropriate for this study since it allows for the adoption of multiple perspectives in examining a complex problem and also permits the use of multiple sources of evidence for the purpose of corroboration (DeCuir-Gunby & Schutz, 2017). The qualitative elements of this study examine how teachers construct reality and make meaning of their interactions with students within the context of their daily classroom instruction and other school activities (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Through in-depth interviews, the researcher looked for insider subjective knowledge, such as how general education teachers understand the academic needs of former ELs and how ESL teachers conceptualize former ELs experiences in the GE classroom. In addition, classroom observations were conducted to build knowledge of the GE teachers’ instructional practices. Interviews and observations are two of the most effective ways of gathering this type of information (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Vogt, Gardner, & Haeffele, 2012).
Qualitative findings are supplemented by a correlation analysis, which is designed to determine if pairs of variables are related and, if so, how strongly they are related (O’Leary, 2017). The correlation analysis provided the researcher with a basis for comparison of qualitative interview data codes with quantitative data obtained through classroom observations and the collection of documents and artifacts.

**Study Site**

The Fieldview Public School District is a pre-K to 12 urban/suburban district in central New Jersey containing two middle schools, one secondary magnet arts academy, and one comprehensive high school that collectively serve more than 4,000 students in grades six through twelve. Over the past ten years, the student population has shifted from majority African-American to majority Hispanic, including a substantial increase in ELs (NJDOE, 2019). Reports show that ELs comprise between 19% and 39% of the student body at each of the middle and high schools. More than half of the district’s student body claim Spanish as their primary home language and former ELs number 1,670, more than 20% of the total student population. Secondary students in the Bilingual/ESL program whose first language is Spanish receive content-area instruction (Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies) in Spanish as well as a separate ESL class. Depending on their levels of English proficiency, some students are placed in transitional or general education classes that are taught in English before fully exiting the bilingual program.

The Fieldview school district is an appropriate site for this study due to the growing population of ELs and the low academic achievement reflected in standardized test scores. Results from the 2018 English Language Arts/Literacy standardized state assessment show that
approximately 17% of ELs met or exceeded proficiency levels, while 32% of non-ELs did the same. In mathematics, 15% of ELs and 21% of non-ELs met or exceeded proficiency.

Sample

The process of selecting participants began with a convenience sample of 70 GE and ESL teachers from across the district’s middle and high schools. Twelve volunteer participants were identified from this purposeful sample of all district middle and high school ESL, language arts, and social studies teachers through a digital survey (Appendix B). The survey asked teachers to select the grade and subject area they teach, to provide their length of teaching experience, and to state whether or not they teach ELs or former ELs. The last item on the survey described this study, invited respondents to participate in this research, and requested contact information for volunteer participants.

A total of 48 teachers participated in the survey, a response rate of 68.5%, and 21 participants indicated an interest in participating further in the research study. With a goal of including a balance of ESL and GE teachers as well as middle and high school teachers, and a maximum of 12 participants, I selectively contacted the pool of volunteers to construct the participant group. A few teachers declined the invitation and the final sample included five ESL teachers and seven GE teachers (see Table 1). In this way, a handpicked sample was purposefully chosen from the self-selected pool of volunteers. According to O’Leary (2017), handpicked sampling allows the researcher to select participants to meet a particular purpose. In this case, the researcher employed this method in order to ensure a range of grade levels, subject areas, and years of teaching experience among the participants. Survey respondents had to meet the following criteria to be eligible for selection: (1) be an ESL or GE teacher who teaches ELA
or social studies; (2) teach students in grades six through twelve (middle or high school); and (3) teach ELs or former ELs.

Table 1

Participants: Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Level</th>
<th>ELA (#)</th>
<th>SS (#)</th>
<th>ESL (#)</th>
<th>GE (#)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* ELA = English Language Arts; SS = Social Studies; ESL = English as a Second Language; GE = General Education

Since each of the Fieldview middle and high schools reports a significant percentage of ELs as part of the student population, the ESL and general education teachers in this district routinely work with ELs and former ELs in their daily classes. The experiences and perceptions of a sample of ESL and general education teachers will provide a basis for understanding how these teachers perceive the needs of former ELs and enact their teaching roles across various content areas in support of ELs’ and former ELs’ academic and language progress.

Procedure/Data Collection

Qualitative data was obtained primarily through interviews and quantitative data was obtained through interviews, classroom observations, and documents and artifacts. Observations were conducted in general education classrooms in order to collect data about each general education teacher’s instructional practices as related to the support of ELs’ academic language development. First-hand observation allowed the researcher to record actual behavior and make interpretations based on knowledge and expertise rather than rely on reported accounts (Merriam
& Tisdell, 2016); therefore, these observations provided the researcher with first-hand knowledge of teachers’ instructional practices. This observation data was also used to modify the interview protocol for each general education teacher participant and provided a common reference point and context for the interviews of general education teachers.

For each observation, the researcher used a Sheltered Instruction Observation tool, adapted from the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol® (SIOP) form (Appendix C; Echevarria & Short, 2004), which was developed for the purpose of evaluating implementation of instructional features that support second language learners. Since the SIOP® is the only observation protocol that is a research-based tool for examining effective sheltered instruction teaching practices and is aligned with the focus of this study, I have elected to use a modified version of this instrument, utilizing six of the eight categories: building background, comprehensible input, strategies, interaction, practice and application, and lesson delivery. I will refer to this observation tool as the Sheltered Instruction Observation tool.

In addition to the Sheltered Instruction Observation tool, the researcher also took descriptive field notes that included information about the physical environment, instructional resources, teaching strategies, and teacher discourse. An audio recording of the class was made using a digital recorder and was transcribed to verify data recorded on the observation form and in the field notes. For these observations, the researcher took on the role of observer as participant in which the role of the researcher is known, permitting the researcher to record information as it occurs (Creswell, 2014).

Additional in-depth data was obtained through semi-structured, face-to-face interviews using the interview guide approach (Patton, 2002). Interview questions moved from descriptive and knowledge-based to those soliciting opinions and feelings (Patton, 2002). Interviews lasted
between 17 minutes and one hour and 29 minutes. Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed by hand.

Two separate interview protocols were used – one for general education teachers (Appendix D) and one for ESL teachers (Appendix E). Many of the questions on the two protocols were similar in order to facilitate a comparative analysis. For example, both groups were asked to describe their roles and experiences as teachers of ELs and former ELs and to explain if and how they collaborate with one another. They were also asked to share their knowledge of their school’s ESL program, the procedure for reclassification, and what supports are available to ELs as they transition to general education classes. Some questions were specific to the teachers’ roles. For example, ESL teachers were asked how they prepare their students to transition out of the ESL program. Additional questions for general education teachers addressed how they know when a student is a former EL, what modifications or adaptations they make for former ELs, and what they know about sheltered instruction or SIOP®. Throughout the interviews the researcher was alert to ideas that connect to teachers’ beliefs about their instructional effectiveness and their perceptions about the readiness of students to participate in general education classes. In addition, demographic information was collected from both groups, including length of teaching experience and ability to speak a language other than English.

The researcher also collected documents and artifacts from general education classrooms that were relevant to the research questions of the present study and were related to teachers’ instructional practices as a third data point (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). These included lesson plans and classroom artifacts such as student handouts and photographs of displayed instructional materials such as anchor charts. Documents and artifacts were scanned and saved digitally.
Qualitative Data Analysis

To answer research question one and determine general education teachers’ perceptions and beliefs about former ELs, the researcher transcribed the face-to-face interview recordings of general education teachers by hand and analyzed the transcribed data following the recommendations of Hays and Singh (2012). After each interview, a memo was written in order to capture the initial impressions of the conversation. These memos were expanded after each interview was transcribed. Transcription data were first analyzed with In Vivo Coding in order to capture participants’ ideas through their own words and better identify ideas of importance to them (Saldaña, 2016). The first transcription text was broken into chunks and In Vivo codes were assigned by hand, then all codes were clustered around four categories that emerged from the data. A summary of the participant’s key points was constructed using the In Vivo codes that were generated (Saldaña, 2016). As each successive transcript was coded, the new In Vivo codes were clustered into these same categories, with additional categories added as new concepts emerged, and a summary constructed for each interview using the In Vivo codes. Following this process, an analysis of the interview data for GE teachers produced these four categories: perceptions/beliefs about former ELs; needs of former ELs; perceptions/beliefs about GE and ESL teachers; perceptions of self as a teacher of former ELs.

After collecting and categorizing all the In Vivo codes from this first coding cycle, an analysis was conducted to look for areas of overlap and recurrence across categories, which resulted in five Pattern Codes for each data group. A second round of coding was performed using these Pattern Codes, from which several cross-cutting themes emerged in regard to the four qualitative research questions that guide this study. This analysis provided systematic and comprehensive data about each of the participants’ experiences with former ELs and provided
one dimension for constructing a rich description of teaching and learning in these general education teachers’ classrooms (Creswell, 2014).

To answer research question two and ascertain how general education teachers make sense of their roles in supporting former ELs’ learning, the researcher analyzed data from general education teachers’ interviews, observations, and collected classroom documents and artifacts. To answer research question three and determine how ESL teachers envision former ELs’ experience in general education classrooms, face-to-face interview recordings with ESL teachers were transcribed and analyzed following the same procedure as for question one. To answer research question four and compare general education and ESL teachers’ perceptions and beliefs, a comparative analysis of the codes and themes generated by the two sets of responses to the questions in common was conducted in order to look for similarities and dissimilarities.

Since there is little research on teachers’ beliefs and perceptions about former ELs, I looked to previous research findings related to ELs for possible coding categories. I was alert for certain codes or themes that could have emerged from the ESL and general education teacher interview data based on this body of research, including: the use of students’ home language as an asset or deficit; the impact of ELs on instruction in the general education classes; teachers’ beliefs about their own effectiveness; issues of inequity and exclusion; and collaboration across the school community (Peercy & Martin-Beltran, 2012; Reeves, 2006; Russell, 2012, Shim, 2014; Valdés, 2001; Walker et al., 2004). Throughout the data analysis process, I looked for data that provided information about how ESL and general education teachers describe their work with ELs and former ELs and how they perceive their roles in preparing ELs for transition to general education classes or in supporting former ELs continued academic and language development in a general education setting.
Previous findings demonstrated that ESL teachers do not always believe they have the capacity to adequately support the development of their English-learning students (Baecher, 2012; Farrell, 2019), while general education teachers often do not feel a responsibility to specifically support the academic and language needs of ELs because they feel it is the ESL teachers’ responsibility to prepare them (Olsen, 2010; Polat & Mahalingappa, 2013; Russell, 2012; Walker et al., 2004; Yoon, 2008). I considered whether the findings of these previous studies might generalize to teachers’ beliefs regarding former ELs. I also paid attention to comments that addressed ideas about general education and ESL teachers collaborating formally or informally regarding the needs of former ELs, since research indicates that collaboration between these two groups supports students’ academic access and progress (Russell, 2012; Valdés, 2001). (See Table 2)

**Quantitative Data Analysis**

In order to answer research question five and determine if there is any correlation between general education teachers’ classroom practices and their perceptions and beliefs about former ELs, two sets of data were analyzed and coded: (1) GE teacher interviews, and (2) classroom observation data, documents, and artifacts. Codes consisted of 20 specific sheltered instruction features known to support academic and language development. These instructional strategies are listed in the sheltered instruction features chart (see Appendix F). Using the IBM SPSS Statistics program, a correlation analysis was then conducted comparing the data from the interviews, representing teachers’ perceptions and beliefs, with the data from the observations and artifacts, representing teachers’ actual classroom practice, to determine if there is and to what extent there is a relationship between the two. In addition, an analysis of the agreement of the four sheltered instruction codes connected to the sociocultural theory of second language
acquisition was conducted to determine the degree of agreement for these codes across interview and observation data.

**Ethics**

In accordance with ethical guidelines, I made every effort to respect the rights of all participants in this study and address concerns of consent, harm and privacy (Vogt, et al., 2012). I obtained the appropriate informed consent agreements from participants. Within these agreements, I emphasized the voluntary nature of their participation and clearly explained the purpose of the study. I repeated this message verbally immediately before each interview. I also informed participants of all data collection procedures and recordings, and notified them of their option to skip questions, or opt out entirely. I explained how I planned to report the data I collected and I made transcriptions and findings available to participants for their review. Although anonymity is not completely possible for interviews and observations, I protected the privacy of participants by assigning pseudonyms and omitting any background information in my report that may allow identification. All ethical considerations required by the university’s Institutional Review Board were implemented. (Creswell, 2014).

