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Teachers' Knowledge, Perceptions and Practices Regarding Academic Literacy Development of Long-Term English Learners

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Teachers' Knowledge, Perceptions and Practices Regarding Academic Literacy Development of Long-Term English Learners

by

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DEDICATION

This study is respectfully dedicated to the educators in my life that have made me a better person as well as to my colleagues and friends working tirelessly to make a contribution in this world. Thank you to my family for the love, support, and motivation you have supplied me with. The best of me, comes from the heart of my mother who poured her soul into providing the best possible life for my siblings and I. Every ounce of energy spent on this labor of love was done so with the goal of contributing to this world like my mother has as an advocate, role model, leader and hero to everyone she crosses paths with. I also dedicate this work to the students, families and communities of Maywood, Lincoln Heights and Huntington Park who have shaped my growth as a person. I draw inspiration from your resiliency, strength, and courage to take the necessary steps to reach success.

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ABSTRACT

Teachers' Knowledge, Perceptions and Practices Regarding Academic Literacy Development of Long-Term English Learners

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Secondary educators must be knowledgeable in their content while increasing the academic literacy of their students, a process further complicated when working with students who are long-term English learners (LTELs). This mixed-methods study explored the knowledge, practices, and perceptions of six secondary teachers working to develop the academic literacy of LTEL students in content-specific classrooms. Set within a sociocultural framework, the study provides a greater understanding of the challenges and successes educators experience when working at the secondary level with students with diverse learning needs. The data were collected in two phases. Phase I included a quantitative survey of teachers, designed to acquire demographic information from participants who met the inclusion criteria: educators who taught a content-specific course and had a minimum population of 10.7% LTEL students in at least one of their classes. These data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Phase II consisted of qualitative one-on-one interviews, classroom observations, and follow-up interviews. Data analysis for Phase II included transcribing the interviews and taking notes on emerging themes.

Qualitative data were also provided by the classroom observations using the Observation Protocol for Academic Literacies. Notes created in each of the classrooms were coded by themes and used in the creation of profiles for each educator. Themes that emerged through the one-on-one interviews and classroom observations were used to create questions for the follow-up interviews. Findings add to the body of research regarding content-specific secondary teachers' knowledge and perceptions about the academic literacy development of their LTELs.

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

This study was created to understand the experiences of six secondary teachers working with long-term English learners (LTELs) and their knowledge, classroom practices, and perceptions of their own readiness to develop academic literacy in the different content areas they were teaching. Through the use of surveys, one-on-one interviews, classroom observations, and follow-up interviews with each of the six participants, this study aimed to understand the challenges encountered by educators as they were tasked with teaching not only content material, but also English language and literacy skills for this population. This study was also created to highlight areas of growth and improvement needed to address the diverse needs of LTEL students. In addition, this study was carried out in order to better understand the perspectives and needs of these educators, who were responsible for preparing LTEL students for higher education or to enter the workforce with a skillset that would allow them to thrive.

Long-Term English Learners' Experiences

The presence of LTEL students in California classrooms is not new; however, research that investigates the needs of this population of students has been lacking. Prior to 2015, few California school districts had a clear definition of "long-term English learner" or the means to identify and monitor the progress and achievement of this population (Olsen, 2010a). Only one in three districts had a formal definition or designation for identifying, counting, serving, or monitoring LTELs—and their definitions varied from 5 to 10 years as being "normative" for how soon English learners should reach proficiency (Olsen, 2010a). In October 2015, California Governor Brown approved Senate Bill 750, an act to amend Sections 313.1 and 313.2 of the Education Code. The California Education Code defined an LTEL as:

> an English Learner who is enrolled in any of grades 6 to 12, inclusive, has been enrolled in schools in the United States for six years or more, has remained at the same English language proficiency level for two or more consecutive prior years, or has regressed to a lower English language proficiency level as determined by the English language development test identified or developed pursuant to Section 60810, or a score developed by the Superintendent on any successor test. "English Learner at risk of becoming a long-term English Learner" means an English learner who is enrolled in any grades 3 to 12, has been enrolled in schools in the United States for four to five tears, scores at the intermediate level or below on the English language development test, and has scored in the fourth or fifth year at the below basic or far below basic level on the prior year's English language arts standards-based achievement test. (Senate Bill 750, 2015)

Despite the increased numbers of LTEL students attending U.S. schools, practically no research has been conducted about them to date, nor have specialized educational programs existed to meet their needs (Menken, Kleyn, & Chae, 2012). For instance, LTEL students comprised 59% of the secondary student population in 40 school districts of California (Olsen, 2010b); however, despite these striking national statistics, LTEL students have remained "an invisible group" who have been placed in school programs that have failed to recognize their distinct needs.

Positionality

As an English language learner (ELL) and an educator of LTEL students, my exposure to this population of students has been a constant. Throughout my career in education, I have consistently sought to understand the needs of LTEL students but have found little support and limited dialogue for this group of students who deserve more attention. When I was a student, I

witnessed firsthand the neglect of LTELs, especially in secondary school, as a majority of the teachers relied heavily on textbooks to disseminate knowledge. Walking into history class in seventh grade was like walking into prison. Few words were spoken by our teacher, there were actually instructions to students like "Sit down, button up, and complete the work assigned on the wall." Textbooks largely replaced teacher-led instruction in my urban secondary school, thus creating a challenge for the LTEL students who relied on educators to navigate information.

The challenge of understanding academic content in a language they were still developing competence in was too difficult for many of my classmates without the support of an expert. The majority of my peers including myself spoke English fluently, but lacked the reading and writing skills required for success in secondary content classes. I was able to adapt to meet the demands of my secondary teachers; however, many of my peers were unable to do so because of their limited language skills and lack of instructional supports. As a result, only half of the students with whom I entered high school went on to graduate. Only 60% of English language learners (ELLs) in Los Angeles County high schools graduated 4 years after entering the ninth grade (California Department of Education [CDE], 2014). Even though I graduated from high school, I have never been able to forget the faces and dreams of the students who were not as fortunate.

At the time of this study, I was a social studies teacher at a secondary public school located in Northeast Los Angeles. I was motivated to work with secondary youth due to my conviction that my peers and I deserved more from our education. The students that have filled my classrooms have entered with high levels of English speaking social skills. However, their reading and writing skills have been significantly below grade level. Given the environment of high-stakes testing, my colleagues have adapted by delivering content knowledge and assessing

students based on their ability to retain information. The shift to Common Core State Standards will change how secondary educators deliver content and assess students; but, more importantly, progress is needed to address the lack of awareness of the needs of LTEL students in secondary schools. The pursuit of this research was aimed at examining the perceived preparation of educators at my school site to develop the academic literacy skills of LTEL students as well as the current teaching practices required to provide this diverse learning population access and support to succeed in different content area classes.

Statement of the Problem

In California and across urban areas, ELL students have consisted of the largest growing population in public schools but also the least likely to graduate from high school (Gándara, Maxwell-Jolly, & Driscoll, 2005). English learners are known by many acronyms, including English as a second language (ESL), limited English proficiency (LEP), ESL lifers, emergent bilinguals, and long-term English language learners (LTELs). Despite the large numbers of LTEL students in secondary schools and the research that has recognized this trend, little research has been conducted about them. Instead, existing research on ELL students has focused on the elementary school setting (Menken et al., 2012). Recent statistical trends in U.S. secondary schools indicated that 80% to 90% of ELL students in middle and high school were actually born in the United States (Kibler, Walqui, & Bunch, 2015; Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007; Valdés, Kibler, & Walqui, 2014). LTELs were found to be usually second- or third-generation immigrants who had attended U.S. schools their entire lives but had not achieved the high level of academic English proficiency needed to succeed in the all-English mainstream program (Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007). According to work by Olsen (2010b), LTEL students showed distinct language issues, including high-functioning social language, weak academic language, and

difficulties with their reading and writing skills. LTEL students also have not been afforded the opportunity to benefit from their bilingualism. Jacobs (2008) argued that despite potential benefits, the native languages of LTEL students were often overlooked, as were the resources to help them acquire literacy skills. Cummins's (2010) research showed that there may be certain thresholds of language proficiency that students must reach in order to experience cognitive benefits of bilingualism, especially in areas related to educational success. Moreover, Cummins found that continued academic development of both languages conferred cognitive/linguistic benefits, whereas less well-developed academic proficiency in both languages limited children's ability to benefit cognitively and academically.

Subtractive Schooling

Jacobs (2008) found that LTEL students were frequently criticized for lacking academic fluency in English, despite having been educated in the United States. A negation of their culture and language LTEL has been experienced by LTEL students when they enter their classrooms is an example of subtractive schooling. Valenzuela (1999) indicated, "schools themselves are perpetuated to promote inequality . . . such as academic tracking, a curricular bias against Mexican culture, the Spanish language, and things Mexican" (p. 16). LTEL students have demonstrated the ability to blend into the dominant culture and speak English well, yet have faced conflicts between the dominant culture in which they work and go to school and the home culture of their parents. In addition, Menken and Kleyn (2010) recognized how the experiences of LTEL students in U.S. elementary and middle schools have been subtractive, thus contributing to their limited academic literacy skills, which, in turn, have negatively impacted their overall academic performance. Exacerbating this problem, the typical high school ESL or bilingual program, has not been designed to meet the needs of emergent bilinguals with limited native

language literacy skills (Meltzer & Hamann, 2005; Ruiz de Velasco & Fix, 2000). García (1999) found that most high school programs were designed to meet the needs of emergent bilinguals who had arrived in U.S. high schools with adequate prior schooling and native language literacy skills. Furthermore, high schools have not demonstrated tolerance or understanding of the skills with which LTEL students enter school.

Overwhelmed when students have been unable to reclassify as English proficient, schools often have failed to recognize the strong content knowledge these students possess (Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011). Because such programs assume literacy, they typically have not been prepared to explicitly teach students the literacy skills across content areas that are necessary to navigate the secondary curriculum (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2007; Callahan, 2006). Menken and Kleyn (2010) found that not only must the schooling that these students receive be consistent, emergent bilinguals must also be offered opportunities in school to fully develop academic literacy skills in the languages they speak.

Structural Challenges

In many cases, LTEL students have not only been perceived as linguistically challenged, but have also been viewed as academically challenged. A substandard academic program has generally entailed prioritizing language acquisition over access to grade-level coursework in the mainstream curriculum (Kibler et al., 2015; Mónzo & Rueda, 2001; Valdes, Kibler, & Walqui, 2014;). As a result, schools have focused on linguistic factors rather than access to content area knowledge. Yet in the process of teaching English, these institutions have neglected to prepare these students for higher education (Callahan, Wilkinson, & Muller, 2010). Menken et al. (2007) argued that in addition to improving consistency, high schools must change their programming and practices to address the needs of the large numbers of LTEL students who have limited

literacy skills in either of the languages they speak. The LTEL students they studied had strong oral language for social purposes but required further development in academic literacy, making their needs different from those of new arrivals (Menken et al., 2007).