**Researcher’s Role**

As an employee and central office administrator for the Fieldview Public School District, my role as a researcher has the potential to present some concerns while also affording some benefits. Efforts were made to mitigate concerns through procedures described below. As a researcher, I approached each observation and interview with an awareness that teachers might behave and respond differently due to my position with the district. I emphasized the confidential nature of their participation during and after the consent process and reminded them that they would have an opportunity to review and comment on transcriptions. Additionally, my personal
experiences and insider perspective had the potential to bias my interpretation of the data and reporting of results. Therefore, as I collected, analyzed and reported on the data, I maintained an awareness of possible power imbalances and meticulously implemented established protocols to protect participants’ privacy and ensure confidentiality. Although my familiarity with the district and my own classroom experiences as a former district teacher created the possibility of participant reactivity and researcher bias, my relationship with the district and experience as a classroom teacher also enhanced my understanding of the issues and challenges teachers encountered.

In order to mitigate the effects of my insider status and my own biases, I examined my assumptions and the possible influence I could have on the study findings and included these reflections in my report (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In addition, I employed multiple strategies for validating the findings, as described below (Creswell, 2014).

**Reliability and Validity**

Although I did my best to maintain objectivity, interpretation of the data I collected may have been influenced by my own experience as a teacher and administrator in a district with a substantial proportion of ELs and former ELs. Additional observational bias may have existed due to conditions such as my own selective attention as the observer and the general reactivity of the participants being observed. Member checking the observational data is one way I addressed this concern.

To establish validity, member checks were performed with preliminary observation and interview data analysis to provide opportunities for teachers to provide feedback on the accuracy of the researcher’s emergent findings (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). As the sole research observer, I also checked transcriptions against the audio recordings and solicited a fellow researcher who is
not employed by the district to cross-check my transcriptions for accuracy and coding reliability (Creswell, 2014). I continued to collect data until my findings seemed saturated, while also specifically looking for data that might disconfirm my findings (Creswell, 2014; Hays & Singh, 2012; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

The observations and interviews I conducted in this research study are two of the most common ways to collect data (Walonick, 2010) and they provide different approaches to understanding teachers’ perceptions of their students and their roles. Collection and analysis of documents and artifacts provided additional data that is nonreactive and grounded in the context to support or refute findings from interviews and observations. The triangulation of these sources of data provide more reliability than a single method of data collection (Creswell, 2014; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

I have provided rich, thick descriptions of findings, in accordance with qualitative research standards, and have worked to be sensitive to the diverse perspectives of the study’s participants. I also maintained a research journal throughout this process in order to establish an audit trail that documents my data collection and analysis procedures. This journal adds to the reliability of the study (Gall et al., 2015).
CHAPTER IV

Findings

In this mixed methods study, I investigated the beliefs and perceptions of one district’s middle and high school teachers regarding their students who are former ELs and to examine how the beliefs and perceptions of general education teachers compared with those of ESL teachers. An additional purpose of the study was to evaluate the relationship between general education teachers’ beliefs and their classroom practices in regard to teaching former ELs. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and instructional artifacts.

Findings from data analyses in relation to the research questions that guided this study are described in this chapter. First, qualitative thematic findings are presented for each of the first four research questions. Next, quantitative findings that address the fifth research question are presented.

Qualitative Data Findings

Results are presented per research question for the four qualitative research questions that guide this study. These results are presented as themes generated through the analysis of interview data. The first two questions address the beliefs and perceptions of GE teachers and the third and fourth questions address how the views of GE teachers and ESL teachers compare.

Beliefs and Perceptions of General Education Teachers

This study sought to investigate the perceptions and beliefs of General Education teachers about their EL students. In analyzing the data to answer the first two research questions, five themes were found: Motivated and Hardworking, Similarity in Diversity of Needs, Discomfort in the Classroom, Alleviating Discomfort, and Figuring it Out.
Research Question 1

Four major themes emerged from the data to answer the first question: *What are general education teachers’ perceptions and beliefs regarding the former ELs they teach?*

**Theme 1: Motivated and Hardworking.** GE teachers who participated in this study generally viewed former ELs as hardworking and motivated. Middle school history teacher, Andrew, described one student as an example:

He’s very driven . . . that personal inner drive. He wants to do all he can. He asks really good questions about how he can improve. And so, if he was a native English speaker, I’m pretty sure he would be in my high tier group just because of his desire or his want to learn.

Marisol also views her former EL students as “very motivated to learn. I find they want to learn; they want to succeed.”

Several teachers claimed that many of their former ELs perform better academically than other general education students. High school English teacher, David, expressed his belief that “they have more drive because of their past experiences. They’re proud to be where they’ve gotten, so I think that motivates them to work harder than the general ed population.” David also characterized these students’ performance as “impressive” when they achieve above grade level. Carol, another high school English teacher, commented that former ELs do as well as “if not better than some of the GE students.” She believes that students’ attitudes make the difference.

Well, I think that they know that life’s a struggle. They certainly realize it’s not going to be easy. And so, I see that persistence and that hard work. I see that a lot . . . that they want to achieve. . . And there’s not that willingness to struggle with the general population as there is with the ELs.
**Theme #2: Linguistic and Cultural Capital.** Teachers also recognized the strengths that former ELs bring to the GE classroom. Several participants pointed to students’ varied life experiences and the diversity of language and culture that can lend a different perspective. Middle school ELA teacher Peter commented that former ELs may bring “different life experiences and contexts for reading.” In this way, GE teachers appeared to value former ELs’ linguistic and cultural capital. Lorraine explained:

> Anyone who is bilingual . . . that’s a great strength in and of itself today in America. . . . I think they bring that strength to the classroom plus in a history classroom, they may very well be bringing experiences from [other] countries. . . . So, they’re able to connect to the content a lot of times because of what they’ve experienced or what they may be leaving their nation for and coming here.

Marisol concurred, stating, “Their background and perspectives open up a different dialogue.” Theo also expressed his belief in the value of bilingualism and multicultural perspectives: “They have multiple perspectives. . . . They’re going to go out into the world and be bilingual. . . . They can view the world in kind of like two different lenses. . . . And it helps.”

**Theme 3: Similarity in Diversity of Needs.** The GE teachers in this study acknowledged that former ELs cannot be viewed as a homogeneous group when considering their academic and social needs. Middle school teacher Peter summed it up this way: “Every kid is at such a different place that to give some sort of blanket statement . . . I don't think it would be fair because some kids who had ESL are in my honors class and some are probably at the bottom of GE and some are at the top. It's all over the place.”

Several teachers echoed Peter’s sentiment that, just like the academic performance of GE students, that of former ELs varies. For example, David explained, “In my experience I don’t
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Notice much of a difference between them and the general ed population. As a matter of fact, I think some of the former EL students actually perform better.” While some teachers like David emphasized how well former ELs perform academically, other teachers pointed out that, although former ELs in general are motivated and hardworking, some may adopt poor academic habits just as some GE students do. High school social studies teacher Lorraine described several such students:

I’ve got Fernanda who’s actually a very good student who’s not doing that well this semester. And then Carlos - he’s not doing well at all. That’s because he’s fooling around. And then I have Esteban and Josue not completing any work. It has nothing to do with their ability, they just don’t want to do the outlines.

When Andrew described one of his middle school students who works very hard and does well, he contrasted that student with “others that will try to fade. They’ll just sit back.” Andrew also connected students’ variations in performance with their language proficiency:

It really depends on the student. I’ve had some students, who every time I give a lesson, a student next to him has to translate everything I said. I think he was exited a little too early and the parents just want him in regular ed. I’ve met other students that have been exited and they do better.

Teachers also commented that they use many of the same instructional strategies to support former ELs that they employ for their GE students. High school English teacher, Carol, stated,

Well, graphic organizers are always good. But that’s also for gen ed students who aren’t doing as well. I find myself giving all my kids a graphic organizer. They are good tools and tools that are good are generally good for everybody.
Marisol also pointed out that some students may have a more difficult time adjusting both academically and socially due to transience:

We have kids that are so transient over the years. You’re here for five years, you’re gone for five, you’re back and now they don’t go to school. So, there are gaps in their education.

GE teachers identified the social needs of their former EL students, which they view as often being just the same as those of their other GE students. Carol shared her observations:

I think they do come in feeling isolated, you know, so that they feel like they're aren't really a part of the group. So, they have to be kind of brought into the group. But you know what? Making it kind of relating it to other, the general ed population, I had to integrate my general ed classes even though they weren't ELs.

In this quote, Carol explains that all students – whether they are former ELs or not – need to feel that they are part of the group and may need the assistance of the teacher to accomplish this sense of belonging. Marisol voiced a similar idea: “They’re still regular teenagers who are grappling with what the general ed kids are.” Theo summed up the theme of “similarity in diversity of needs” most succinctly: “My former ELs aren’t different from my regular ed kids. You know, everyone’s experience and journey in life is different, but we all have similar goals.”

**Theme 4: Discomfort in the Classroom.** Participants in this study highlighted the discomfort that students feel when they move from ESL/bilingual classes to GE classes. Theo shared this observation:

I feel like oftentimes like they stick out like a sore thumb, because they are a little uncomfortable, you know? And even though they have some grasp or some level of understanding of the English language - my experience with former ELs is that they
speak good English - but oftentimes when they first come into regular ed classrooms, they're still really, really, really uncomfortable.

Marisol stated that the student’s level of discomfort may depend on their language or social skills: “I think they're afraid to speak for fear of being ridiculed. They're still not comfortable yet. The kids who are social, more sociable and have established friends and relationships, they tend to do better.” English teacher Carol concurred with this perspective, saying, “I think they do come in feeling isolated, you know, so that they feel like they aren't really a part of the group. So, they have to be kind of brought into the group.”

**Research Question 2**

Two additional themes emerged to answer the second question: *How do general education (GE) teachers make sense of their roles in supporting former ELs’ learning?*

**Theme 1: Alleviating Discomfort.** Six of the seven general education teachers interviewed emphasized the importance of making sure that former ELs were comfortable in their classrooms. Andrew explained how he made accommodations for students when being asked to read aloud:

I didn't want to embarrass them. And I didn't want to force them to be uncomfortable to read the whole page. So I said, just read a paragraph. And they were very nervous. All three were very nervous. And there was one young lady . . . and I said, you know, they look to you already, these other two, so if you lead, they'll follow.

Lorraine, a high school social studies teacher who encourages students to make use of their first language, believes that doing so is “another level of comfort. It’s another nurturing experience. It’s another layer of ‘I feel heard. I feel seen. I feel comfortable that the teacher’s going to allow me to read this in my native language.’” Lorraine emphasized the importance of
improving students’ comfortability by describing circumstances that might be “frightening” or “scary” for them and declaring that “the most important thing for them is to feel included.”

High school English teacher Carol believes that the importance of making former ELs feel comfortable is no different than it is for any other group of students. “But you know what? Making it relate to the general ed population, I had to integrate my general ed classes even though they weren't ELs. Integrating the students into one unit is important.”

Like Carol, Theo also stressed the importance of integrating former ELs into his GE classes and said that he “does not treat them as someone who’s different, but rather . . . as a regular ed student . . . not make them feel ostracized or treated differently.” He mentioned that he is “passionate about social-emotional support” and elaborated on how he works to improve students’ comfort level:

And that's why I try to make it my business - the first thing is just how can I make them feel at home here, you know? And it's not the easiest thing to do and I don't have a cookie-cutter defined approach to it, you know? But I'm cognizant of that and I think how can I make the student feel comfortable? Because before I try to teach them and have them learn, if they're not comfortable, how much am I really going to be able to get through to them? Like any student, relationships in general . . . you have to have some level of comfort for me to take something from you. So, the kids definitely feel uncomfortable. I think about how I can make them feel comfortable and then get to the next step, which is just teaching them.

Since high school ELs take most of their classes in a separate building that houses the majority of the bilingual and ESL classes, David, a high school English teacher, believes that
these students’ discomfort upon transitioning to a GE classroom stems from a lack of interaction with native speakers prior to their reclassification.

Well, if they've already been exposed to the general ed, there's not a problem. But what I've seen is some of them are very shy because they lack that exposure since they're in the other building. In that case, it's just a nudge, pair them up with a general ed student and that's it. That's only if they don't have many friends that are in the general ed population. But from what I've seen over there, the ones that don't get any exposure, they're very shy. And it's due to the fact that they are isolated over there. They need to be exposed to the general population, so when they get here, they won’t be shy, they won’t be timid.

Theo also mentioned that former ELs’ discomfort may be exacerbated by their limited interaction with native speakers prior to their transition to general ed classes:

They may not feel comfortable around their peers and they may not feel comfortable in this building and when they're in the [other building] and they have the protection of kids that speak the same language, have the same social practices, social norms, teachers who understand who they are and their cultural backgrounds, they come here, they're ostracized, right?

Another high school English teacher, Marisol, described how she tried to improve one student’s comfort level:

You know, I have a kid who doesn't say boo, and he struggles and he's afraid to speak up in class. And he'll whisper the answer to me, (I think it's this), but he will not raise his hand or he’ll say please don't call on me today. You know, he tells me every day before they hit the door, please don't call on me. Last week I prepped him for the lesson/assignment. I told him I want you to practice this and I'm going to call on you.
You're going to look at this question, and when you come in, you're going to give me your answer. I'll let you know if you are right or wrong. If you have it wrong, we will review it. Then you're going to share the right answer with the class. I won't let anyone answer that question. I do something like that to raise his confidence. Otherwise, he will sit there mute and won't speak and is afraid to, because you know, kids are mean, right? You know, and they ridicule each other and when they're building confidence and they don't have it in a language, one kid laughs at him and forget it. They're done.

**Theme 2: Figuring It Out.** Participants see themselves providing transitional academic and social-emotional support to former ELs. Marisol explained, “I’m always pulling stuff or sitting with them one-to-one to help them understand something.” Theo prioritizes social-emotional support. “One thing that I try to do is pair them up with a student who is bilingual. They understand their culture at home where their family is from, and they understand American culture and they speak English.” He also sees vocabulary as “something that is important in helping them transition.” Carol expressed her belief that “you need support systems in both places” - in and out of school - while Lorraine described using a program that provides readings for her social studies class in multiple languages.

Although teachers see a role for themselves in providing transitional support, several teachers also called for some type of structured, systemic, transitional support for former ELs as they move into the GE setting. Andrew, for example, explained, “I have to remember to give them that extra support . . . I don’t feel like they have a support system.” He suggested offering a course where students could do additional reading and learn more about the “nuances of the English language.” Marisol described a similar type of support:
I would almost do transitional reading support, lower-level reading support because if we keep them at an elementary or middle school level and just teach from there, they’re never going to catch up. But extra reading and definitely writing practice - they go hand in hand. If I don’t know the language and if I’m having trouble developing my vocabulary base and my knowledge base of this language, how can I be expected to then write in it and write proficiently?

The GE teachers who participated in this study generally recalled little or no targeted professional development about teaching former ELs offered by their district or school and characterized their support of students as “figuring it out.” When asked what they believed administrators expected of them, one participant replied, “Teach them the best we can,” while others indicated that they really weren’t sure. A high school teacher reported, “As far as I know, they haven’t stated anything explicitly that we should be doing. So, I don’t think that’s one of their priorities right now.” Lorraine explained, “I think that they would want us to be as professional as possible, learn as much as we could about the student, and find ways and resources that we could support them. . . That’s what a teacher does.” She added, “You’re in a classroom and you have to figure out what every single kid needs and why somebody is failing.”

Teachers’ responses include many examples of how they had to “figure out” how to support the former ELs in their classes. Andrew stated, “I don’t know if we’re doing it the right way or the wrong way or if there is a right or wrong way.” Theo compared his work as a teacher of former ELs to that of a magician:

You know, and really the sorcery and the magic, being a magician to give them extra support but also not make them feel like they’re ostracized. And feel like they’re different, you know, like, all right guys, we're going to stop for this student because they need this
extra help. You know, you have to find a way to do both. Like give them the extra help, but also say, hey, this is our show and we're going to continue on. . . Teachers, one of the things that we have to do is – cause everything is not just hand fed and given to us - is that we have to create things on our own.

Marisol discussed many approaches that she uses to support former ELs, including leveraging their native language, providing graphic organizers for support, and working on oral language in every class. When asked what advice she would give to a GE teacher teaching former ELs for the first time, she explained that “figuring it out” is what teachers do:

I would almost say guess what? They're just kids. Think of them like a special ed kid or your lower level kids or your middle level, however you want to classify them. At the end of the day, if someone doesn't understand, you're going to find the best way to teach them. While we believe there's always a language barrier, there doesn't have to be. And even if there is a bit of one, there are resources out there and don't be afraid to ask for help. Some of us compartmentalize and we don't ask for help then you really get overwhelmed. So, I think asking for help is vital to success. Someone has resources to help.

Theo also described the challenges that many students face, such as holding a job, and the need for teachers to find ways to work around those challenges. He explained that some students work at night and may have trouble staying awake in class. “He’s sleeping cause he’s tired. He worked overnight, but he’s here, that’s step one. He’s here. Thank God he’s here. We’ll work it out.”
Comparison of GE Teachers and ESL Teachers

This study sought to investigate how the perceptions and beliefs of two different groups of teachers - GE and ESL - compared in terms of their students and their own roles as teachers. In analyzing the data from the ESL teachers’ interviews, themes emerged that had similarities to those generated by the GE teachers, but new themes also arose to answer the third and fourth research questions.

Research Question 3

An analysis of the interview data led to the identification of two distinct themes in response to the question How do GE and ESL teachers’ perceptions and beliefs about former ELs compare?

Theme 1: Concern for Student Comfort. Similar to their GE colleagues, ESL teachers emphasized the need for students to have support in getting comfortable as they transition to the GE setting. ESL teachers characterized students as often feeling intimidated and the transition period as a scary time for them. Amelia explained, “It can be intimidating. They are scared to speak. A lot of them, they're scared to read out loud. Sometimes they have to, like in a history class, they'll be afraid because of their accent or may be afraid of mispronouncing a word.” Some teachers attributed students’ fear of the new setting to not knowing GE students. Rosa, a middle school ESL teacher stated, “Their main issue is that they don’t know anyone in the class. ‘Oh, my friends are not here.’ So that is the student’s main concern.” High school ESL teacher Lawrence believes that students are not only concerned about the other students, but also about the academic work:

They're intimidated by what they're going to be reading and doing in the courses. They think - a lot of kids believe that they're going to be made fun of, for their accent - they're
not going to understand anything and they're going to be made fun of. You know, it's high school. So, a lot of it is that. You know, a lot of that is self-esteem issues of am I going to be picked on by the other kids. You know, am I going to be different from other kids in the class? Will I be able to be on par with the kids? Will I fail? There's a lot of nervousness in almost every kid.

The ESL teachers described the transition period for their former EL students as one in which they need to get “more comfortable with the classes and their teachers,” as Amelia explained. When asked what supports former ELs need as they transition to general ed classes, Grace emphasized the importance of the teacher:

Oh, it's the teacher. It's the classroom environment. Because stop and think about it. You have to go to that class every day. If you're not going to a class where you feel comfortable and you feel welcome and you feel that you can succeed. We know that from elementary kids . . . It's not difficult. I feel for kids and I let them vent. Nothing's worse than going into a classroom where you know the teacher is not thrilled about teaching you. Kids pick up on that.

Rosa expressed her belief that more experiences interacting with students in the GE classes could be beneficial:

I know that the eighth-graders, when the eighth-grade gen ed go on field trips, they're also invited or they also go with them just so they can be around English-speaking students. Maybe it makes them more comfortable. Maybe that helps them cause it's all about, for them it's more about the emotional as opposed to the academic part. Like I think that's more important to them, especially at that age.
Theme 2: Hardships and Resilience. While both groups of teachers see their EL and former EL students as hardworking and motivated, ESL teachers as a group articulated more specifically how the difficulties students have to overcome contribute to their resilience. Rosa explained:

They experienced stuff that gen ed students don't even imagine ever seeing. You know, like shot on the streets in their country and gangs and all that, crossing the border itself. You know, some students actually had to do that. So, I think they're more mature emotionally than the gen ed kids.

Amelia discussed the idea that many of her students have to work. “A lot of them work after school. They finish what they are doing and they’re running off to whatever work they need to do so. So, it’s a bit challenging.” Grace stated that the fact that many of her students have to work is “our biggest challenge.” Lawrence also referred to students’ work obligations and described how he views ELs in terms of the challenges they must overcome to make academic progress:

We don’t know how many, but many students work and . . . a lot of them actually have to pay rent. Many of our students try very hard. You know, maybe many students, gen ed, feel like this is just a thing you do, you have to go to English class, just go, you've got to pass, you know, you’ve got to pass it. These students, they earned getting there. You understand? There was nothing guaranteed about them being there. It is a mark of success, especially if they did it pretty quickly.

Grace also voiced admiration for her students’ “tenacity” and “grit.” “They just don't give up. My kids don’t give up and it’s honestly because they don’t have a choice because they know
if they give up, they’re going to get sent back and they don’t want to go back to that. So that’s what keeps them going.”

**Research Question 4**

Two themes emerged to answer the question: *How do GE and ESL teachers’ views of their roles as teachers of ELs and former ELs compare?*

**Theme 1: Nurturing and Advocating.** While both groups of participating teachers agree that an important role for GE teachers is helping former EL students get comfortable in their classes, ESL teachers often identify their own roles in a more expansive way. They see themselves acting as nurturers and advocates for their ESL students, sometimes even after students leave the ESL program. In describing their responsibilities as ESL teachers, participants often used nurturing language, referring to themselves as “caring,” “passionate,” having a “sense of purpose” and “always here to help.” High school ESL teacher Grace characterized ESL teachers as “mother hens” and Amelia described the “hand-holding” functions of ESL teachers, while Lawrence explained the transitional period like this: “They’re very nervous going in. They don’t think they can handle it. You push them out the door, out of the nest and typically they fly.”

During this transitional period, former ELs may also return to their ESL teachers for support. Amelia explained that former ELs initially need to build academic confidence and they may rely on their ESL teachers for assistance until they develop more confidence and a comfort level in going to their GE teachers. “I do tell them, build a rapport with your teacher, talk to them, let them know that you need help and go to your teacher. So, once they do that, they kind of need less or no help. But I do have some former ELs that do come in the beginning for that support.” Lawrence stated, “I’ve got a lot of students come back and talk. . . . A lot of my kids
still come back during the lunch periods and hang out in my room.” Rhoda, a middle school ESL teacher, explained,

Shortly after transitioning to general education, former ELs often visit their former ESL teachers and complain that the work in general ed classes are too difficult and ask to return to ESL classes. The visits may last for at least a month or two until the student becomes comfortable in their new environment.

Rosa described the situation in more detail:

I actually have former ELs coming into my class and they come visit me when they have lunch or in between periods. And personally, I always ask them, how are your classes going? Do you need any help anywhere? And I tell everyone who's exiting because they usually exit from my class, I tell them when you go to your class, if you need any help, if you don't understand an assignment or homework or you don't understand something, come see me, see me at your lunch, see me whenever you want and I will help you. And they do. Not a lot of them, but I do have four who I see every day. Sometimes they just even come in just to talk to me. And I have helped a couple of students, you know, cause I asked them, how are your assignments going? Oh, Miss, I don't understand my homework assignment. And I'm like, okay, take out your homework. Let's do it together.

Several teachers shared other anecdotes that demonstrated these nurturing behaviors. For example, Grace explained why she always brings extra food to school on days that follow school closures for snow:

I learned these kids aren't happy when it's going to snow. Why aren't they happy? We're going to get a snow day. For them, it was a different dynamic. Fieldview shuts down, nothing gets plowed. Their bosses tell them don't come into work. They don't get paid;
they don't get paid, they don't make rent. So, since they know they have to make rent, the money has to come from someplace and it comes out of their food budget.

In addition to the role of nurturer, ESL teachers also take on broader advocacy roles. This may be by talking with a GE teacher on behalf of an individual student or may be oriented toward school or district policy on behalf of groups of students or the bilingual/ESL program. All of the ESL teachers interviewed articulated strong opinions about academic programs for ELs and/or the school context and their roles as advocates for their students and their program.