Many factors influence levels of performance of secondary or LTEL students, including consistency of school enrollment, program placements, language(s) of instruction over time, and the content and quality of instruction (Ortiz et al., 2011). To understand what curriculum modifications would make the content accessible, educators must recognize the knowledge students bring with them into the classroom. Menken and Kleyn (2010) found when students in high school received native language supports, it was often in a foreign language class where LTEL students, who were native speakers, were mixed with non-native speakers, with instruction focused on basic grammar and vocabulary development. Additionally, most LTEL students received language support services in high schools that were mismatched to their actual language learning needs. For many of these LTEL students, poor academic performance subsequently led to retention (Menken & Kleyn, 2010).

In their study of LTEL students, Menken and Kleyn (2010) found that LTEL students were characterized by low levels of academic literacy in English and their native language, and typically did not perform well in high school, regardless of the content-area subject. The vast majority of the students studied experienced educational failure, making LTEL students a particularly high-risk population for grade retention and dropout. High schools can no longer assume prior literacy ability among orally proficient LTEL students in English. Academic language and literacy instruction should be infused into all subject areas, including math, science, and social studies in addition to English (Menken & Kleyn, 2010). High school teachers must be prepared to teach literacy in explicit ways. Calderón and Minaya-Rowe (2011) found that

important factors preventing long-term English learners from learning hinged on the quality of instruction and professional development practices at school sites.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this sequential mixed-methods study was to gain an understanding of urban secondary teachers' perceptions of their knowledge and ability to develop the academic literacy in LTEL students and the practices they have employed to explicitly and implicitly teach literacy in their content-specific classes. This study also sought to gain an understanding of what school-wide efforts supported urban secondary teachers in increasing their knowledge of LTEL students and how professional development has assisted these educators' practices. The third purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of whether these urban secondary teachers' perceptions of their abilities to teach LTEL students were complemented by the practices they employed.

Research Question

By learning about the teachers' perceptions of their abilities to address the needs of LTEL students, this study aimed to address the following question: *What are secondary teachers' perceptions about their knowledge to develop academic literacy of Long-Term English learners?*

Significance of the Study

Research on LTEL students is needed to fill the void that has neglected this specific and diverse student population. Menken et al. (2012) referred to LTEL students in secondary schools as the "invisible population" due to the lack of research about them, which has contributed to the limited scope in working with this population. This lack of knowledge has misled educators working with LTEL students to believe they have skills that fluent English speakers have. Menken and Kleyn (2010) found that LTEL students were orally proficient for social purposes in

English and their native language, but that their skills in these languages were several grade levels below in reading and writing, resulting in poor overall academic performance. In addition, LTEL students typically had limited academic literacy, which impacted their performance in language arts as well as content classes, where instruction has been rooted in an assumption that high levels of academic literacy have previously been attained (Menken & Kleyn, 2010). Furthermore, the lack of awareness has placed LTEL students in the same classes as all other English-language learners without services specifically targeted to their needs or with services mismatched to their actual language ability and learning needs (Menken & Kleyn, 2010). The work of Menken, Funk, and Kleyn (2011) showed the importance of increasing educators' awareness of the LTEL student population to positively impact educational outcomes for this group of students. Short and Fitzsimmons (2007) found that although much remained to be learned regarding how to best provide instruction for LTEL students, what was certain was that their literacy challenges could not be well served by a one-size-fits-all solution. It is imperative that instructors understand both their students' current level of knowledge and strategies that have been proven to foster academic growth.

Secondly, LTEL students have been a rapidly growing student population, comprising 59% of students in 40 school districts across California (Olsen, 2010b). The dilemma for these students has been that the typical high school ESL or bilingual education program has not been designed to meet their specific needs (Menken et al., 2012). Olsen's (2010a) study showed that secondary school teachers were generally not prepared to teach reading and writing skills to LTEL students due to a lack of training in language development and a focus on teaching academic content. Additionally, Olsen (2010a) argued that few teachers believed they had the tools, skills, or preparation to meet the needs of their English-language learner students—and,

few had received professional development to do so. According to Olsen (2010a), teachers needed to know their students, to engage in careful analysis of the language demands of the content they were teaching, and to work to develop skills in implementing appropriate instructional strategies that would explicitly develop language and literacy across all curricula. Furthermore, Olsen (2010b) called for professional development for teachers and administrators to increase their preparation and skills to work with LTEL students.

Theoretical Framework

The sociocultural theory of learning has described learning environments as embedded within a broader system, where learning is fostered and developed using the culture, history, and language of the learner (Vygotsky, 1978). The sociocultural approach of learning development has recognized and validated the relationship a student has with the social environment and how cultural contributions, such as language and background, are critical instructional tools to be used and facilitated within this environment. Vygotsky described this relationship as a mediated process influenced by the language, history, and the social experiences of the learner, otherwise known as cultural artifacts. Although learners have cultural artifacts at their disposal, the educational environments to which they have been exposed have impacted the development of these tools.

Furthermore, Vygotsky (1978) found that much important learning by the child occurred through social interaction with a skillful tutor. The tutor may have modeled desired behaviors or provided verbal instructions for the student through social interactions. Vygotsky referred to cooperative or collaborative dialogue as when a child seeks to understand the actions or instructions provided by the tutor using the information to guide or regulate his or her own performance. Vygotsky asserted that there was a difference between what a child could achieve

independently and what a child could achieve with guidance and encouragement from a skilled partner. Furthermore, Vygotsky found that *zones of proximal development* were the areas where the most sensitive instruction or guidance should be given, thus allowing the child to develop skills they will then use on their own in developing higher mental functions.

Methodology

This inquiry used a mixed-methods research design to answer the research question and to create profiles of teachers of LTEL students. This study included the use of five methods of data collection: (a) Teachers' Perceptions of LTEL Preparation survey (See Appendix A), (b) one-on-one interviews (See Appendix B); (c) classroom observations using the Observation Protocol for Academic Literacies (OPAL), an instrument developed by Lavadenz and Armas (2009) (See Appendix C); (d) interviews (See Appendix D) for qualitative data, and (e) follow-up interviews to individually clarify findings. The site for this research was an urban secondary public school near the downtown area of Los Angeles, California, with an LTEL population of 10.7%. This research focused on the practices of teachers at this school as they worked to develop the academic literacy of LTEL students. The study investigated how public secondary teachers in an urban setting perceived their ability to develop academic literacy in LTEL students. The school site, Northeast High School (pseudonym), had been a fixture in the community for over a hundred years and was divided into small learning communities (SLCs), each meant to provide students with exposure to different careers in the arts, education, science, mathematics, medical, and social justice fields. Due to the increased presence of charter schools in the neighborhood, Northeast High School experienced a decline in enrollment between 2007 and 2015. The loss of students to other schools led to fewer teaching positions and opportunities for

students to take elective courses. Northeast High School consistently enrolled ELLs and LTELs, providing this site with both the opportunity and challenge of meeting their unique needs.

Teachers' Experiences and Practices with LTEL Population Survey

Teachers completed the Teacher's Perceptions of LTEL Preparation Survey, a survey that included demographic questions, along with questions to determine their experience with English language learners, the challenges of working with ELL students, and their professional development needs when working with this group of students. The survey link was emailed to teachers at Northeast High if they met the requirements of the study. Qualifying teachers were given two weeks beginning in early February 2016 to complete the survey that was adapted from an instrument previously used by Gándara et al. (2005). The researcher was given permission by the authors of the instrument to use the same survey questions in this study. This instrument gave all the participants working with the target population of this study the opportunity to self-initiate into the study. Furthermore, the survey provided preliminary information from the participants regarding the challenges and needs of secondary teachers working with LTEL students. The teachers who self-initiated by providing their contact information agreed to continue contributing to the study through a one-on-one interview, classroom observations, and a follow up-interview.

One-on-One LTEL Teacher Interviews

The interview questions were intended to provide educators with a means to articulate their experiences when working with LTELs, specifically, how they perceived their ability to develop the academic literacy of this population of students in their classrooms. The interview session gave the educators the opportunity to discuss their capacity to develop academic literacy in LTEL students through the professional preparation they had received prior to full-time teaching, the ongoing professional development delivered to them at their worksite, and the

perceptions of their practices. From February to March 2016, the six participants were interviewed using both closed-ended and open-ended questions. The interviews took place in the teachers' classrooms during their conference periods and lasted approximately one hour.

Classroom Observation: The Observation Protocol for Academic Literacies

To record classroom observations, the researcher used the Observation Protocol for Academic Literacies (OPAL) (Lavadenz & Armas, 2009) (See Appendix C). The OPAL is a research-based behavioral observation tool that measures teacher practices and classroom interactions from sociocultural and language acquisition perspectives. The OPAL used a six-point Likert scale, with scores assigned by trained observers, based on low to high levels of implementation, to rate instruction for academic literacies (Lavadenz & Armas, 2010). The classroom practices in the OPAL were measured in four areas: rigorous and relevant curriculum, connections, comprehensibility, and interactions (Lavadenz & Armas, 2009). The classroom observations took place in mid-February and early March 2016.

Follow-up Interviews

The researcher used the quantitative data analyzed through the one-on-one interviews as well as the notes from the OPAL to create questions for further clarification through follow-up interviews with the six participants. Emergent design (Creswell, 2007) has been one of the hallmarks of qualitative research, and in emergent design adhering to the prepared interview protocol exactly (rather than being flexible and responsive during data collection) does not allow for the design to emerge naturally when research is conducted. Indeed, Creswell recommended being flexible when constructing research questions. In addition, the researcher should be prepared with follow-up questions and probes to obtain full and nuanced responses from participants. In this study, the researcher reconstructed questions to reduce misunderstanding and

composed effective follow-up prompts to further understanding (Creswell, 2007). The follow-up interviews were used to clarify information gathered during the earlier stages of data collection. The follow-up interviews were documented through notes and an audio recording using a smart phone with a voice notes application for later transcription and coding. The follow-up interviews were conducted at the school site after school or during the teachers' conference periods and lasted approximately 30 minutes each.