During her interview, Amelia explained how she has initiated contact with GE teachers on behalf of students in order to support their academic progress. She has also advocated for “a better system in terms of assessing the student holistically and individually” and has, at times, made recommendations for students to exit the ESL program despite their results on the exit test. She explained that she believes that the students’ standardized test scores carry too much weight as program exit criteria and may not offer “accurate representation of the students.” She explained:

I feel that we're doing a disservice to our ESL and to our former EL population by not addressing a lot of their needs holistically. And as an individual student, I feel that it's like a cookie-cutter system that everybody falls in there and it breaks my heart to see these kids wanting to do better and be better. And I feel that we're not providing that for them because we're not doing the best that I feel that we can.

Grace described several situations in which she advocated for better learning conditions for her students, including refusing to have students sit on the floor of an overcrowded class. She explained how she spoke up when plans were being made to move the high school bilingual/ESL program from one building to another:
I still saw this as inferior and a step down and it was, the stairs were crumbling and I expressed that to [the superintendent]. I expressed the problem with the elevator. I expressed the problem with the asbestos in this building and people just don't want to come over here. We have Promethean boards and flat screen TVs over here. What are we going to have [when we move] over there? What's our technology? [A bilingual science teacher] was very, you know, adamant about what are we walking into? I don't have a lab over there. I have a state-of-the-art lab over here. What am I going to have over there? So [the superintendent] assured us that all of this was going to get fixed and a lot of it did because they have fixed the stairs. They have fixed the elevators. Rumor has it, they're putting in a kitchen, a brand-new beautiful kitchen so we can have real lunch . . . and they're trying to sneak over to the other cafeteria to get decent food or food at all cause they're running out here and it's like this is slim pickins and it's an issue with kids getting in trouble, leaving the campus or sneaking out to go get food. I spoke up.

Grace also explained why she feels she must act as an advocate in her position:

Those are the things you bring home with you about them, about the kids, and you're either going to be an advocate for your kids or you're going to show up, do what you got to do and keep it moving. And I don't pass judgment on those people, because a lot of people don't understand when you sign on to be an ESL teacher . . . you're going to have to live this job, otherwise you're not doing it the right way. You have to be passionate and you have to be the advocate for your kids because they're not going to have anybody who defends them.

High school ESL teacher Lawrence also described two ways in which ESL teachers advocated for specific programs to better meet student needs. First, he explained how teachers’
advocacy led to reinstituting an alternative school program that would benefit students who needed to work while they attend school.

To us, we thought, well, it's unfair to demand kids work full time to pay rent and then come in here and then not let them graduate cause of attendance. And now we've sort of equalized that. Well, they have options, so it is on them. You know, we can still provide an education, we don't have to water down the rules as much as we used to, so we've held kids to a higher standard, and we've seen the attendance rates are very high. Students get more support services, more psychological counseling.

Second, because the program offered much needed services that were not available previously, Lawrence was better able to play an advocacy role for a student in distress by recommending her for a counseling program that was tailored to her needs.

I'm like, okay, let's go get you some counseling. I recommended her, you know, spoke to her father. And you know that it happens a lot. I feel like the year before, that student would have just stopped coming in. But now, I had a place I could send her, there were people that spoke Spanish for her and other kids to talk to. So those kinds of services that we've always felt, well we don't know what to do or you could send her there but they don't speak Spanish. So . . . this has been a big success.

In keeping with their advocacy role, ESL teachers offered many suggestions for providing support to ELs as they transition to GE classes. Grace reiterated the importance of the teacher. “If they are placed with the right teacher, they’ll do well. And by the right teacher, I mean someone who is either trained in ESL strategies or someone who is receptive to having them in their classroom.” Lawrence discussed both what ESL teachers can do to prepare students and what GE teachers can do to support them as they transition. He suggested that ESL teachers
“sit in on an English class so you can let them know that this is the end goal, this is the end game. Here’s where you want to get them. How can we structure our class to be more aligned with that?” He recommended that GE teachers create supports for vocabulary development and use approaches such as visuals, audio, and other differentiation tools. He also suggested “a survey or something that we can all see and share with their [students] experiences going from one to the other.” Rosa provides transitional support in her ESL classroom by exposing her students to authors that students will encounter in GE classes, such as Poe and Dickinson, and by teaching her students “how to create a five-paragraph essay.” She recommends that GE teachers be “a little bit lenient” at first with students’ spelling and grammar and “give them time to adjust.”

**Theme 2: Lack of Collaboration.** Both GE and ESL teachers expressed a desire to collaborate with one another and acknowledged the benefits of doing so. ESL teacher, Amelia, explained that in the past she has exchanged curriculum ideas with GE teachers. “So, I tried to see, okay, this is what you are working on in your classroom, so I can reinforce it in my classroom.” She noted that students observed the similarities in what they were doing in the two classrooms. GE history teacher Lorraine also said she has collaborated with ESL teachers in the past by “talking about the students’ strengths, where there are areas where they may need more reinforcement and review.” Both of these teachers, along with their colleagues, explained that this collaboration is not happening as frequently now or not at all.

At Fieldview High School, both groups of teachers mentioned that having most of the ESL and bilingual teachers and students operating out of a separate building is one reason for the diminishing collaboration. When asked why he thought there wasn’t more collaboration, high school English teacher David stated, “The fact that we are in two different buildings.” ESL
teacher Lawrence explained, “the nature of having two buildings now makes it very difficult to see each other. I wish I could give you a lengthy answer, but at the end of the day, it’s out of sight out of mind.” Lawrence went on to say, “I wish we could be physically closer, in more proximity to discuss curriculum and align more.” Although he believed that interaction between the two departments would be beneficial, nothing was formally structured to support collaboration and informal collaboration is diminished since teachers do not see one another during the course of the school day.

Although middle school teachers indicated that some collaboration is taking place, they also explained that no formal, structured opportunities exist. Middle school social studies teacher Andrew described the kinds of interactions he has with teachers in the ESL/bilingual department:

I've gone to the bilingual social studies teacher just to find out her pacing and where she is. Students that have exited, I've asked her does she know anything about them if they're struggling. Is it that the language is holding them back or is it that they were just not a participating student? I've talked to the SLA [Spanish Language Arts] teacher. So, I would often go and ask her just in general about students.

Andrew also explained that the bilingual social studies teacher is part of his common planning group, but that there is no formal structure in place for teachers to use this time to specifically discuss former ELs. Middle school ESL teacher Rosa stated that she does not really see the GE teachers that often, “but when they do have a problem with a student, if they’re not sure if it’s language or not, they email me or they call me and then we have a discussion.”

Teachers in both groups pointed out that whatever collaboration is taking place relies mostly on established relationships between individual teachers. ESL teacher Grace said that she sometimes texts a GE English teacher “to check on certain kids for me” and “because I’m friends
with Ms. Taylor, I'll check on certain kids who were my kids previously.” She added, “The only person that I’ve collaborated with because we found out completely by accident was Ms. Malone because again, we’re friends outside of school and we found out that there’s a group of freshmen that I have second period [and] she has all of them for English.” History teacher Theo also referred to existing relationships as a prerequisite for any informal collaboration.

For me personally, I have a good relationship with some teachers because I used to teach in the old building and so I have friends who teach ELs and former ELs, well primarily ELs now, you know, I have them now. So, a lot of times I'll just ask them what are they doing.

Theo developed some collegial relationships with ESL and bilingual teachers when their classrooms were in the same building and, as a result, he continues to interact with them about students and curriculum. When asked, he affirmed that this is not the result of any structured, planned collaboration, but is an “informal thing. And that's based upon my relationship with my coworkers versus something that is structured.”

Quantitative Data Analysis

Research Question 5

Using the Sheltered Instruction Observation components as codes, I correlated the participant interview responses with the observation transcripts and artifacts to answer the fifth research question: How do general education teachers’ perceptions and beliefs about former ELs correlate with their classroom practices?

Total Sheltered Instruction Scores

Using the IBM SPSS Statistics program, a correlation analysis was conducted with the set of participants’ total interview scores (n = 7) and the set of participants’ total observation/artifact
scores \((n = 7)\) to determine if a relationship existed between the participants’ beliefs about the academic needs of former ELs and their observed classroom practices. (See Table 2.) The possible scores for each interview and observation were 0 to 20, with 0 indicating that none of the 20 sheltered instruction features were present and 20 indicating all features were noted. Interview scores were obtained by coding interview transcripts, while observation/artifact scores were obtained by coding observation transcripts and artifacts for evidence of the sheltered instruction components. The correlation analysis demonstrated that this relationship was weak \((r = .20)\), indicating that teachers in the sample rarely acted in alignment with their expressed beliefs in their classroom practices.

With the assignment of each code representing one sheltered instruction feature, results for individual participants’ interview data indicated that participants reported using one to seven sheltered instruction features. Results of individual observation/artifact data analysis indicated that participants were observed using between 10 and 17 sheltered instruction features. Individual differences between participant reported use of sheltered instruction features and observed sheltered instruction features ranged from a low of five to a high of 12, with the greater number always associated with the observation data (see Table 2).

**Table 2**

*Sheltered Instruction Scores by Participant*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Theo</th>
<th>Carol</th>
<th>Andrew</th>
<th>Marisol</th>
<th>David</th>
<th>Lorraine</th>
<th>Peter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ob/Artifact</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Individual Sheltered Instruction Features

To answer research question five, How do general education teachers’ perceptions and beliefs about former ELs correlate with their classroom practices?, I analyzed the correlation between the set of participants’ total interview scores and the set of values for each sheltered instruction feature observed across all participants to determine if a relationship existed between participants’ overall beliefs about former ELs and their implementation of specific sheltered instruction features in their lessons. The correlation analysis showed strong positive relationships ($r = .829, .760$) between higher interview scores and the use of three of the sheltered instruction features in the observed lessons: links to students’ backgrounds, links to past learning, and the use of appropriate speech indicating that participants who reported using more sheltered instruction features were associated with the use of these three features. Higher interview scores also correlated negatively with the use of intentional grouping ($r = -.760$; See Table 3.) indicating that participants who reported using more sheltered instruction features were not associated with the use of intentional grouping.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sheltered Instruction Feature Observed</th>
<th>Pearson’s r</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Links to background (BK_O)</td>
<td>.829*</td>
<td>Very strong correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links to past learning (PL_O)</td>
<td>.760*</td>
<td>Very strong correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate speech (SP_O)</td>
<td>.760*</td>
<td>Very strong correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentional grouping (GR_O)</td>
<td>-.760*</td>
<td>Very strong correlation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
To further answer research question five, a correlation analysis was also conducted with the two sets of scores across participants for each sheltered instruction feature to determine if, and to what extent, teachers’ beliefs were associated with their observed practice for any specific features. Since the analysis involved cross-tabulated table data in which both variables are dichotomous, the strength of association was determined by finding the phi correlation coefficient. The only strong relationship revealed between interview responses and observation of the same feature was for clarifying techniques (CL) \((r = .750)\), indicating a strong relationship between participants’ interview responses about using clarifying techniques in their lessons and the observation of teachers’ use of these techniques.

Although the only sheltered instruction feature that was found to have a strong correlation between expressed beliefs and actual practice was that of using clarifying techniques, several strong relationships were found across features. These included very strong correlations between teachers who said they believed the use of a students’ first language (L1) is an appropriate instructional support for former ELs and their use of links to past learning (PL_O) \((r = 1.00)\), appropriate speech (SP_O) \((r = 1.00)\), and intentional grouping (GR_O) \((r = -1.00)\) in the observed lessons. The correlation for the first two features (PL_O and SP_O) is positive, while the relationship with intentional grouping is negative. (See Table 4.)

Table 4

*Correlation of Select Sheltered Instruction Observation Data with Teachers’ Beliefs in Use of L1*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sheltered instruction feature</th>
<th>Phi coefficient ((r))</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Links to past learning (PL_O)</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>Very strong correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate speech (SP_O)</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>Very strong correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentional grouping (GR_O)</td>
<td>-1.000</td>
<td>Very strong correlation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Finally, to further answer research question five, (How do general education teachers’ perceptions and beliefs about former ELs correlate with their classroom practices?), I analyzed the data related to the four features of sheltered instruction that directly apply to the tenets of Sociocultural Theory: (a) intentional grouping, (b) interaction and discussion, (c) application activities, and (d) student use of L1. Table 5 displays occurrences of these four features as coded across all GE teacher participants’ interviews and observations and analyzed for agreement. The first feature of intentional grouping (GR) occurred in two teacher interviews and was observed in a third teacher’s lesson, indicating disagreement (Cohen’s kappa = -0.2353). In observation data, the code DISC, for student interaction and discussion, occurred for all seven GE participants in this study, but only occurred within three participants’ interview data (Cohen’s kappa= 0.0000), while application activities (APP) were coded in none of the interview data, but occurred in five participants’ lessons (Cohen’s kappa = 0.000). These results indicate disagreement for these two categories. Lastly, six interviews included the L1 code, referring to student use of their first language, while only one observation transcript yielded this code (Cohen’s kappa = 0.0541). This last category is interpreted as having slight agreement.