Making Individual Profiles

Seidman (1998) suggested that "profiles are one way to solve the problem the interviewer has of how to share what he or she has learned from the interviews" (p. 102). Lichtman (2010) emphasized that profiling was a process of transforming collected words into meaningful words. To create profiles, the researcher read participants' interview transcripts and follow-up interview transcripts repeatedly, found meaningful statements corresponding to the research question, and highlighted the important passages. Since no standardized guidelines existed for the organization or format of a profile (Lichtman, 2010), the researcher created profiles based on his research question. Therefore, the story in each profile represented both the participant and the researcher. Although the researcher composed the profiles based on what the participants said, the profiles were written in the first-person voice of each participant.

Data Analysis

This research included multiple methods of data collection, allowing the researcher to triangulate data. Triangulation provided the opportunity to offset potential threats to the validity of the data (Glesne, 1999). The Teachers' Experiences and Practices with LTEL Population survey, one-on-one interviews, classroom observations using the Observation Protocol for Academic Literacies (Lavadenz & Armas, 2009), and follow-up interviews provided the

researcher with both qualitative and quantitative data to analyze. In this study, the use of quantitative data was represented in the form of numbers that alone would not hold much significance; however, through descriptive statistics the data have been described more efficiently (Anastas, 1999). Descriptive statistics were obtained from the OPAL and the results were integrated with the survey, initial interviews, and follow-up interviews to provide meaning for each numerical value and associating each score with participant feedback and evidence of their practices.

Limitations

With a sample of six participants all from the same school site, the results of this research cannot be generalized broadly. The findings may not be applicable to other public urban secondary schools or other educational settings. Additionally, the strategy used to recruit participants may have created bias. The researcher was also a teacher at the site being investigated during the time of this study, and his colleagues may have felt obligated to participate in the study due to their professional relationships. Although their reasons for contributing to this study may have not been the sincerest, the conversations that took place during the study did not veer from the typical conversations that took place daily.

Link to Social Justice

One cannot find social justice in education if the needs of any group of students are overlooked. LTEL students in California and across urban schools can no longer be ignored at the secondary level and deserve to have their needs recognized as well as addressed. Education should be liberating; however, LTEL students are often denied humanizing experiences that honor their funds of knowledge. The lack of humanization can and must be addressed in classrooms and in professional development, as educators reflect on their practices and the

students with which they are entrusted to work. Through the Freirian principles of humanization and praxis, educators can impact students who have been neglected and marginalized through curriculum, policies, and practices that have not embraced diversity or recognized the strengths of each student. The efforts of teachers, "must be imbued with a profound trust in people and their creative power. To achieve this, they have to be partners of the students in their relations with them" (Freire, 1970, p. 72). The literature found that educators must reflect on their beliefs and continually reinvent their teaching methods and practices. "Thinking critically about practice, of today or yesterday, makes possible the improvement of tomorrow's practice" (Freire, 1998, p. 44).

Through reflection and reinvention, educators have the potential to humanize LTEL students who have been marginalized in their educations. Freire (1970) argued that one does not liberate people by alienating them. Authentic liberation—the process of humanization—is not another deposit to be made in men. Liberation is a praxis—the action and reflection of men and women upon their world in order to transform it.

Summary and Organization of the Study

In summary, this study consisted of two phases of data collection and analysis that aimed to understand the perceptions of secondary teachers' knowledge to meet the needs of LTEL students and to reflect on the practices they used to develop the academic literacy of this diverse learning population. In addition, this study aimed to contribute to the research on LTEL students in urban secondary schools in order to reduce their marginalization.

This chapter outlined issues impacting the marginalization of LTEL students and the need for quality instruction and professional development at the school level. It also summarized the importance of examining secondary urban educators' perceptions of their ability to meet the

needs of LTEL students as well as individual classroom practices that promote learning. Chapter Two reviews scholarly literature on the perceptions of urban secondary teachers' ability to work with LTEL students, the practices these teachers have used to meet the needs of LTEL students, and the role of professional development in increasing an understanding of LTEL students. Chapter Three presents the mixed-methods approach, and instruments used by the teacher questionnaire, interviews, classroom observations, and follow-up interviews, as well as the data analysis approaches. The qualitative and quantitative data gathered are presented in Chapter Four, followed by an analysis and discussion of the findings. This study concludes with implications, conclusions, and recommendations for future research in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study investigated the knowledge and practices of six secondary teachers at an urban high school in Los Angeles, particularly in regard to their efforts to develop the academic literacy of their LTEL students. The researcher addressed California specifically because of the large LTEL population in secondary schools, and California was the location of research for this study. The purpose of this literature review was to better understand LTEL students at the secondary level, the perceptions of teachers' working with LTEL students, and to understand the knowledge needed to enhance LTEL literacy at the secondary level. The literature review began with sociocultural theory since this framework served as the conceptual foundation that guided this study focused on the academic interactions of secondary teachers to promote academic literacy among their LTEL students. The sociocultural approach of learning development recognized and validated the relationship a student had with the social environment and how their cultural contributions, such as language and background, were critical instructional tools to be used and facilitated within this environment (Vygotsky, 1978). Due to the important role educators have been assigned in the acquisition of academic literacy for their LTEL students, further research was needed on the experiences of secondary content teachers working with LTEL students in developing academic literacy.

Furthermore, this chapter reviews the literature on Sociocultural Theory, followed by summaries of other relevant research and literature, divided into four sections:

- A review of the literature and research on the federal establishment of bilingual education;
- California policies addressing English learner underachievement;

- Defining academic language and literacy for emergent bilinguals; and
- Perceptions of teachers of long-term English learners.

The chapter concludes with a discussion of recommended instructional practices for teachers of LTEL students.

Sociocultural Theory

The Vygotskian sociocultural theory of learning framed this study proposing that cognitive activities are mental activities external to the learner in which s/he participates through mediation (e.g., the use of language). The theory proposed that language mediated the process whereby external activities were transformed into mental ones through internalization (Swain, 2000; Wertsch & Stone, 1985). According to Vygotsky (1987), speech and thinking develop independently of each other, but at a certain point in development they converge, where "thinking becomes verbal and speech becomes intellectual" (p. 112). In other words, language serves as a vehicle of thought (Vygotsky, 1987). As Vygotsky also found, cognitive development appears first in the inter-psychological (e.g., between or among individuals; social) plane and is then appropriated by the individual.

Vygotsky (1978) argued that social interaction was the basis for all learning and indicated that social interaction preceded the development of knowledge and ability. Consciousness, the notions of self and identity, physical skills and mental abilities, all have their origin in social interaction between the child and parent, and between the child, peers, and others, including teachers. Vygotsky (1978) stated, "Human learning presupposes a specific social nature and a process by which children grow into the intellectual life of those around them" (p. 88). Solitary work, either in tests or in classroom activities, are incompatible with Vygotsky's conception of pedagogy.

As all knowledge and ability has arisen in social activity, all learning has been co-constructed, and nothing has ever been gained by taking interaction out of the learning process (Vygotsky, 1978). The primary process by which learning has taken place has been interaction—more specifically, through engagement with other learners and teachers in joint activities focused on matters of shared interest that contain opportunities for learning (Walqui, 2006). Vygotsky (1987) found that

> By ascertaining the child's potentials when he works in cooperation, we ascertain in this way the area of maturing intellectual functions that in the near state of development must bear fruit and, consequently, be transferred to the level of actual mental development of the child. (p. 202)

Furthermore, studying what the child is capable of doing independently is to study yesterday's development; by studying what the child is capable of doing cooperatively, a child's future potential is discovered (Vygotsky, 1978).

Vygotsky (1978) proposed that students develop new concepts by working with an adult or more capable peer who asks questions or points out aspects of a problem. Instruction that is within a student's zone of proximal development (ZPD), the area just beyond the student's current level of proficiency, serves as a scaffold to mediate learning. What students can first do with help, they can later do independently. For this reason, teachers might be encouraged to organize learning activities so that students are provided opportunities to work collaboratively. Education never takes place in a vacuum but is deeply embedded in a sociocultural milieu; thus, learning is a matter of both cognitive development and shared social practices. The cognitive and the social are inseparable in classroom learning (Walqui, 2006). Teachers are responsible for facilitating learning activities based on what students have already understood.

The concept of scaffolding grew from ZPD conceptions of learning and development. Scaffolding was first used by Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976) in their studies of parent-child talk. They defined scaffolding as "a process that enables a child or novice to solve a problem, carry out a task, or achieve a goal that would be beyond his unassisted efforts" (Wood et al., 1976, p. 90). Vygotsky's ZPD and subsequent conceptualizations of scaffolding have had powerful implications for education. For the purpose of this dissertation, a *scaffold* refers to instructional processes mediated by semiotic resources such as certain curricular and technological tools designed to help learners navigate their ZPD.

While scaffolding, as originally conceived by Wood et al. (1976), describes child development as a series of informal social interactions at-home between mother and child, the notion of scaffolding was in time embraced in formal education settings. The support is not meant to be permanent, but instead is gradually "faded" (Pea, 2004, p. 438), or minimized, as the learner becomes more of an expert. Scaffolds do not make the task easier but make it possible for a learner to complete the task while supported (Bruner, 1976). Scaffolding is described as a "structure, guided in a specific form by tacit assessment of a child's independent capabilities" (Pea, 2004, p. 425). It is also a process carried out and adjusted over time until a child is able to successfully complete the task him/herself.

Educational policies created at the national level were negotiated at the state and local school district–levels as supports provided to schools, teachers, and their students. Furthermore, federal policies have affected classroom practice in the micro-interactions that have occurred between teachers and students (Cummins, 2001). Faced with the responsibility of providing consistent and quality instruction within the current sociocultural climate, ESL teachers have often been left to navigate policy complexities and even contradictions with limited support

(Cummins, 2001). The overall goal should be focused on providing students with skilled educators that have been prepared to meet their language needs. Sociocultural theory provides insight into the role educators have in their students' knowledge development and skill building. Therefore, if the goal is to provide students with meaningful learning experiences, then policies are needed that prepare educators to be the experts students need.

Federal Establishment of Bilingual Education

Spurred by movements to create equitable schooling experiences for English language learners, the federal government increased spending on teacher training as well as on the development of teaching material that addresses learning gaps for students with limited English speaking students. The allocation of funds for language teachers began in 1958 with the National Defense Education Act (NDEA), and efforts to legitimize equal opportunities for language learners continued via the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Bilingual Education Act of 1967 (BEA), *Lau v. Nichols* (1974). However, beginning in 1978, the reauthorization of the BEA shifted emphasis to language development through English-only programs.

The landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964 developed from the demand during the early 1960s for the federal government to launch a nationwide offensive against racial discrimination (U.S. Department of Justice, 2001). Title VI was created to prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance. Specifically, Title VI states that:

> No person in the United States shall, on the ground or race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. (42 U.S.C. Section 2000d)

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was one of the first legal mandates to address equal opportunity in education. The federal government's involvement in the educational programming needs of EL students began with the Bilingual Education Act (BEA) of 1968 (20 U.S.C. Section 779). The Bilingual Education Act was added as Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. "Its primary function was to legitimize bilingual education programs, allocate funds for experimental programs, and foster research on bilingual education" (Ovando & Collier, 1998, p. 43). This implicitly encouraged a subtractive form of bilingual education, where the native language and culture were not viewed as resources on which to build, but as barriers to overcome (Cummins, 1991). Bilingual education was a remedial effort, aimed at overcoming students' "language deficiencies," and these "compensatory efforts were considered to be a sound educational response to the call for equality of educational opportunity" (Navarro, 1990, p. 291). Although bilingual education was an approved activity, no particular program of instruction was recommended; instead, local educational agencies were provided financial incentives to deviate from bilingual education and develop new and untested programs (Garcia, 2005). In 1968, bilingual programs across the United States enrolled 26,000 students. By the end of 1972, this figure rose to about 112,000 students. At the same time, estimates indicated nearly five million school-age youth, nearly 10% of the total, spoke a first language other than English; four million of these were of Spanish language origin (Kloss, 1977). In 1974, some 220 bilingual programs were entirely or partially supported by the BEA. A comparable number of bilingual programs had either received BEA funding in former years or had been helped by BEA indirectly (Fishman, 1974). Several states passed laws that authorized bilingual education, however, local educational agencies were being financially diverted from implementing bilingual education to

instead place the literacy needs of students in the hands of untried and untested programs. Lau v. Nichols was the landmark decision for English language learners that never was.

Lau v. Nichols (1974) marked the federal government's first significant involvement in litigation involving EL students. Lau v. Nichols (1974) was a class action lawsuit initiated in 1971 by non–English speaking Chinese students. The San Francisco Unified School District was accused of failing to provide all non-English speaking students with adequate language instruction. The U.S. Supreme Court found that to require a child to have basic English skills before the child could meaningfully participate in education was "to make a mockery of public education" (*Lau v. Nichols,* 414 U.S. 563). August and Garcia (1988) argued that, "The 1974 United States Supreme Court Decision in *Lau v. Nichols* was the landmark statement of the rights of language minority students indicating that limited English proficient students must be provided with language support" (p. 7). Despite strides toward recognizing the needs of students with limited English fluency, the landmark case failed to establish a particular instructional approach or a time table to provide English language learners with needed language supports.

During the years of the next three reauthorizations, public opinion reflected a strong aversion to the use of federal funds to preserve minority languages and cultures, claiming that federal funds should focus on English language acquisition and assimilation into the mainstream (Crawford, 1999), thus thwarting the consistent implementation of bilingual education programs for ELL students. Historically, during times of peak immigration, there has been a decline in the acceptance of bilingualism. Increased immigration has tended to create a feeling of instability, perhaps due to the unsettling sensation of change, apparent increased job competition, or fear of an inability to communicate with immigrants (Wiese & García, 1998). This feeling of instability has often led to a fear of the unknown and an insistence on using the status quo language,

English (Fitzgerald, 1993; Portes & Rumbaut, 1996). The public felt that bilingual education programs that encouraged native language maintenance would only foster children's allegiance to minority languages and cultures, and this was not an acceptable responsibility for schools (Wiese & García, 1998). Regardless of the justification, the decline of bilingual education programs deprived students with continued academic cognitive/linguistic development of both their native language and English language skills, causing continued inconsistencies in addressing the language needs of ELL students.

The 1978 reauthorization of the BEA added language to the 1974 definition of bilingual education, which specified that instruction in English should "allow a child to achieve competence in the English language" (Sec. 703 [a][4][A][i]) and when enrolling English-speaking children, "The objective of the program shall be to assist children of limited English proficiency to improve their English language skills" (Sec. 703 [a][4][B]). Other changes in the legislation required parents to be given a greater role in program planning and operation; personnel were required to be proficient in the language of instruction and English; and grant recipients were tasked with demonstrating how the program would continue once federal funds were withdrawn (Wiese & García, 1998). Just a few years later, more change was implemented in how ELLs were tasked with improving their English language skills. The 1984 reauthorization of the BEA marked a stark shift from mandating bilingual programs to the acceptance of English-only programs. Transitional bilingual education programs were defined as providing "structured English-language instruction, and, to the extent necessary to allow a child to achieve competence in the English language, instruction in the child's native language" (Sec. 703 [a][4][A]). The purpose of native-language instruction was to support the transition to English instruction, and the allocation of funding reflected a preference for this program. Sixty percent of

Title VII funds were allocated to the various grant categories, and 75% of these funds were reserved for transitional bilingual education programs (Wiese & García, 1998). In contrast, developmental bilingual education programs were defined as providing "structured English-language instruction and instruction in a second language. Such programs shall be designed to help children achieve competence in English and a second language, while mastering subject matter skills" (Sec. 703 [a][5][A]). The goal of this program included native language and English language competence, yet no specific funding allocations were specified, thus demonstrating a consistent failure to provide English language learners with tried and tested support.

California Policies Addressing English Learner Underachievement

The State of California has also exhibited a history of inconsistency in providing bilingual education and equitable opportunities for language development. California has had a large proportion of EL students underachieving due to unmet language needs, as evidenced by 59% of ELL students in 40 districts across California being classified as LTELs (Olsen, 2010b). Bilingual education was seen a legitimate means to provide language support in 1967 through an amendment to Section 71 of the Education Code in California that provided latitude to local school boards to regulate when and under what circumstances instruction might be given bilingually as long as instruction was educationally advantageous to the students. As a result, bilingual high school students of both Mexican and native English-speaking skills could be taught partly in Spanish (Kloss, 1977). Although California schools had the option of providing bilingual education to students, the implementation of bilingual education programs to develop both native and English language skills was not mandated or systemically carried out.

The Chacon-Mascone Bilingual Bicultural Act (CMBBA) was enacted in 1976 and was the first legislative act in California that mandated school districts to provide ELL students with equal educational opportunities (Mora, 2004). The creation of the policy came as a result of the large proportion of ELL students who demonstrated significant underachievement. Teaching students in their primary language was believed to provide access to curriculum that would improve their academic performance; thereby giving ELLs equal educational opportunity (Crawford, 2004). Due to the interdependence of primary and secondary language skills, bilingual education was key to developing primary literacy skills and served as a resource for the development of English literacy skills (Cummins, 1979). The CMBBA was a compensatory approach designed to address the academic shortfalls of ELLs (Crawford, 2004). The law adopted a Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) program model as a means to organize bilingual education instruction for students. TBE provided primary language instruction for students until they developed sufficient proficiency in English to successfully enter mainstream classes—usually 2 to 4 years (Crawford, 2004)—although students needed additional years to develop primary language literacy skills that could be transferred to a second language. Although California finally adopted a program that embraced bilingualism, it burdened students with a time constraint that was not aligned with the time experts believed was necessary to develop language literacy skills in a second language. California would continue approaches that would circumvent a researched-based approach of benefitting students through bilingual education cognitively and academically.

Furthermore, California changed course on how to support the language needs of English-learner students when policy moved away from bilingual education and ventured on a new an unproven course. In an effort aimed at assisting teachers in addressing the language

diversity of their students, a new specialty credential was created for teaching English as a Second Language (ESL). ESL teachers were responsible for English learners' language development, while mainstream teachers were responsible for content-area instruction (Malakoff & Hakuta, 1990). In 1993, the credential for teaching English learners was restructured by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, combining the roles of content teacher with ESL teacher in the Crosscultural, Language and Academic (CLAD) credential (Swofford, 1994). Teachers who were bilingual received the Bilingual Crosscultural, Language, and Academic credential (BCLAD), and were authorized to teach academic content in the students' primary language until the student reached an "intermediate level" of proficiency in English. Teachers with CLADs or BCLADs were then tasked with transitioning students to instruction in English using teaching strategies, such as Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE), to make instruction more comprehensible for English learners (Malakoff & Hakuta, 1990). In addition, teachers credentialed under the CLAD and BCLAD programs would be able to teach content-based ESL, renamed English Language Development (ELD) (Swofford, 1994). As a result, the role and responsibilities of the ESL and the regular classroom teacher meshed, with the same teacher responsible for ELD and content instruction. Designed to maximize the academic benefit to English learners, it was instead minimized (Crawford, 1995). The levels of support offered dwindled for students once they reached an intermediate level of English proficiency, since teachers did not have a strong sense of urgency to differentiate instruction to make it more comprehensible to ELLs, and often taught ELLs the same way they taught their other students (Malakoff & Hakuta, 1990). Furthermore, while the Commission on Teacher Credentialing offered the BCLAD credential, by 1997, only about one-third of English learners in California were actually in classrooms taught by teachers with bilingual certification

(Rumberger & Gándara, 2000). A shift in the support services offered to acquire English language proficiency was not met with the proper implementation, once again depriving students with a consistent and proven program shown to benefit the cognitive and academic development of ELL students.

Since 1998, California's language and literacy policy context has included the implementation of language and literacy programs that have failed to meet the diverse needs of EL students. Prior to 1998, California utilized TBE as one approach to serve the language needs of EL students. TBE was challenged in building on the native language skills of students because it provided primary language instruction only until sufficient English proficiency was developed to enter mainstream classes, typically only 2 to 4 years (Crawford, 2004). Language experts have shown it takes 5 to 7 years to attain proficiency in English (Cummins, 2000; Varela, 2010). The limited exposure to native language instruction restricted the opportunities EL students had to develop academic language skills in their primary language that could be transferred to English. TBE was unique from language maintenance approaches that had as a goal the development of biliteracy. TBE was not the most effective model for developing English literacy skills as compared to developmental bilingual education, which exited students after 5 to 6 years (Crawford, 2004). Despite an ineffective model compared to bilingual education, California would continue a trend of misinformed policy to educate students in the development of the English language skills.