Table 5

Agreement of Sheltered Instruction Codes in Interviews (I) and Observations (O)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>GR(I)</th>
<th>GR(O)</th>
<th>DISC(I)</th>
<th>DISC(O)</th>
<th>APP(I)</th>
<th>APP(O)</th>
<th>L1(I)</th>
<th>L1(O)</th>
<th>Total Simple Agreement</th>
<th>Cohen’s Kappa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andrew</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>0/4 (0%)</td>
<td>-1.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carol</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>1/4 (25%)</td>
<td>-0.5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>2/4 (50%)</td>
<td>0.2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lorraine</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>3/4 (75%)</td>
<td>0.5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Code Duration</td>
<td>Cohen's Kappa</td>
<td>Simple Agreement</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marisol</td>
<td>N  N  Y  Y  N  Y  Y  N</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter</td>
<td>N  N  Y  Y  N  Y  Y  N</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theo</td>
<td>Y  N  N  Y  N  N  Y  N</td>
<td>1/4</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>-0.5000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Simple Agreement: 57.14% 42.86% 28.57% 28.57% 39.28%

Note. Y = code occurred in transcript or artifact; N = code did not occur in transcript or artifact; I = interview; O = class observation; GR = Intentional grouping; DISC = Interaction and discussion; APP = application activities; L1 = student use of first language
CHAPTER V

Discussion

The current study was the first to explore teachers’ beliefs and perceptions of their former EL students, their roles as teachers, and to what extent their beliefs and perceptions were enacted in their classes. Qualitative data from interviews with GE and ESL teachers were analyzed to answer four of the research questions that guided this study. Complementary preliminary quantitative data were collected from interviews and from class observations and artifacts. A correlation analysis of these data sets was conducted in order to determine the relationship, if any, between the beliefs teachers expressed regarding instructional supports for former ELs and their actual instructional practices. This chapter presents a discussion of the findings within the context of previous research and the theoretical framework that guided this study. Implications for policy, practice, and future research are discussed, followed by study limitations.

Summary of Findings

This section discusses the qualitative and quantitative findings as they relate to each of the research questions. Where there is a lack of previous research on former ELs, I compared the findings in the current study with those of previous research studies related to ELs. Findings overall indicated that GE teachers have positive perceptions of former ELs, but do not see their academic needs as being different from other students. They use instructional strategies that they believe are effective for all students and, in general, may not be aware of the potential needs of former ELs for continued support of English language development. As a result, teachers may not intentionally plan or implement specific approaches for the purpose of promoting former ELLs’ academic and language development.
GE Teachers’ Perceptions of Former ELs

The first theme that emerged from the data was teacher characterization of former ELs as “motivated and hardworking.” Participants perceived this group of students as eager to learn, motivated to succeed, and willing to put effort into their schoolwork. Although findings in the current study are the first evidence related to teacher perceptions regarding former ELs, this finding can be situated in the mixed findings from the prior literature about GE teacher perceptions of EL students. For example, prior studies found that teachers’ beliefs about ELs’ academic ability and potential were mixed, with GE teacher beliefs categorized either as neutral or negative (Lucas et al., 2015; Walker et al. 2004), or that teachers believed that ELs were hardworking and motivated (Cho & Christenbury, 2009; Harklau, 2000). Findings from Harklau et al. (2000) in particular resonate with the findings of the present study, as the GE teachers in the Harklau study expressed the sentiment that ELs were “hardworking, highly motivated students who had triumphed over adversity” (Harklau, 2000, p.46) and described the students positively even when their academic performance was wanting. Harklau viewed this inconsistent thinking as reinforcement of stereotypical, idealized views of model immigrant students, which downplayed areas of academic concern. Even though they were aware of gaps in students’ learning and skills that needed improvement, teachers continued to frame ELs as good students, which may have contributed to students’ own limited understanding of their academic needs.

Teachers in the current study did take note of former ELs who did not fit the perceived overall positive norm, but these examples were outweighed by the preponderance of comments and anecdotes that portrayed former ELs as dedicated and motivated students. Although students may work hard and show enthusiasm about school work, it cannot be confirmed that they are also making appropriate academic progress without examining student data or interviewing
students; however, several teachers explicitly stated their perception that many former ELLs outperform their other GE students. This perception is in keeping with the actual reported achievement levels of former ELs in previous studies, which demonstrated that former ELs caught up to their peers and in some cases outperformed them in both reading and math (Ardasheva et al., 2012; Huang, Davis, & Ngamsomjan, 2017; Kim & Herman, 2012). Occurrences of former ELL students excelling academically, beyond the average performance of other GE students, further solidified GE teachers’ overall views of former ELs as motivated, hardworking students in this study.

The perception held by GE teachers in this study that former ELs are generally motivated and hardworking may be influenced by the culture and context of the school and district. With a well-developed district-wide ESL and Bilingual program and a performance requirement on a standardized test to exit the program, GE teachers may see former ELs as having earned their places in GE classes through their own motivation and hard work. Likewise, the varied findings in previous studies on ELs could be a function of the various settings. Like the students in the Harklau (2000) study, ELs and former ELs may find themselves perceived differently according to the culture of each particular school or district. In addition, ELs may be perceived as deficient, having not yet qualified for reclassification, while former ELs, having achieved the necessary standard for reclassification, may be held in higher esteem for their accomplishment. Teachers’ positive perceptions of former EL students may also be reinforced by the students’ own perceptions of themselves as successful and the ways in which the students enact their self-images. Several teachers alluded to the pride students have in their accomplishments and attainment of reclassification. The way students conduct themselves as a result of these feelings
of pride and success may contribute to the way teachers view them and observe their motivation and hard work.

Teachers also identified as strengths students’ bilingualism and multicultural perspectives, citing their linguistic skills and more global views of the world as assets for both classroom and career. Participants expressed their admiration of students’ bilingualism and their beliefs that former ELs may have more mature perspectives than other students due to their knowledge and experiences of other cultures. Previous research regarding teachers’ views on use of students’ first language (L1) in the general education setting is mixed, with some regarding it as a positive resource for learning (Cho & Christenbury, 2010; Karabenick & Noda, 2004) and others viewing it as an obstacle to acquisition of English (Mellom et al, 2018; Reeves, 2006). Cho & Christenbury (2010) also found that teachers viewed cultural differences between themselves and their students to be less challenging than other factors, even though students’ cultures may be incongruent with mainstream school culture. Research conducted in New York City schools with high populations of English learners found that successful schools centered students’ ethnolinguistic identities and supported the use of their bilingualism in the classroom in flexible ways (Garcia et al, 2013). The generally positive views of students’ linguistic and cultural differences expressed by participants in this study suggest that, unlike teachers who have negative attitudes toward ELs (Mellom et al., 2018), they may be better positioned to implement the culturally responsive pedagogical practices that would further support their former EL students (Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1995).

While acknowledging and appreciating former ELs’ differences, GE teachers in the current study often viewed former ELs as no different from other students in terms of what they need, both socially and academically. This finding is reflected in the theme “similarity in
Participants observed that their former ELL students were just like other GE students in two major ways: (a) the need to fit in socially and (b) their varied academic needs. In general, participants identified former ELs’ need to feel comfortable with other students in the class to be an important social need. Although there is no previous research that addresses teachers’ perceptions of the needs of former ELs, findings from research related to LLs are similar to the current finding - that GE teachers perceived the social needs of their EL students to be comparable to those of non-EL students (Karabenick & Noda, 2004). This finding is not surprising given the importance of fitting in socially to young people at this stage of development, however, former ELs may have a more difficult time due to their cultural and linguistic differences. It is important to consider this issue, especially given the demographics of the setting of the study. Fieldview is a district that has gradually shifted from a majority African-American student population to a majority Hispanic student population over the past twenty years. Although the majority of ELs and former ELs in this district are Spanish-speaking, students come from Mexico and many different countries in Central America, South America, and the Caribbean, as well as a variety of settings, including rural and urban. Some speak an indigenous language, such as K’iche, rather than Spanish. Students who are ELs also include those from countries in Africa, Asia, and Europe. Although the population of GE students includes many students with a Hispanic cultural background, many are first or second generation American-born, and it cannot be assumed that they share common linguistic or cultural traits with recent former ELs. It stands to reason, then, that former ELs may draw attention from other students due to linguistic and cultural differences. This adjustment may be more pronounced for former ELs as they move from classes in which all students are English learners to the general education context. Despite this context, given that the majority of former ELs are Spanish-
speaking and the majority of the GE population is Hispanic, teachers may believe that former
ELs have some similarities to other students linguistically and culturally, resulting in their
perception that their needs are similar.

The findings of this study indicate that teachers hold a wide range of perspectives about
the academic needs of former ELs. Although previous research found that GE teachers often
view ELs as academically deficient (Olsen, 2010; Murphy & Torff, 2019; Russell, 2012),
teachers in the current study believed that the varied academic needs of former ELLs were no
different than the needs of all their students and could be addressed with the same differentiation
strategies they employ with their other GE students. Most participating teachers acknowledged
that former ELs need instructional support, but they generally did not explicitly link these needs
to language development, instead comparing their needs with those of other lower performing
students or students with classified special needs. On the other hand, a few teachers did connect
students’ varied academic needs with their English language development. In fact, despite
teachers’ stated beliefs that former ELs were generally motivated and hardworking, and while
explicitly expressing their positive attitudes about students’ bilingualism, participants in this
study sometimes cited students’ lower English proficiency as the reason why former ELs could
not engage in more rigorous academic work. In this way, contrary to other assertions they made
about students’ capabilities, teachers at times viewed students’ developing bilingualism as a
deficit, one that signaled their lack of readiness or ability to engage in learning activities that
require critical thinking.

Despite seeing students’ bilingualism as an asset, some participants still described
students’ needs as being the same as their other GE students. Others described students’ needs as
addressing deficiencies in English, rather than supporting continued English language
development. One participant characterized former ELs’ bilingualism as inconsequential to their academic needs. This wide variation in beliefs and perceptions among this small sample may be the result of an absence of training and guidance from school and district leaders, as well as a lack of collaboration with ESL teachers, about how best to support former ELs’ academic and linguistic growth within the GE classroom context. As there is no prior research related to GE teachers’ views of the needs of former EL students, we can look to previous studies related to GE teachers and ELs for some idea as to how specific training might impact teachers’ beliefs and practice. Such studies have shown that this type of training for GE teachers is often missing, but when it takes place, teachers self-report improved preparedness and effectiveness (Coady et al., 2011; Karabenick & Noda, 2004; Reeves, 2006). Therefore, it could be that similar training would result in more positive perceptions of former ELs’ bilingualism while providing teachers with the knowledge and skills they need to effectively support students’ academic and language development needs. Learning about the process of second language acquisition, developing greater cultural and linguistic understanding of their former EL students, and acquiring the skills and resources to support students’ academic and linguistic development might result in more intentional, consistent, and effective practices for teaching former ELs.

Finally, the theme “discomfort in the classroom” reflects GE teachers’ perceptions that former ELs are uncomfortable when they first come into GE classes. Although no previous research has been conducted with former ELs, prior studies with ELs emphasize the importance of positive teacher beliefs, an understanding of English learners, and knowledge of SLA pedagogy in order to create a positive learning environment (Diaz et al., 2016; Kolano & King, 2015; Salerno & Kibler, 2013). Teachers in the current study described how students were shy, quiet, and reluctant to speak in class. Some teachers attributed this discomfort to the fact that the
students did not have any friends in the class. They also indicated that the transitioning students may have concerns about being ridiculed due to their accent or developing language proficiency. Teachers attributed this “shyness” to ESL students’ segregation from the GE population and lack of interaction with native English speakers prior to their reclassification, which can result in a lack of social connections with the GE students.

It is unclear whether GE teachers view former ELs’ discomfort as stemming primarily from their English language proficiency or from other social emotional factors, such as a lack of relationships with other students or concerns about academic demands. Regardless of the cause of students’ discomfort, it is important to consider whether teachers’ perceptions of former ELs as being uncomfortable contribute to their view of them as “lower learners”. This perception may result in former ELs being placed in lower tier groups simply because of perceived language deficits. If language support is recognized as a student need, appropriate approaches such as use of L1 resources, bilingual peer partnerships, text translations and the like would be applied. Students should not be assigned less rigorous work simply as a result of a language need. This situation raises issues regarding equitable access to the curriculum for former ELs and echoes the findings of previous studies of English learners, which have determined that teachers may not believe that a rigorous curriculum is appropriate for ELs or may believe that ELs cannot handle activities that require critical thinking (Olsen, 2010; Riley, 2015; Russell, 2012; Walker et al., 2004; Yoon, 2008). The findings of the present study raise the concern that this belief may carry over to former ELs as well.

**GE Teachers Make Sense of their Roles**

Two themes emerged that explained how GE teachers made sense of their roles as teachers of former ELLs. First, within the theme “Alleviating Discomfort,” GE teachers saw
themselves inhabiting the primary role of helping students feel comfortable in their classes. Although this phenomenon has not been previously investigated for former ELs, the finding in the current study is similar to prior research with GE teachers of ELs, which found that helping students feel comfortable was a key element of teachers’ identity (Martin, 2018). Teachers in the current study connected students’ discomfort to their English proficiency, even though students may speak well and have a good understanding of the language. Participants voiced concern about students being embarrassed or feeling ostracized and expressed a desire to help students become comfortable and “fit in” with their peers.

Similar to the findings of Martin (2018), teachers discussed students’ discomfort in terms of fitting in both socially and linguistically, but prioritized easing students’ social emotional needs over supporting their language development needs. This may be connected to teachers’ lack of knowledge and training regarding former ELs and their perception that the needs of former ELs are similar to those of other GE students. Participants reported performing this role of alleviating discomfort by integrating students into the class through matching them up with a bilingual peer, adjusting seating arrangements, or providing low-risk opportunities to speak in class, approaches that may also support language development if applied with that intention. Hence, although GE teachers provided language support for the purpose of making students more comfortable, it is not clear that they provided this support with the purposeful intention of addressing students’ academic language development. GE teachers are not likely to be knowledgeable about the specific methodology for using these approaches most effectively to support students’ linguistic progress due to the lack of training, collaboration, or other professional development activities connected to the teaching of former ELs. As a result, their approaches for alleviating students’ discomfort may unintentionally match up, at least
superficially, with approaches that can be effective in supporting linguistic development; however, without intentionality, the design of the task or strategy will not be focused on language development and so cannot have maximum effectiveness. For example, providing low-risk opportunities to participate verbally can support language development, if the activities involve meaningful tasks and chances to engage in informal, academic discussion and collaboration. If the low-risk opportunity to speak in class consists of a prepared and practiced statement, it may boost the student’s confidence in contributing in that limited way, but it may not add to the student’s growth in meaningful, communicative language production. It is important that teachers understand how students acquire the second language and then use that knowledge to intentionally plan tasks and activities that will be most effective in contributing to language development.

The GE teachers who participated in this study also emphasized that former ELs could be made to feel more comfortable if they were not treated differently. Although they were aware that students needed additional instructional support, they expressed concern that students would feel more uncomfortable if it were obvious that they were getting this additional support. Participants indicated that students needed to feel comfortable first and then academic support that did not draw undue attention to them could come into play. This concern about not treating former ELs differently from other students could discourage teachers from using differentiated approaches that would be more effective for former ELs. This finding fits in with previous themes in which teachers emphasized the similarities between former ELs and GE students and expressed concern about students discomfort in the classroom.

Second, within the theme “Figuring it Out,” GE teachers see themselves as being responsible for figuring out what students need to succeed in GE classes and they take
responsibility for supporting former EL students’ academic and social-emotional needs. Although there is no research that investigates teachers’ perceptions about their responsibility for teaching former ELs, these findings controvert those from previous research about teachers of ELs, which showed that GE teachers may not see a role for themselves in supporting ELs, believing that support for second language acquisition is the province of ESL teachers (Olsen, 2010; Russell, 2012; Walker et al., 2004; Yoon, 2008). However, most participants did not explicitly mention the need to provide support for language development, focusing instead on helping students understand content through peer support, which most likely would include translation, and the translated texts that are available in some instructional programs. This is an important distinction which indicates that, although participants are willing to “figure out” what students need, they may not draw the conclusion that students need specific types of instructional support in order to continue to develop the academic language they need to succeed. This is not surprising given that teachers in this study did not recall participating in significant professional development activities or receiving guidance specific to the instruction of former ELs provided by their school or district. This is noteworthy in a district that includes about 1,670 former ELs or almost 21% of the student population. Given this context, the onus is on GE teachers to determine what is best for the former ELs in their classes and may explain why they often utilize the same instructional strategies and resources with former ELs as they do with other students who need academic support.

**How GE and ESL Teachers’ Perceptions and Beliefs Compare**

Interview data from matching questions for both GE teachers and ESL generated two themes. First, within the theme “Concern for Student Comfort,” ESL teachers concurred with their GE counterparts in identifying the importance of students’ comfort level in the classroom.
This finding is consistent with one aspect of Krashen’s Monitor Theory of SLA, the Affective Filter Hypothesis, which suggests that students who are comfortable in the classroom will acquire language more readily (VanPatten & Williams, 2015). While both groups of teachers expressed their belief that students need to feel comfortable in class in order to achieve academic success, GE teachers framed students’ discomfort as shyness or reluctance to participate and ESL teachers described it in stronger terms – as feelings of intimidation or fear. These two groups of teachers may attribute students’ discomfort differently due to their own experiences within the school. GE teachers may assume that former ELs, transitioning from a nurturing environment that some characterize as “isolating,” will naturally experience some social adjustment as they encounter unfamiliar peers, teachers, and academic routines. ESL teachers, who may be more aware of discriminatory incidents or negative teacher attitudes towards former ELs, also may have more personal knowledge of students’ fears. For example, ESL teachers noted that they were aware of which GE teachers were more open to working with English learners. In this way, ESL teachers’ personal knowledge of their students’ circumstances may intensify their perceptions of how uncomfortable students are.

The second theme, “Resilience and Hardships,” emerged from ESL teachers’ views of their students’ responses in the face of great hardships. Although GE teachers perceived students as hardworking and motivated, ESL teachers considered their students' characters in light of the specific challenges they have had to overcome and continue to endure. These findings are in keeping with previous research, which demonstrated that ESL teachers are acutely aware of the daily challenges students face in their home, school, and work lives (Trickett et al., 2012). Although some GE teachers also acknowledged the overall challenges that former ELLs faced, ESL teachers discussed these issues in more detail. This is likely due to ESL teachers’ more
intimate knowledge of students’ cultures, backgrounds, and experiences. Since students are in the ESL program for multiple years, sharing classes with many of the same students and often with the same teacher for more than one year, there may be more of a feeling of community among teachers and students, which engenders more intimate knowledge of the details of students’ family lives, economics, and out-of-school experiences. ESL teachers also may have a stronger bond with their students as they help them navigate the unfamiliar territory of American education. To some degree, ESL students may feel more dependent on their teachers until they acquire a level of English that allows them to understand and communicate their needs in the dominant language of the school community. This dependence may further strengthen their relationship as ESL teachers support their students’ language development and eventual transition into GE classes. In this way, ESL teachers have knowledge of the hardships that students have faced and an understanding of the resilience and determination that were needed to overcome them.

**How GE and ESL Teachers View their Roles**

Parallel questions in interviews with GE and ESL teachers generated two themes relevant to teachers’ perceptions of their roles: “Nurturing and Advocating” and “Lack of Collaboration.” First, ESL teachers saw themselves as nurturers and advocates for their students while GE teachers saw their role as providing transitional support. Although GE teachers recommended more formal, structural support for former ELs as they transition into GE classes, they did not express taking any action to advocate for this. ESL teachers, on the other hand, communicated feelings of empowerment to act on behalf of their students in advocating for learning conditions and organizational changes. This finding is consistent with previous research that centers the role of advocacy within ESL teachers’ practice (Trickett et al., 2012; Linville, 2020). Given ESL
teachers’ deep understanding of their students’ backgrounds and experiences both inside and outside of school, and their up-close perspective on the challenges students face, it is not surprising that ESL teachers characterized themselves as nurturers and advocates and referred to their students as “my kids” and “our kids” in a way that communicated the existence of close and personal relationships with them.

Second, both groups acknowledged “lack of collaboration” between GE and ESL teachers as detracting from transitional support for former ELLs, while the benefits of professional collaboration between ESL and GE teachers is well documented (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010; Martin-Beltran & Peercy, 2014; Peercy et al., 2015 Russell, 2012). Teachers discussed the obstacles to collaboration, including lack of proximity to one another and the absence of dedicated time within the school schedule for such meetings. Developing sustainable collaborative practices without supportive structures is unlikely. With both groups of teachers recognizing the benefits of collaboration to both teachers and students, it is worthwhile noting that neither group referred to any requests they had made to school or district leaders to support these collaborations in their schools or the district. This may speak to school cultures that value teacher autonomy over collaboration, even though teachers recounted instances of professional collaboration when a collegial relationship already existed or when the teachers’ classrooms were in close proximity. It may also be the case that, without guidance or encouragement from any formal authority, teachers are not motivated to prioritize this type of collaboration.

**Correlation between Teachers’ Stated Beliefs and Observed Practice**

A correlation analysis of interview and observation data demonstrated a weak relationship \( r = .20 \) between what teachers stated they believed were beneficial instructional strategies for former ELs and what was observed through lessons and artifacts. Research on the
connection between teacher beliefs and practices is mixed, with some studies demonstrating an influence of beliefs on practices, and others concluding that teacher practices are often misaligned with their stated beliefs (Buehl & Beck, 2015). The data from the current study indicated that teachers used more approaches that would benefit former ELs in their lessons than what they articulated in their interviews. This may be because teachers are not aware that certain instructional strategies support former ELs, but they routinely use these strategies for all their students. This seems likely based on other beliefs that GE teachers communicated in their interviews, such as the idea that former ELs are not much different than other students and that their needs are similar to the needs of other students. GE teachers may unknowingly use effective strategies and resources for former ELs because they are the same strategies and resources they use for all their general education students. This brings us to the question: When GE teachers state that a specific instructional practice is effective for former ELs, is that practice observed in a lesson?

A strong positive relationship between beliefs and practice was found for only one sheltered instruction feature: using clarifying techniques. Clarifying techniques include modeling, demonstrations, and the use of visuals and gestures, among other supports for aiding student understanding. Since these clarifying techniques are common pedagogical approaches, this finding is consistent with the idea that GE teachers use the same approaches for former ELs as they do for other students.

Other correlations were found between teachers’ stated beliefs in student use of their first language and three other sheltered instruction features in observed lessons (see Table 4). The relationship between belief in students’ use of their first language (L1) and the use of appropriate speech and language is understandable, since these two features are complementary and address
the need to provide comprehensible speech and texts for students. Although only one participant who expressed a belief in students’ use of L1 was observed using that feature in a lesson, all the participants who expressed this belief used appropriate speech. They also provided links to past learning. Again, these two strategies are common pedagogical approaches and participants may implement them for the benefit of all students. A more interesting correlation is the negative relationship between teachers’ belief in the use of L1 and the use of intentional grouping schemes. The lone teacher to deny the benefits of students’ use of L1 was also the only teacher to be observed implementing an intentional grouping plan, in which students were paired based on their proficiency levels. Some teachers who see the value in students’ use of their first language may not routinely group students in a structured way based on their needs and the requirements of the instructional task and, therefore, may not recognize the value of students’ use of academic language to accomplish a collaborative task.