In 1998, California was the stage for the battle to end all native language instruction by mandating that English learners be taught in English-only classrooms. The movement in California took the form of a voter initiative—Proposition 227—that severely restricted the use of primary language for instructional purposes, and instead provided for a transitional program of

"structured English immersion" that was not supposed to last more than one year (Gándara et al., 2000). Time spent teaching basic English allowed less time for teaching content matter. Higher-level curriculum was simplified because students lacked sufficient English skills to grasp complex concepts (Gándara et al., 2000). The notion that young children might need 5 years or more to make the transition to English-only seemed unreasonable to many laypersons. In the late 1980s, English-only advocates seized on this issue and politicians responded. Following the lead of Congress, several states began to impose time limits—typically 3 years—for a given student's participation in a bilingual or ESL program. The Unz initiative in California was more restrictive, mandating an English immersion program as the default approach for all English-language learners in a timeframe of typically one year (Crawford, 2004). The Unz initiative drastically differed from the bilingual education programs championed by language experts and became another obstacle for English learners already confronting academic and cognitive challenges.

In addition to moving toward English-only instruction, California stressed statewide-standardized testing, thus negatively impacting literacy instruction for EL students because teachers focused instruction on English test items measured by the state assessment (Gándara et al., 2000). An approach that began with the development of phonemic awareness in a language they did not speak well was a formula for failure (Freeman & Freeman, 1999). Reforms that narrowed the range of academic skills to which students were exposed in response to high stakes testing is arguably responsible for ELL students' academic deficits (Maxwell-Jolly, 2000). These reforms were in effect until the recent passage of Proposition 58 in November 2016. Proposition 58 repealed the English-only requirement of Proposition 227. However, the State of California would allow districts to design their own programs to address the needs of their EL students.

Again, another move providing districts with the flexibility of moving away from consistent English language programs and bilingual education.

To address the unique needs of its many high school LTEL students, one district in California has developed two courses with different objectives and expected outcomes (See Table 1). One course was designed for high school LTELs whose literacy skills were below fifth-grade level based on their California English Language Development Test (CELDT). Academic Literacy for English Learners was designed to incorporate language development with intensive, accelerated literacy skills. This course was created to make use of discipline-specific materials that supported core classes at an accessible reading level for students so that language and literacy skills directly support the students' skill development in other content area classes. It was also created to incorporate daily practice in developing oral and written academic discourse through carefully planned and implemented interactive activities. The Academic Literacy teacher was tasked with maintaining contact with all the students' core content teachers to regularly monitor their progress in those classes. When students struggled, this teacher was tasked with working with the student's other teachers to ensure an intervention plan is developed (Los Angeles Unified School District, 2012).

Table 1

High School LTEL Courses

High School Advanced ELD	High School Academic Literacy
• CELDT Level 3-5 • 1 period daily • More than 5 years in U.S. schools • Reading level 5th grade or above • Study and organizational skills addressed • Course is designed especially for LTELs • Concurrent with English course	• CELDT Level 3–5 • 1 period daily • More than 5 years in U.S. schools • Reading level below 5th grade • Course is designed especially for LTELs • Concurrent with English course New

This district designed a second course, Advanced ELD, for high school LTEL students who could read above the fourth-grade level. Advanced ELD was designed with a focus on language development and success in content classes, following the model of the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program. At schools with an AVID program, Advanced ELD was scheduled to occur immediately before or after AVID sections on the master schedule to make use of the tutors that were a mandatory part of the AVID program. The tutorial feature of Advanced ELD was omitted at schools that did not offer AVID. One key feature of Advanced ELD was that the teacher was tasked with serving as a monitor and advocate for the students with regard to their other courses and teachers. The Advanced ELD teacher also was tasked with maintaining contact with all the students' core content teachers and regularly monitoring their progress in those classes. Advanced ELD had a foundational curriculum focused on complex expository texts and academic language development. In addition to that curriculum, students learned basic organizational techniques such as keeping a binder, recording homework assignments and time management. Students were taught to monitor their own progress in their other courses by keeping records of grades and points for their assignments, homework, quizzes

and tests. One day each week in Advanced ELD was devoted to one-on-one binder review with the teacher to ensure that students did not fall irreparably behind in any class. When students struggled, the Advanced ELD teacher intervened with the student's other teachers and an intervention plan was developed (Los Angeles Unified School District, 2012). This district's plan followed with a common practice in federal and California policy in striving to meet the language needs of English learners without tapping into or building upon their prior knowledge in their native language through bilingual education.

California Language Reform Responsible for Long-Term English learners

The ineffectiveness of academic programs resulting from instruction from educators who have not been provided with the means to guide EL students to develop language and literacy skills has contributed to the growing LTEL student population. Many LTEL students have not been able to meet performance standards on the state language proficiency assessments, often scoring at the early advanced or advanced levels on the CELDT (Callahan, 2003). However, some students who took the CELDT were unable to meet performance standards on state achievement tests yet achieved passing grades in their academic content classes. On the 2013 Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR), a majority of secondary students scored at or below the basic level. LTEL students generally have possessed basic English language proficiency. However, academic preparation has been lacking, which has influenced academic achievement (Callahan, 2005). More precisely, the issue at hand has been LTEL students' command of advanced academic literacy skills, since these students generally have performed several years below grade level in English reading comprehension and writing skills (Castori et al., 2003; Ruiz de Velasco, Fix, & Clewell, 2000; Salm & Reveles, 2006). Freeman and Freeman (2002) found that LTEL students needed access to rigorous, grade-level literacy instruction that allowed them

to acquire and develop the advanced literacy skills needed to meet English Language Arts content area and RFEP performance standards.

The ineffectiveness of academic programs resulting from years of poor language and literacy instruction contributed to the onset of the LTEL student population. However, LTEL students' under-preparation, combined with exceedingly high English reclassification criteria, now has contributed to students retaining their English learner status (Callahan, 2003). There are four academic criteria for reclassification for English learners in California:

1. Assessment of English language proficiency, using an objective assessment instrument, including but not limited to, the state test of English language development;
2. Teacher evaluation, including but not limited to, a review of the student's curriculum mastery;
3. Parent opinion and consultation;
4. Comparison of student performance on an objective assessment of basic skills in English and Language Arts. The assessment results must have an empirically established range of performance in basic skills based on the performance of English proficient students of the same age (CDE, 2014b).

In 2002, California implemented state assessment policies designed to monitor the academic progress of all students. The accountability system included the STAR program, featuring the California Standards Test (CST), a standards-based test at grade level, administered through grades K–11, intended to measure achievement of state content standards in English-language arts, history-social science, mathematics, and science. Use of the CST was discontinued in 2013 and was replaced with the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) that has

been designed to utilize computer-adaptive tests and performance tasks meant to allow students to demonstrate their knowledge. Also forming part of the state accountability system was the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). The CAHSEE was officially implemented in 2006, with the distinction of improving student achievement in public high schools and allowing graduating students to demonstrate grade-level proficiency in reading, writing, and mathematics. Although use of the CAHSEE ended in 2015, the impact it had on the experiences of educators and students has endured. In August 2010, California adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and, in an effort to align student assessments with CCSS, the CDE developed a new assessment of English language proficiency for ELL students to replace the CELDT. The English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) should be used to determine ELLs' progress in reading, writing, listening, and speaking and for federal accountability purposes (CDE, 2014b). The use of high stakes testing might have serious implications on the teaching practices that take place and the opportunities afforded to EL students.

Defining Academic Language and Literacy for Emergent Bilinguals

Gee (1996) argued, "the traditional view of literacy as the ability to read and write rips literacy out of its sociocultural contexts and treats it as an asocial cognitive skill with little or nothing to do with human relationships" (p. 46). In addition, Vygotsky (1978) argued that higher psychological processes, such as those involved in literacy teaching and learning, took place in social interactions between people, then over time were appropriated within the individual. Under the sociocultural premise, the social interactions structured in schools have deserved careful and thoughtful attention because they have served as the foundation for learning.

Skutnabb-Kangas and Toukomaa (1976) observed that emergent bilinguals could often appear to educators to be fluently bilingual on the surface (e.g., when using language for social

purposes), while still performing below grade level on academic skills and tasks. Cummins (1981a, 2008) described the influential distinction between basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency skills (CALP). BICS have been described to involve contextualized language supported by paralinguistic cues such as gestures, facial expression, and tone of voice as well as other interpersonal and situational cues to create meaning. In comparison, CALP has been defined as involving more abstract language with fewer such cues and has been required of students in order to complete school tasks and assessments like those described above. Cummins (1981, 2008) found that students typically acquired BICS more rapidly than they did CALP. Bailey (2007) provided a different perception of BICS/CALP. He argued against thinking of social language as less cognitively demanding and instead insisted that differences between BICS and CALP were in the relative frequency of complex grammatical structures, specialized vocabulary, and uncommon language functions. MacSwan and Rolstad (2003) found that CALP did not involve more complex language and that the BICS/CALP distinction conflated language ability and academic achievement, a consequence of which is "the ascription of special status to the language of the educated classes" (p. 329). Carrasquillo, Kucer, and Abrams (2004) found that as content grows increasingly more complex in secondary schools and literacy practices become more and more specialized within the subject areas, so too are the demands for the language needed to acquire this knowledge.

Like other scholars who studied the academic language demands of secondary schooling for emergent bilinguals (Gibbons, 2009; Zwiers, 2007), Schleppegrell (2004) employed functional linguistics to examine the grammatical features of academic language used in schools and to explain why particular aspects of the school curriculum were linguistically challenging for emergent bilinguals as well as for speakers of language varieties other than the standard.

Colombi and Schleppegrell (2002) noted how secondary students must acquire what they termed "advanced literacy," which they defined as:

> [T]he kind of meaning-making that is typical of secondary and postsecondary schooling, and that is also required for participating in many of the professional, technical, bureaucratic, and social institutions of our world. We focus particularly on educational contexts, where students need to work in content areas that have particular ways of making meaning. Students' learning of disciplinary knowledge requires participation in social contexts where texts are actively constructed. Students need to be able to participate in literacy in ways that enable them to contribute to the evolution of knowledge. (p. 1)

In recent years, research has identified academic language and literacy as a primary reason for differences in performance among emergent bilinguals. Rather than being academically homogenous, emergent bilinguals in secondary schools have arrived with disparate levels of academic language and literacy skills, content knowledge, and prior schooling experiences (Abedi, 2004; Freeman, Freeman, & Mercuri, 2002; Ruiz de Velasco, 2005). Academic language and literacy skills have been proven crucial for achievement, particularly at the secondary level (Colombi & Schleppegrell, 2002; Gibbons, 2009; Menken, 2008; Zwiers, 2007). Short and Fitzsimmons (2007) highlighted what they termed an "academic literacy crisis" among emergent bilinguals at the secondary level, which they argued should be of serious concern. In the wake of these findings, new studies emerged that argued for the importance of academic literacy for secondary emergent bilinguals (August & Shanahan, 2006; Colombi & Schleppegrell, 2002; García & Godina, 2004; Meltzer & Hamann, 2005; Rubinstein-Avila, 2006; Ruiz de Velasco & Fix, 2000; Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007). While explicit literacy instruction

usually has been considered a task for elementary teachers—too remedial for instruction at the secondary level—there has been growing recognition that the teaching of academic literacy across content areas also should become a regular part of secondary school curricula and instruction, particularly in the education of emergent bilinguals (Menken & Kleyn, 2010). As Koelsch (2006) indicated of emergent bilinguals—another term for ELLs—in the United States:

> The development of strategies—both at the policy and instructional level—to promote literacy among adolescent English language learners is a critical component of improving educational outcomes, including increasing high school graduation rates and 4-year college and university completion rates. Adolescent literacy at the high school level entails the development of disciplinary knowledge and the use of that knowledge in oral interactions, reading and writing. (p. 5)

There has become an awareness of a need for schools to support emergent bilinguals in their acquisition of academic language and literacy, but a criticism has been how the definition of academic language and literacy has privileged some while marginalizing others.

Recent scholarship related to academic language has been informed by systemic functional linguistics as well as by sociocultural theories of learning (Scarcella, 2003). Context has been considered primarily in terms of apprenticeship within a discipline-specific discourse community. This discourse community usually has been approached as a community of practice in which experts needed to help novices gain greater "control of a range of semiotic resources as well as an understanding of social and linguistic expectations for participation" (Colombi & Schleppegrell, 2002, p. 2). Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory gave teachers the role of providing experiences within the ZPD to encourage and support the student's individual learning. In addition, scaffolding—the support a teacher or instructor provides to help children

transitioning from collective to independent problem solving—provided the necessary support for learning (Wood et al., 1976). Zwiers, O'Hara, and Pritchard (2013) indicated three high-impact teaching practices for developing complex academic language: using complex texts, fortifying complex output, and fostering academic interactions. Zwiers et al. (2013) found that essential teaching practices for developing complex academic language were not effective without cross-cutting practices: clarifying, modeling, and guiding. Clarifying complex language focused on using communication strategies to make language comprehensible, as well as frequent checking for comprehension. Modeling included showing students how to use language and how to deconstruct language. Guiding language learning components included (a) providing and prompting for academic language, (b) formatively assessing targeted language, and (c) providing specific feedback during instruction (Zwiers et al., 2013). Research on teachers' knowledge, preparation, and experiences through a sociocultural lens has been relevant to providing students with opportunities to engage in literacy and language development.

Adolescent Literacy and Applicable Instructional Practices

When teachers and schools have been poorly prepared to develop the reading skills of secondary LTEL students, challenges for this population have been further perpetuated. The need has been to require knowledge of reading instruction, comprehension strategies, and scaffolding to address their needs.

In secondary schools, reading for in-depth comprehension has required the reader to develop more than the basic skills necessary to read text. Moreover, he or she must have acquired socially and culturally specific ways of using text to serve the purpose of the content area (Greenleaf, Schoenbach, Cziko, & Muller, 2001). Reading comprehension has been described as the act of constructing meaning by interacting with written text using prior

knowledge, experience, and information in the text (Pardo, 2004). In order to comprehend text effectively, adolescent readers must be able to be engaged in a wide variety of reading practices that enable them to access the content. Recommended practices have included setting clear goals for reading (Pearson & Duke, 2002); developing the flexibility to read for a variety of purposes; and maintaining motivation to read and learn (Snow & Biancarosa, 2003). Developing effective comprehension skills in secondary school comes with challenges. Adolescents who have struggled to effectively comprehend materials might have experienced a wide range of challenges that required knowledge of a wide variety of interventions (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004). Adolescents' literacy development has been further complicated by secondary schools assuming reading skills have been acquired in elementary school, rather than in content area instruction. As a consequence, secondary schools often have been ill-equipped to work with students who lacked the reading skills to be successful in content area classes (Ruiz de Velasco et al., 2000). Van Lier and Walqui (2012) found that more problems have been created in secondary schools where the content tended to vary from lesson to lesson and seldom involved students in a coherent development of deep understanding or critical thinking.

Short and Fitzsimmons (2007) posited that more research was needed on how to teach reading comprehension to support the literacy development of some struggling readers within the LTEL population. However, several key principles and strategies to support literacy growth have emerged in the literature. Reading instruction should be embedded in the regular curriculum to teach students to interact with a variety of texts within content area classes, where comprehension strategies should be taught in the context of interpreting text (Alvermann & Eakle, 2003). In reading challenging texts that may be beyond their comprehension level, students engaging in the clarifying bookmark activity are required to slow down their reading

and, in conjunction with peers, consciously apply strategies to make sense of the text, focusing on what they understand, how they understand it, what they do not understand, and what they can do about it (Kibler, Walqui & Bunch, 2015). Also, students who have struggled to read in subject area classrooms have needed instruction that was developmentally, culturally, and linguistically responsive to their individual needs (Alvermann, 2002; Alvermann & Eakle, 2003). To effectively meet the needs of readers who have been struggling, instruction must offer students a wide range of free-choice high-interest materials to ensure student engagement and to regard students' current abilities to read, write, and communicate orally as strengths, not deficits (Alvermann, 2002; Alvermann & Eakle, 2003). Teachers must be prepared to provide instructional scaffolding that previews texts, teaches vocabulary, facilitates connections between text and student background knowledge, and utilizes the teaching of explicit strategies (Alvermann, 2002; Alvermann & Eakle, 2003). The advancement of expertise to work with EL students in ambitious ways requires an investment in professional development different from the isolated, piecemeal workshops many teachers have experienced. Profound transformative knowledge can only be brought about through sustained, focused professional development (Valdés, Kibler & Walqui, 2014).

Labeling LTEL students as struggling readers and instructing them with the previously mentioned instructional practices has oversimplified the complexity involved in meeting the needs of this diverse group learning to read in a second language. Researchers have argued that interventions designed for native English speakers will not necessarily work for adolescent ELs because they required more instructional time focused on vocabulary development and background schema than their native English-speaking peers (Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007). Calderon (2001) noted that little was known about the most effective approaches to reading

instruction for secondary ELs, which has resulted in an uncertainty of the most effective methods for developing LTELs' literacy skills. Few programs or practices have been developed for ELs, and those that exist generally have been created for students in elementary school. Some studies found that whole language approaches to reading instruction seemed to work well with ELs (Calderon, 2001; Garcia, 2000). Explicit instruction in cognitive and metacognitive strategies was also found to be effective in promoting English reading comprehension (Calderon, 2001; Garcia, 2000, 2003). Research also has indicated that teaching vocabulary and connecting students' background knowledge with the text content have been particularly effective (Calderon, 2001; Garcia 2003; Moll & Gonzalez, 1994).

Essential Teaching Practices for Developing Academic Language

Learning always has been based on prior knowledge and experience (Walqui & Heritage, 2012). Therefore, making meaning of academic language—as with any language—has required drawing on relevant background knowledge and previous participation in discourse, a process Aukerman (2006) called "situating that language vis-à-vis other experiences and what others have said" (p. 631). Effective instruction has been defined as involving integrating the learning of concepts and language through meaningful experiences in conjunction with scaffolding by teachers and peers of the features of academic language, both spoken and written, that are needed to construe meaning (Heritage, Silva, & Pierce, 2007; van Lier, 2004).

Zwiers et al. (2013) identified three high-impact teaching practices for developing complex academic language: using complex texts, fortifying complex output, and fostering academic interactions. Fostering academic interactions, which focused on building language and content learning through dialogue between students, included providing extended opportunities for interaction and building students' communication skills for thinking together about the

discipline as experts would (Zwiers et al., 2013). Fortifying complex output focused on cultivating students' abilities to formulate oral, written, and multimedia messages (Zwiers et al., 2013). Using complex texts focused not only on students' abilities to understand a complex text—which was a necessary element—but also using that text's language to build students' linguistic skills and prepare them to understand similar texts in the future (Zwiers et al., 2013). Zwiers et al. found that essential teaching practices for developing complex academic language were not effective without cross-cutting practices—clarifying, modeling, and guiding. Clarifying complex language focused on using communication strategies to make language comprehensible, as well as frequent checking for comprehension. Modeling included showing students how to use language and how to deconstruct language. Guiding language learning components included (a) providing and prompting for academic language, (b) formatively assessing targeted language, and (c) providing specific feedback during instruction (Zwiers et al., 2013).

Components of the foundational practice of designing language and literacy activities included (a) designing learning activities to engage students and to require authentic and original use of academic language, (b) identifying language objectives, and (c) building on students' linguistic and cultural strengths as well as needs (Zwiers et al., 2013).

Language objectives could provide a focus for students of the most important language during each lesson. However, teachers should identify key language demands that support the content learning in a lesson. Walqui and Heritage (2012) found that in the specific context of EL instruction, teachers should pay attention to developing the language necessary to encode emerging concepts across domains so that they might be sustained. Language development has occurred when it has been carefully scaffolded by the teacher, as well as by the students working together (van Lier & Walqui, 2012). The goals and outcomes have specified academic and

linguistic criteria for success, and the road to success has required a range of focused cognitive and linguistic work, while at the same time allowing for individual and group choices and creativity (van Lier, 2007). Looking at learning from a language-based perspective has required an active learner in an action-based environment, in which challenging puzzles, explorations, and projects have been supported by carefully scaffolded activities and autonomy-supporting interactions (Allwright & Hanks, 2009; Walqui & van Lier, 2010).

Generally, language learning has happened when learners have come into close and frequent contact with speakers of the target language and efforts have been made both by the learners and target language speakers to communicate by use of that language (Fillmore & Fillmore, 2012). Fillmore and Fillmore found that interactional opportunities with speakers were seldom if ever available for the learning of academic language. It would be highly unlikely for students, even mainstream English speakers, to find conversation partners inclined to interact with them in such language. In fact, very little of the language spoken by teachers in the classroom, even during explicit instruction, qualified as instances of this register, as Fillmore and Fillmore discovered by studying transcripts of instructional events in classrooms. Perceiving, talking about perceiving, thinking about it, and acting in various ways to accomplish more and more complex tasks have served to connect perception, speech, thinking, emotion, and action in multiple ways, thus achieving expertise and proficiency at ever higher levels (Gibson & Pick, 2000)

Academic English Literacy

Cummins (1996) noted that literacy required students to make complex meaning explicit through written modality by means of language itself, rather than with contextual cues. Successfully obtaining academic literacy has embodied a Vygotskian approach to literacy, where

members of an academic community have constructed meaning through joint activity using tools specific to their social context. Furthermore, Olsen (2010a) noted that oral language was the foundation for literacy. As a result, Olsen found that a course designed for LTEL students should be a classroom in which students were engaged in talking about what they had been learning.