Finally, by examining the occurrence of the four sheltered instruction features that closely relate to the sociocultural theory of SLA, we can consider the intentionality of teachers’ use of these approaches to support former ELs. Table 5 documents the assignment of the four codes that represent the use of social interactions along with use of content knowledge, concepts, and language, as these are effective approaches for supporting second language acquisition. Sociocultural theory proposes that these features are effective when they are purposeful and intentionally planned around meaningful concepts and tasks. Through this lens, the appearance of these features in interview and observation data can be compared in order to draw some conclusions about the degree of intentionality demonstrated by teachers.

When comparing interview and observation data for these sheltered instruction codes, inconsistencies are evident between what teachers stated and what was observed in their practice,
as demonstrated by Cohen’s kappa values from 0.0000 to -0.2353, indicating disagreement. In some cases, teachers were observed using sheltered instruction features even when they did not identify those features as approaches that could be useful in supporting former ELs. For example, even though all seven GE teachers in this study provided opportunities for students to interact with one another and/or the teacher through informal discussions or collaborations, only three of them identified discussion as a method they used to support former ELs. This implies that the other four teachers included this instructional element, but did not intend for it to be a support for former ELs. Likewise, five participants implemented application activities in their observed lessons, but none of them stated that they used this approach to support former ELs. These results show that teachers are not aware that some of the instructional strategies they already use in their classes can be leveraged to provide more purposeful support to former ELs. Conversely, six of the participants stated that students using their first language is a beneficial approach, but only one of them was observed implementing this support in class. Perhaps teachers assume that students could use this support on their own by consulting with a bilingual peer or using a translation dictionary. Another possibility is that the teachers did not see use of the L1 as needed in the specific classes that were observed. It may also be the case that teachers do not have the knowledge or resources to implement this feature. It is also surprising that only two participants named intentional grouping as an effective support for ELs. Neither of these two teachers were observed implementing intentional grouping, but another teacher that did not report using intentional grouping was observed using it. Since grouping students for collaborative tasks is a well-known effective instructional model, and teachers generally indicated that they used the same strategies for former ELs as they used for all their students, it is unexpected that this approach was only observed in one of the seven classes and only mentioned by two other
This raises questions about what instructional features these GE teachers value and implement routinely and how closely aligned, or not, their typical instructional methodology is with the sheltered instruction features.

As the correlation analysis demonstrated, there does not appear to be a strong relationship between teachers’ stated beliefs and their practices regarding the support of former ELs. Based on SCT, these four features of sheltered instruction provide an opportunity for GE teachers to improve the learning conditions for former ELs in their classes.

Previous research has shown that teachers’ beliefs can be correlated with instructional effectiveness and student achievement (Archambault, Janosz, & Chouinard, 2012; Hertzog, 2011; Richardson, 1996; Schmid, 2018; Tang, Lee, & Chun, 2012). Although it is widely held that teachers’ beliefs impact their practice, researchers also acknowledge that various contexts may hinder implementation of practices that align with their beliefs (Fives & Buehl, 2012). Examining the various forces that may contribute to teachers’ instructional decision-making can lead to a better understanding of how to support teachers in making effective choices in their practice.

Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model (Bronfenbrenner, 1989, 2005) provides a framework for examining the internal and external conditions that influence teachers’ beliefs and practices about their students and teaching and learning. Although the study was underpowered, preliminary correlation analysis demonstrated a weak relationship between participants’ expressed beliefs and their observed practices. Bronfenbrenner offers a multi-level model with which to consider the contextual interactions that may impact this relationship. First, an individual’s own internal beliefs may be impacted through new knowledge and experiences gained by the individual, as well as by self-reflective practices. GE teachers’ experiences with
former ELLs, therefore, may cause them to decide not to implement certain practices even though they believe they are effective. As they reflect on their practice and examine student results, they may also adjust their beliefs. Next, at the classroom or school level, teachers may be impacted by other teachers and school administrators. In the present study, participants indicated that they received no specific direction regarding how to plan instruction for former ELs. They also generally did not collaborate with ESL teachers. This lack of direction and absence of access to more knowledgeable peers could cause GE teachers to be unsure of what practices to implement, or they may interpret the lack of guidance to mean that instructional planning for former ELs is not important. At the next levels, teachers’ beliefs and practices could be impacted by district, state, or national policies. For example, if the district adopted an instructional model for teaching former ELs and provided appropriate training, these conditions might impact teachers’ beliefs and/or practices.

In this way, Brofenbrenner’s model allowed consideration of how the context of the classroom, school, district, and broader policy have affected and could affect teachers’ practices and clarifies several paths for future research. Although the conclusions that can be drawn through analysis of these data sets are limited by the number of participants ($n = 7$) and the number of observations ($n = 7$), these results can serve to generate potential areas of inquiry for future research. For example, a narrower study that targets GE teachers’ knowledge of effective instruction for former ELs and includes several lesson observations with a larger sample would provide richer data for this specific area of study. It may also be worthwhile to explore which of the sheltered instruction features GE teachers already use in their lessons and how their use of them is impacted when they are trained to use them intentionally for the support of former ELs.
Integration of Themes

The findings of this study demonstrated the complexity of teachers’ perceptions through overlapping themes. GE teachers generally perceived their former EL students to be “motivated and Hardworking,” but experienced “discomfort in the classroom,” and had “similarity in diversity of needs,” just like other GE students. They see themselves as responsible for making former ELs feel comfortable and for figuring out what students need and how to provide it. In recognizing former ELs’ need to feel comfortable, teachers use a variety of approaches, but also reported treating former ELs the same as other students in the class, including employing similar instructional strategies to support learning. In these ways, teachers worked to address students’ social-emotional needs without intentionally addressing their language development needs. There is little evidence that teachers expressly planned the types of interactive experiences and leveled supports that would propel students’ development of academic language and content.

Further, several overlapping themes were discerned in the analysis and comparison of GE and ESL teachers’ interview data. Both groups saw students’ comfort levels as a key to their successful transition from ESL to GE classes and identified the teacher as the key conduit to attaining comfort. Both groups also expressed positive attitudes toward their EL and former EL students; GE teachers described them as hardworking and motivated and ESL teachers focused on their perseverance and resilience. In their roles as teachers, both groups viewed themselves as pivotal in students’ successful transition from ESL to GE classes both academically and socially. Despite their shared positive perceptions of their students and their belief that they play an important role in students’ social-emotional and academic lives, both groups admitted that little to no planned, purposeful, collaboration took place between them.
This lack of collaboration indicated that GE and ESL teachers may not see themselves as members of the same community of practice. It may be the case that ESL teachers view themselves as members of the community of language teachers, while GE teachers consider themselves a part of the community of GE teachers, or that of specific content teachers. The lack of training and the absence of stated district or school expectations for GE teachers of former ELs means there is no structured context for GE teachers to identify as language teachers in addition to content teachers. Hence, any existing collaboration relied on already established relationships and/or proximity.

Etienne Wenger, a leading researcher on communities of practice, might characterize these collaborations as those of “brokering pairs” (Wenger, 2016, p. 236), wherein teachers “introduce elements of one practice into another” (p. 235) “through a personal relationship that acts as a brokering device” (p. 236). Even though the participants in this study sometimes crossed boundaries to gain new learning that they applied to their own practice, there is no evidence that this new learning was shared with other members of the teaching community. In order for these collaborative learning opportunities to be available to teachers, there needs to be a community of practice in which GE and ESL teachers are participants, sharing an interest in teaching ELs and former ELs and interacting around experiences and resources. Without such a community, GE teachers do not have access to the knowledge and experiences of their ESL counterparts that could inform their instructional practices. Therefore, former ELs may not have the benefit of having GE teachers who are knowledgeable about them and the instructional approaches that are most effective for their language and academic development.

Finally, although the correlation analysis showed no substantial relationship between teachers’ stated beliefs about how best to support former ELs and their observed teaching
practice, the quantitative data collected in this study reveals a noteworthy phenomenon. In every case, participants were observed using many more sheltered instruction features in their lessons than they brought up in interviews as effective practices for supporting former ELs (see Table 2). This may be because GE teachers use these instructional approaches as part of their regular teaching repertoire and may not be cognizant of their specific effectiveness for former ELLs. In this way, these results seem to align with GE teachers’ belief that the instructional strategies they use for GE students are beneficial for all students.

**Implications**

There are several implications that can be drawn from the findings of this study. First, I will describe those in the areas of policy. Then, I will delve into implications for practice and future research.

**Policy Implications**

The results of the present study highlight the need for training for GE teachers in the theory and practice of second language acquisition in order to make purposeful instructional decisions to support the continued academic and language development of former ELs. This training could include a required course for pre-service teachers as well as ongoing professional development for all GE teachers in SLA and sheltered instruction techniques. Although the findings from the present study demonstrated that GE teachers willingly accept responsibility for differentiating for their students, they may not have the necessary training to inform their instructional decisions. District and state policies that require relevant courses and in-service training would be an important step toward ensuring that teachers have the knowledge they need to support the growing population of former ELs.
Implications for Practice

Regarding implications for practice, this study provides preliminary evidence that teachers’ beliefs are not always enacted in their practice. For this reason, it is important to explore not only teachers’ perceptions of their students, but also the internal and external forces that impact their instructional decision-making. Participants in this study indicated that they had no specific guidance or training for teaching former ELs within the general education setting. ESL and GE teachers also lacked any systemic structures for collaborating about the curriculum, instruction, and social emotional needs of students as they moved from the ESL/Bilingual program to the GE program. Therefore, as members of the school and district community, teachers lack any formal contextual influence regarding their teaching practice for former ELs, and students lack any similar support as they navigate the transition from one program to the next. This lack of structural supports may communicate an organizational view that none are needed or that the need is not prioritized. Thus, a lack of action can impact teachers’ practices. If a school or the district provided structured opportunities for GE and ESL teacher collaboration around curriculum issues and student progress, that would communicate the placement of this need as a higher priority, and could impact teachers’ practice in kind.

From a sociocultural perspective, this lack of attention to supporting former ELs’ induction into a new community of learners is problematic. Given that all learning is social, and former ELs must apprentice to a new community of learners in order to fully participate in learning, teachers and students must have the knowledge and resources to make the community functional. This requires carefully planned and scaffolded interactional learning, supported by appropriate resources and integral to the instructional plan. In addition, without collaborative interactions with ESL teachers or specific training for GE teachers in culturally and linguistically
responsive pedagogy, it is unlikely that GE teachers would design the optimal learning environments for former ELs to be academically successful (Hawkins, 2019).

Sociocultural theory of SLA calls for the specific design of instructional activities intended to encourage learners to find ways to participate in meaningful experiences with support from peers and teachers that is appropriate based on students’ level of language proficiency (Ortega, 2015). Without appropriate training on second language acquisition principles, GE teachers lack the knowledge needed to support the design of these kinds of instructional activities for the former ELs in their classes. Training in SLA theory and practices would maximize teachers’ stated interest and willingness to support students by giving them the tools and rationale to do so in a targeted and intentional way, prioritizing the language demands of the class together with the content (Kim & Herman, 2012).

Such training may also preempt GE teachers’ misconception that students’ developing language proficiency equates with their cognitive ability. Misinterpreting the need for language support as the inability to engage in higher order thinking can limit former ELs’ access to curricular experiences that would promote both academic and language development. It is likely that, when GE teachers have a more complete understanding of language acquisition and have developed the methods and resources to support former ELs’ specific language needs in the content they are learning, they will apply these methods rather than other approaches intended for “lower level” learners. In this way, GE teachers can come to understand that former ELs can use their first language as a mediating tool in order to achieve learning goals that would be inaccessible in English (Ortega, 2015).
Recommendations for Future Research

The present study contributes to a small body of research on former ELs. Although there is extensive research involving ELs, very few studies have focused on these students once they are reclassified. As such, there are many additional opportunities for future research.

This study included a small number of participants, all of whom were English, social studies, or ESL teachers. Increasing the number of participants and broadening the sample to include other content area teachers, such as science and math, could result in richer data. It could be the case that science and math teachers use different instructional approaches for former ELs since these subjects rely more on technical vocabulary and less on reading and writing to arrive at conceptual understandings.

To extend the aim of this study and explore the relationship between teachers’ beliefs and practices, two adjustments for research are recommended. First, in addition to the qualitative data collected through interviews, quantitative survey data about teachers’ beliefs should be collected. This would provide the opportunity to query participants about the specific sheltered instruction practices targeted in the observation and would generate a separate data set apart from interviews on which to base the correlation analysis. Second, more than one observation should be conducted to collect a variety of information.