Literacy learning has occurred via a range and blend of explicit and implicit teaching, usually guided by interaction with a more knowledgeable other over time (Hull & Moje, 2012). However, as students climb grade levels, they have not been allowed to connect oral discussions and activities grounded in their own personal experiences with talking, reading, and writing about abstract content-related concepts (de Jong, 2004). Students also have been expected to master more complex vocabulary, syntactic structures, and pragmatic conventions that have been specific discourses of subjects and grade levels (de Jong, 2004). As a result, de Jong found that academic achievement was largely dependent on students' ability to manipulate language for academic purposes appropriate to grade level and content area. To learn literacy well, students should have meaningful purposes for engaging in literate practice and opportunities to use literacy for a broad range of life activities related to goals and desires beyond the moment of instruction (Hull & Moje, 2012). In addition to meaningful purposes, Olsen (2012b) emphasized structured oral language practice, instructional conversations, and multiple opportunities for speaking as a means of practicing academic language actively as well as process language prior to writing.

Colombi and Schleppegrell (2002) defined academic literacy as a form of meaning making that takes place in school subject matter instruction. They argued that academic literacy is a social semiotic, a form of social action where language and context co-participate in the meaning-making process. Meaning in this sense was not inherent in texts but developed from the

ways in which texts were utilized and interpreted in literacy tasks by members of particular academic communities (Colombi & Schleppegrell, 2002). Researchers have suggested that for students to acquire academic literacy, they must acquire a range of semiotic resources and gain an understanding of the social and linguistic expectations for participation in these academic communities (Colombi & Schleppegrell, 2002; Scarcella, 2003). Several successful literacy learning projects, which have drawn broadly on sociocultural perspectives on learning, have been developed and implemented in K–12 or afterschool/out-of-school time settings, all with the goal of developing powerful literacy practices and/or bridging out-of-school and school-based literacies (Hull & Moje, 2012).

Colombi and Schleppegrell (2002) noted that academic literacy involves competently deploying academic language practices such as constructing arguments, critiquing theories, and integrating print, visual, interactional, and electronic means of developing and sharing knowledge. For students, learning academic literacy translated into developing knowledge of multiple interrelated competencies in reading, writing, speaking, and listening that allowed them to engage in these practices (Scarcella, 2002, 2003). Colombi and Schleppegrell found that central to the development of these competencies was the opportunity to participate in instructional practices that helped students learn how to do advanced literacy tasks. Specifically, students needed proper instruction in reading and instruction that was focused on language (Scarcella & Rumberger, 2000). Maxwell-Jolly et al. (2007) emphasized that teachers at the secondary level must be willing to understand their vital responsibility to teach literacy to all students, especially English language learners. Complex texts could provide school-age learners reliable access to this language, and interacting with such texts could allow them to discover how academic language works (Fillmore & Fillmore, 2012). Furthermore, Scarcella and Rumberger

found that students required an abundant exposure to academic English and attention to features of the language. Students needed structured opportunities to learn these competencies in which they received explicit instruction and scaffolding by more expert partners (Colombi & Schleppegrell, 2002; Scarcella, 2002; Scarcella & Rumberger, 2000). In addition, Maxwell-Jolly et al. (2007) suggested that teachers must maintain high expectations of their students as well as provide them with ongoing feedback regarding their use of academic language.

Participation in literacy activities that featured explicit instruction and scaffolding has been identified as particularly important for LTEL students, who often have been expected to acquire these language competencies through everyday classroom immersion, rather than through structured learning opportunities (Maxwell-Jolly et al., 2007). Olsen (2012a) highlighted the importance of grammar, and the responsibility of educators in utilizing direct instruction to assist students in becoming aware of the structures of English and how the language works in academic registers. Furthermore, through direct instruction, teachers helped students learn to write more compound and complex sentences and approaches to understand complex reading through mini-lessons (Olsen, 2012b). In addition, scaffolds have helped students to "analyze texts themselves so that they can attend to language features on their own and understand how language is put together to achieve meaning and rhetorical effect" (Scarcella, 2002, p. 211). Furthermore, such scaffolding has provided students with strategies for accessing advanced reading materials correctly, instead of allowing them to rely on strategies that have prevented them from tending to language forms (Scarcella, 2002).

Professional Preparation for Teachers of LTEL Students

Freeman and Freeman (2015) found that while the pre-kindergarten through 12th-grade education sector has made progress in addressing the needs of ELL students, teacher education

programs in higher education have been slow to respond in preparing all teachers to work with this linguistically diverse population. Higher accountability policies and increased rigor in standards-based mandates have elevated the need to re-evaluate existing teacher preparation curriculum and redesign programs to reflect the linguistically diverse student population (Freeman & Freeman, 2015). de Jong and Harper (2005) found that while faculty in teacher preparation programs have made strides in integrating issues related to cultural diversity in teacher preparation curriculum, much has been left to be desired in addressing linguistic diversity in the curricula. Freeman and Freeman found that teachers could not adequately teach emergent bilinguals without specific required coursework that spoke to the diverse and unique needs of this population. Teacher preparation and professional development programs will need to be designed to support the deeper content, performance and language demands expected of students. Consequently, Santos, Darling-Hammond, and Cheuk (2012) found that the content, quality, and delivery of professional learning opportunities needed to support teachers' deeper understanding of content and mastery of instructional strategies that assisted all students' attainment of more rigorous standards. Olsen (2010b) argued for the support of professional development for teachers and administrators to ensure they were skilled to work with LTELs. The skillset provided to educators and its implications on student learning has been the focus of previous research. Beyond content knowledge, Olsen (2012b) found a need for educators to be acquainted with their students through regular check-ins, explicit strategies to build confidence, strategies to create positive rapport in classroom, rewards and recognition for success, classroom norms fostering kindness and respect, and mechanisms for student voice and input.

A growing body of research has established that teachers with good professional preparation have made a difference in students' learning (Darling-Hammond, 2002; Haycock,

1998; Sanders & Horn, 1994; Sanders & Rivers, 1996). Knowledge about the social, psychological, and political foundations and implications of learning English as a second language in the United States would prepare teachers to be responsive to the ways emergent bilinguals function in school (de Jong & Harper, 2005). De Oliveira and Athanases (2007) found that teacher preparation programs must include faculty who have expertise, experience, and research in the area of bilingual education and English language development. Educators should understand the shifts required in curriculum, instruction, and assessment for implementation of the new standards, and then they should have hands-on opportunities to acquire teaching strategies that are responsive to these shifts (Santos et al., 2012).

Furthermore, Goodwin (2002) found that teachers should be able to differentiate instruction, develop knowledge of strategies and techniques for second-language development, and work closely with families and communities. Palmer and Martínez (2013) argued for the development of materials for teachers that "reflect both current theoretical understandings of language practices in bilingual communities and a more critically contextualized understanding of the power dynamics that operate in bilingual classroom contexts" (p. 269). They also found that fostering in-depth understandings of and practices for bilingual learners was required for teachers to capitalize on the flexibility and intelligence displayed by bilingual students. These approaches to provide educators with knowledge and materials best meet the needs of their students connect to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (1978), which described human learning as a process in society. For example, Vygotsky (1987) emphasized that "teaching must be set . . . to satisfy the child's need" (p. 138), and educators must be skilled in providing students opportunities to grow. Such growth could be seen in a process for EL students learning the complexities of attaining a second language. In Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, educators

should continue their learning to provide students with the scaffolds and accommodations based on the assets and goals each student has in mind. In this sense, the development of language requires an awareness of students' proficiency and guidance to reach new learning and knowledge in the process of attaining a second language that would be provided through expertise in bilingual language and English language development.

Professional Development for Teachers of LTEL Students

New EL teachers would be more effective if they were provided with relevant professional development that built knowledge as well as strategies and skills to integrate language. Loucks-Horsley, Love, Stiles, Mundry, and Hewson (2003) described professional development as a process of design that engaged teachers in the context of their own classrooms, and that aimed at strengthening content and pedagogical knowledge while providing opportunities for collaboration and experiences that engage teachers as learners. By 2020, half of all public-school students were estimated to have non-English speaking backgrounds (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013). The reality was that general education teachers were more likely to have ELs in their classrooms, yet they continued to have limited knowledge and understanding of how to best meet their academic, linguistic, and sociocultural needs (González & Soltero, 2011; Jones, Buzick, & Turkan, 2013). The challenges ELL students encounter have been exacerbated on an institutional level. ELL students have been more likely than any other type of student to be taught by teachers with an emergency credential. The rapid growth of linguistically diverse students has not been matched by sufficient growth in general education teachers' knowledge of how to best educate ELL students (Hutchinson, 2013; Samson & Collins, 2012). Thus, schools must take the initiative in providing professional development to teachers tasked with educating LTELs. According to a survey conducted by Walker, Shafer, and Iiams

(2004) of 422 mainstream K–12 classroom teachers, 87% had not received any training in EL student education. The lack of training to work with ELLs raised questions about the urgency of schools to meet the academic needs of this particular population. Without the necessary growth in the skills and knowledge to adequately work with ELL and LTEL students, teachers might continue to ignore their needs and contribute to the challenges they encounter in secondary classrooms.

New ELL teachers would be more effective if they were provided with relevant professional development to effectively overcome the overwhelming challenges they face (Gándara et al., 2005). Darling-Hammond (1998) wrote: "When educators are denied access to appropriate preparation and training they prove unable to manage complex forms of teaching, policymakers typically revert to simplistic prescriptions of practice, even though these prescriptions cannot achieve the goals they seek" (p. 13). Professional development opportunities should be designed to build the knowledge, strategies, and skills of all teachers of ELL students to integrate language development scaffolds for students at varying levels of English proficiency within a classroom. Santos et al., (2012) found that schools and districts needed to combine information on teachers' skills and felt needs with ELL classification data (for current and former ELLs) and performance data to determine where professional development would help build teacher capacity. For in-service teachers, developing this expertise while teaching is important and necessary because teacher expertise is not only knowledge) but also the ability to successfully enact it in situated practice (Valdés, Kibler, & Walqui, 2014).