Since GE teachers signaled a willingness to adjust their instruction for former ELs, and valued students’ linguistic and cultural differences, but lacked any relevant training, future research that employs a training intervention would be a natural next step. Such a study could employ culturally and linguistically relevant pedagogy and sheltered instruction approaches as the basis for an embedded professional development plan, along with pre- and post-observations
of instruction. Such a study would provide an opportunity to examine the effects of training on teachers’ practice.

Lastly, additional research that moves the focus from teachers to students is recommended in order to determine how former ELs perceive their own needs and the efforts of their teachers. For example, a survey of former ELs who were recently reclassified or who are in the process of transitioning to GE classes would provide needed insight into how teachers can best prepare students for this transition and support them in their new learning community.

**Limitations**

As has been noted previously, this study is limited by the small sample size and the limited number of class observations. Although the findings of the study cannot be generalized beyond the district in this study, the results are nevertheless useful in a broader consideration of the role of the GE teacher in supporting the academic progress of former ELs.

In addition, the validity of the comparative findings regarding GE and ESL teachers is limited due to the number of participants and particular conditions of one of the settings. Although four school sites were included in the study, Fieldview High accounted for the majority of the participants; five GE teachers and three ESL teachers were based at this school. In addition, the physical structure of Fieldview High contributes to this limitation since the ESL/Bilingual program is housed in a building that is separate from the main school. For this reason, participants’ views regarding teacher and student isolation may be magnified. In reviewing interview data, however, I noted that this theme was also evident in the interviews of participants from the middle schools, where all programs are included in one building.

My own role as an administrator conducting research in the district where I work can also be viewed as a limitation. As a supervisor of curriculum and instruction, the formal authority of
my position could have an impact on how teacher participants responded during interviews and class observations. Teachers may have also felt an obligation to participate in the study. With a keen awareness of these possibilities, I took the steps recommended by the research community to attempt to minimize the impact. When working with teachers, I was acutely aware of the possibility of power imbalances and emphasized the voluntary nature of their participation as well as the procedures in place to ensure confidentiality. All participants received a copy of their interview and observation transcripts and had the opportunity to make corrections or request that portions be omitted. Apart from minor clarifications, only one participant exercised the opportunity to revise the transcript.

In addition to possible effects on participants, my insider perspective and personal biases could also have affected the way I interpreted the data and reported the results. To address this concern, I maintained a research journal throughout the study, in which I recorded not only all the actions I took, but also my reflections on the concepts and insights that emerged as I collected and reviewed the data. I shared my data and findings and discussed these reflections with fellow researchers throughout the study in order to invite alternate interpretations and consider critical feedback.

**Conclusion**

As the population of ELs continues to grow in our nation’s schools, the population of former ELs grows with them. As these students transition from the supportive environment of ESL and bilingual classes to the general education environment, it is important to consider what supports and structures will allow for their smooth transition and continued progress academically, linguistically, and socially. This study addresses a gap in the body of research on former ELs by examining how ESL and GE teachers perceive the needs of former ELs and how
they address those needs. The findings of this study are a reminder of the complex nature of teaching and the importance of the numerous instructional decisions teachers make every day. This study indicated that teachers are willing to take responsibility for supporting former ELs and are cognizant of the benefits that can accrue from collaboration between ESL and GE teachers. These results also point the way toward prioritizing our resources more intentionally for the support of teachers who guide former ELs’ academic progress.
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Appendix A

Figure 1.

Interaction of teachers’ beliefs and practices based on Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model.
Appendix B

Participant Selection Survey

A research study is being conducted in district middle and high schools that considers the roles of English as a Second Language (ESL) and general education content teachers in the academic progress of English Language Learners (ELs). ELs are defined as students enrolled in Bilingual and/or ESL classes. Former ELs are defined as students who have been reclassified, have exited the Bilingual/ESL program, and are now enrolled in general education classes.

You have received this survey because you are an ESL or general education teacher at one of the middle or high schools in this district. Your participation in this survey is voluntary. By participating in this survey, you are NOT agreeing to participate in the research study. Identifying information and contact information are NOT being collected automatically through this survey instrument. You will have an opportunity to provide your contact information voluntarily at the end of the survey if you decide you are interested in participating in the study.

We appreciate your time and effort in answering this short survey. Thank you!

1. Please select your grade. (If you teach more than one grade, select the grade that represents the greatest number of classes you teach).
   
   a. 6
   
   b. 7
   
   c. 8
   
   d. 9
   
   e. 10
   
   f. 11
   
   g. 12
2. Please select the subject you teach:
   a. ESL
   b. ELA/English
   c. Math
   d. Science
   e. Social Studies

3. How many years of teaching experience do you have?
   a. Less than one year
   b. 1 – 5 years
   c. 5 – 10 years
   d. 10 - 20 years
   e. More than 20 years

4. I currently teach ELs.
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. I am not sure

5. I currently teach former ELs.
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. I am not sure

6. I am interested in learning more about this research study.
   a. Yes
   b. Not at this time.
7. If you answered “Yes” to question #6, please provide your contact information below. We will reach out to you soon.

Name: ___________________________________________

Please contact me by phone: __________________________

OR

Please contact me by email: ______________________________
## Appendix C

### Sheltered Instruction Observation Tool

**Participant:**

**Date:**

**Content/Grade:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Background</th>
<th>Evident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Concepts linked to students’ background experiences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Explicit links between past learning and new concepts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Key vocabulary emphasized</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comprehensible Input</th>
<th>Evident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. Speech appropriate for students’ language proficiency levels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Clear explanation of academic tasks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Techniques for clarifying concepts: modeling, visuals, demonstrations, gestures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Evident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. Opportunities for students to use learning strategies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Scaffolding techniques used to support student understanding (e.g. think-alouds)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Variety of questions or tasks that promote higher-order thinking (literal, analytical, interpretive)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interaction</th>
<th>Evident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10. Interaction and discussion between teacher/student and student/student</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Students encouraged to elaborate on responses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Student grouping supports lesson objectives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Teacher uses wait time for student responses consistently.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Students have opportunities to clarify key concepts in L1 with peer or text.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Teachers’ Beliefs about Former ELS

## Practice and Application

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Evident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Hands-on materials provided for practice using new content knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Activities provided for students to apply content and language knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Activities integrate reading, writing, listening, and speaking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Lesson Delivery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Evident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Content objectives clearly supported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Students engaged 90% to 100% of class time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Pacing is appropriate to students’ ability level.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Short & Echevarría (2016)
Appendix D

Interview Protocol for General Education Teachers

1. Please tell me what you teach and any other roles you have in this school.

2. What have been your experiences teaching former ELs in this school?
   - Can you give an example?

3. How does the ESL/Bilingual program operate in this school? For example, how do ELs move through academic courses?

4. Overall, what do you think about the school’s academic program for ELs?
   - What are its successes?
   - Challenges?

5. How are ELs reclassified as former ELs and placed into general education classes?

6. What support do you think former ELs need when they are reclassified and placed into general education classes?

7. What transitional supports are available to students who are reclassified as former ELLs?

8. What can you tell me about former ELs’ experiences in general education classrooms?

9. What strengths do former ELs bring to the general education classroom?

10. How do you, as a general ed teacher, collaborate with ESL/Bilingual teachers about students and instruction in this school?
    - If you do not collaborate, explain the reasons why.
    - OR Please give a specific example.

11. What could general ed teachers do to support the academic progress of former ELs in their classes?

12. Describe the professional development you have received that relates to teaching ELs.
13. How do you know when a student in your class is a former EL?

14. What modifications or adaptations do you make for former ELs in your classroom?

15. Have you ever heard of sheltered instruction or SIOP? If so, can you describe it?

16. What resources do you use or would you like to have to support your work with former ELs?

17. Is there anything else you would like to do to improve the learning environment for former ELs in this school?
   - How would you accomplish this?
   - What would you need?

18. What do you think your administrator (principal) expects you to do to support former ELs in your classroom?

19. Thinking about your perspective on teaching former ELs when you first started teaching, how has your perspective on teaching former ELs changed?
   - What was your perspective as a first-year teacher?
   - Can you describe what caused your perspective to change?

20. What advice would you give to a new general education teacher about working with former ELLs?

21. How many years of teaching experience do you have? How many at this school?

22. Do you speak any other language besides English?

23. Is there anything else you would like to share on this topic that we haven’t covered?
APPENDIX E

Interview Protocol for ESL Teachers

1. Please tell me what you teach and any other roles you have in this school.

2. What have been your experiences teaching ELs in this school?
   - Can you give an example?

3. How does the ESL/Bilingual program operate in this school? For example, how do ELs move through academic courses?

4. Overall, what do you think about the school’s academic program for ELs?
   - What are its successes?
   - Challenges?

5. How are ELs reclassified as former ELs and placed into general education classes?

6. What support do you think ELs need when they are reclassified and assigned to general education classes?

7. What transitional supports are available to students who are reclassified as former ELs?

8. What can you tell me about former ELs’ experiences in general ed classrooms?

9. What strengths do former ELs bring to the general ed classroom?

10. How do you, as an ESL teacher, collaborate with general ed teachers about students and instruction in this school?
    - If you do not collaborate, explain the reasons why.
    - OR Please give a specific example.

11. What could ESL teachers do to support the academic progress of former ELs in general ed classes?

12. How do you prepare your students to transition to general ed classes?
13. Is there anything else you would like to do to improve the learning environment for former ELs in this school?

- How would you accomplish this?
- What would you need?

14. What advice would you give to a new general ed teacher about working with former ELs?

15. What advice would you give to a new ESL teacher about preparing students to transition into general education classes?

16. How many years of teaching experience do you have? How many at this school?

17. Do you speak any other language besides English?

18. Is there anything else you would like to share on this topic that we haven’t covered?
# Appendix F

## Coding Categories for Sheltered Instruction Features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SI Feature</th>
<th>CODE</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Links to background</td>
<td>BK</td>
<td>Connect w/what students know for relevance and meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Links to past learning</td>
<td>PL</td>
<td>Help students recall relevant past learning &amp; make connections to new information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Key vocabulary</td>
<td>VB</td>
<td>Provide explicit academic vocabulary instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Appropriate speech</td>
<td>SP</td>
<td>Adjust speech &amp; word choice to advance student learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Task explanation</td>
<td>EX</td>
<td>Make expectations clear and teach task routines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Clarifying techniques</td>
<td>CL</td>
<td>Provide appropriate support for students’ language proficiencies (e.g. modeling, visuals, demonstrations, gestures, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Learning strategies</td>
<td>LS</td>
<td>Provide instruction in strategy use for accessing complex texts, determining unfamiliar vocabulary, planning &amp; organizing ideas (e.g. problem solving, predicting, organizing, summarizing, categorizing, evaluating, self-monitoring)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Scaffolding techniques</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Offer support for advancing learning and developing English proficiency. (think alouds, modeling speech, paraphrasing, signal words, sentence starters, use of language resources {dictionary, thesaurus, spell check}, guiding questions for a text or draft; partial outline for note-taking)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. HOT questions/tasks</td>
<td>HOT</td>
<td>Tap students’ critical thinking skills and frames of reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Interaction / discussion</td>
<td>DISC</td>
<td>Frequent opportunities between teacher/student and among students; informal discussion/collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Elaboration encouraged</td>
<td>EL</td>
<td>Encourage elaborated responses about lesson concepts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Intentional grouping</td>
<td>GR</td>
<td>Strategic grouping considering students’ reading/language proficiency; collaborative tasks to answer questions, build understanding, present arguments, provide evidence, solve problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Wait time</td>
<td>WT</td>
<td>Give students time to think and compose their responses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Student use of L1</td>
<td>L1</td>
<td>Use L1 as a resource to clarify key concepts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Hands-on materials</td>
<td>HOM</td>
<td>Provide hand-on materials/manipulatives for students to practice using new content knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Application activities</td>
<td>APP</td>
<td>Plan activities to apply content and language knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Integration of RWSL</td>
<td>RWSL</td>
<td>Activities integrate all language skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Alignment w/objectives</td>
<td>OBJ</td>
<td>Lesson supports stated content goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Student engagement</td>
<td>ENG</td>
<td>Students engaged 90-100% of the time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Appropriate pacing</td>
<td>PCG</td>
<td>Provide additional time as needed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Echevarría, Vogt, & Short, 2000; Echevarria & Short, 2004; Short & Echevarria, 2016)