Darling-Hammond and Richardson (2009) argued that professional development (PD) should be "sustained, coherent, and intense, PD sessions spanning in the school year and ongoing opportunities for teachers to integrate their new learning in the classroom and reflect on their

practice with colleagues" (p. 48). A recent study of the effect of the best prepared teachers on EL student learning conducted in the Los Angeles Unified School District found that students of teachers with specialized training who spoke the students' language showed greater student academic gains than teachers who lacked such preparation (Gándara et al., 2005). Teachers with any professional development that focused on increasing skills for teaching ELL students rated themselves as significantly more capable to teach these students across all categories of instruction than teachers with no such training. This was particularly true of professional development presented by or at college or university (Gándara et al., 2005). Santos et al. (2012) contended that shifts in teacher practice would require sustained and varied support structures to apprentice teachers to new practices in ongoing classroom instruction, curriculum planning, and assessment.

Gándara et al (2005) found that the most useful professional development for secondary teachers emphasized strategies for teaching a second language and other factors unique to second-language learners. Santos et al. (2012) found that disciplinary teachers of ELLs would typically benefit from professional development of academic language and literacy that introduced them to scaffolds and strategies aligned to language functions and structures in the discipline, supported the design of tasks, provided coaching, and allowed time for reflection during implementation. All teachers of ELL students should obtain an increased understanding of language and literacy development skills to design and deliver curriculum, instruction, and assessment in core content areas. Santos et al. (2012) found that educators with deep disciplinary knowledge and content pedagogical skills needed to partner with English language development specialists to guide professional development. Instruction for ELL students should reconcile the students' second language development needs with their content-knowledge requirements (Short

& Fitzsimmons, 2007). However, many teachers have not been well-prepared to integrate language instruction in their content lessons. The lack of teacher training, the lack of resource material for addressing ELL students' needs, and the undeveloped ability of teachers to nurture English language proficiency while delivering content have made the American public-school system ill-prepared to meet the academic needs of rapidly increasing ELL and LTEL populations (García, 2012).

Understanding the implications of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory is crucial in any discussion of professional development for teachers. Kozulin, Gindis, Aqeyev, and Miller (2003) found that "at the heart of Vygotsky's theory lies the understanding of human cognition and learning as social and cultural rather than individual phenomena" (p. 1). In this sense, cognitive growth would only be possible through social interaction between or among people that ultimately would lead to internalization by the pupil. Eun (2008) found the need to ground professional development within Vygotsky's theories due to the human progress spurred on by social interaction. While exposure to new curriculum and information has been an important component of professional development for teachers, just providing information has not been sufficient to ensure facilitated teacher learning. Learning has been seen as an ongoing process of socialization with higher mental functions being formed via social interaction. Therefore, professional development, in order to be realized, must rely on social interactions between and among people (Eun, 2008). Moreover, the advancement of expertise to work with ELL students in ambitious ways requires an investment in professional development different from the isolated, piecemeal workshops many teachers have experienced. Deep transformative knowledge can only be brought about through sustained, focused professional development (Valdés et al., 2014). Vygotsky (1978) developed the pivotal role of the knowledgeable other assisting performance in

learning. As educators have begun to move away from classroom activities devoid of meaning, so must professional development opportunities for teachers shift from the mere presentation of information to dynamic, interactive processes in which teachers as learners can be active participants in constructing their learning to create curricula that recognizes the strengths and needs of their LTEL students.

Perceptions of Teachers of LTEL Students

Low expectations of LTEL students have been met with increased rote and memorization instruction and learning. These low expectations might generate resentment toward emergent bilinguals due to low test scores impacting both the school and teacher. Language experts have found it has taken 5 to 7 years to attain proficiency in English (Cummins, 2000; Varela, 2010). Yet, practices that led to the placement of students in ability tracks were based on assessing students in English despite their low level of English proficiency. Freeman and Freeman (2015) found a lack of understanding of second language acquisition might facilitate negative stereotypes and low expectations toward emergent bilingual students, increasing unnecessary grade retention or misplacement of students. Testing LTEL students in English has provided an inaccurate representation of EL student content knowledge and limited ELL students' access to mainstream curriculum (Reeves, 2004). Gándara et al. (2003) identified "serious limitations of achievement scores based on tests administered in English to students who do not speak English" (p. 3). Elaborating on this issue, Mahoney and MacSwan (2005) indicated that testing ELLs in a foreign language resulted in an inappropriate measure of content knowledge and misleading test scores. In sum, the literature found that practices for testing ELLs have provided a limited perspective and view of ELLs' academic ability given the language barrier. Unfortunately, no assessment tools have been able to reliably make distinctions to determine whether the source of

a child's difficulties is linguistic, academic, or a combination. Additionally, some tests that were designed to measure oral English skills have been criticized for confounding linguistic and academic development (Crawford, 2004).

Language has been a crucial factor in the ways teachers have viewed their students (Walker et al., 2004). LeMoine and Hollie (2007) found that teacher perceptions of students affected how they taught and what they expected of students. In public schools, "speaking a language other than English is generally considered an impediment to learning; a defect to be corrected, and a characteristic with little relevance to other students" (Gándara & Contreras, 2009, p. 321). Smitherman (2000) found, "language is the foundation stone of education and the medium of instruction in all subjects and disciplines throughout schooling. It is critical that teachers have an understanding of and appreciation for the language students bring to school" (p. 119). Cummins (1979) found that the educational experience of minority students has been a direct consequence of how teachers define themselves in relation to minority communities. LeMoine and Hollie (2007) concluded, "Teachers who devalue the language, culture, and experiences of minority students convey the messages that hurt the students' classroom performance" (p. 48). Additionally, "studies find that attitudes toward language learning, do, indeed, affect acquisition and that teachers are influenced by the primary language (or dialect) that students speak, holding higher expectations for some language groups than others" (Gándara & Contreras, 2009, p. 136).

Erroneous practices might have inadvertently reproduced school inequalities for ELL students. Reeves (2004) found that unfair tests practice represented "an ideology of blindness to linguistic difference [that has permeated] the school community" (p. 51). Testing LTELs in a language they have not yet acquired has contributed to higher rates of inaccurate data on LTELs

and has placed added restrictions on funding for ELLs (Gándara & Hopkins, 2010). The literature has revealed high schools' structured over-reliance on testing practices that have tracked students, segregated them, limited LTELs' access to a rigorous curriculum, and provided educators with fallible data. Hallinan and Kubitscheck (1999) uncovered that tracking has persisted as a result of the belief that sorting students by ability and assigning curricula accordingly would enhance learning. However, a wide range of studies have disputed this claim. In their study, academic content was tied directly to the instructional goals of the teacher, and expectations correlated highly with class content. The curricular structure in place in schools in the United States has granted access to challenging academic opportunities to some while denying it to others. Both track placement and mobility vary along racial lines, suggesting that placement has not been wholly meritocratic (Callahan, 2005). Unfair assessment practices have led to the placement of LTELs in modified curricula. Educational professionals often have found it difficult to meet the requirements of special education statutes when completing cognitive, academic, and behavioral assessments. Such difficulties have arisen from the limited range of available instruments in most ELLs' native languages, professionals' lack of training in linguistic and cultural differences, and the shortage of bilingual educators and psychologists (Figueroa & Newsome, 2006).

In addition to inaccurate testing practices, many misconceptions of language and cognition have surrounded LTELs. In many cases, LTELs have not only been perceived as linguistically challenged, but have also been denied opportunities to fully develop their native language literacy skills. Thus, in spite of their oral bilingualism, LTELs have arrived at high school with limited academic literacy in English or with their native languages posing difficulties in all subject areas (Menken & Kleyn, 2010). A substandard academic program has generally

entailed prioritizing language acquisition over access to grade-level coursework in the mainstream curriculum (Mónzo & Rueda, 2001). As a result, schools have focused on the linguistic factors. Yet in the process of teaching English, they have neglected to prepare these students for higher education (Callahan et al., 2010). The literature found that schools have been overwhelmed by non–English speaking skills of ELs and have failed to recognize the strong content knowledge ELLs possess (Calderon et al., 2011). Harklau (1994) found that language limitations acted as a barrier precluding ELs from entering prerequisite courses for higher-level coursework. This, in turn, limited ELs' access to the higher track curriculum. ELL students' substandard curriculum often failed to offer the college preparatory courses regularly offered to English-only students, which generally has created possibilities for better academic outcomes (Carbonaro, 2005). The narrowing effect was blatant in some states, such as California. A statewide survey in 2008 found that among schools at which the low achievement of the ELL subgroup resulted in the school being placed into Program Improvement status, 65% reported that corrective actions required them to expand the hours of the day spent on English language arts and math, resulting in less access to science and social studies. In 17% of the schools, students no longer received science and social studies at all. In 28% of the schools, ELL students did not get art or music at all, and almost half of the schools had reduced art and music as part of their corrective action (Californians Together, 2008). Olsen (2010b) found that states and school districts had a legal and moral responsibility to ensure equal educational access through programs that spoke to the needs of all ELL students by developing their proficiency to the level required for participation in an English-taught curriculum, thus providing access to the core curriculum.

Although Latina/o students have been among the fastest growing populations in the United States, their educational experiences have often been mired in oppression (Davila & Aviles de Bradley, 2010). The ELL population has increased, and the need to understand the challenges these students have encountered in their educational journeys has remained crucial. As discussed in the introduction, the graduation rate of ELLs in California has cast an ominous shadow on their futures. ELLs have been perceived and treated as "different," which has caused tension for policy makers, administrators, and educators who have not understood the needs of ELLs who have been overlooked by reform (Parish et al., 2001). In secondary grades, English language support programs available to ELLs typically have been designed for students who have recently arrived in the United States and have reflected an assumption that the students received adequate schooling in their country of origin (Menken et al., 2012). In general, these programs have not necessarily focused on providing the academic language supports needed by LTEL students (Callahan, 2005; Menken, 2013).

Despite attending schools in the United States for a long period of time, and although they may not have received adequate English language development and academic instruction to meet their needs, LTEL students often have been blamed for their academic underachievement (Jacobs, 2008; Reeves, 2006). Callahan (2006) found that because alternative services such as ESL or reading remedial programs rarely provided rigorous learning opportunities for this population, the students, who struggled from year to year, fell further and further behind. Moreover, limited opportunities to learn have resulted in undesirable educational outcomes, including low engagement, high grade retention and drop-out rates, and inappropriate referrals to special education (Abedi, 2006; Klingner, Cramer, & Harry, 2006). Schools have been critiqued for how they have responded to EL students' academic failure by placing them either in special

education or in remedial programs (Artiles, Rueda, Salazar, & Higareda, 2002; Klingner et al., 2006). Although special education services might be perceived as a means to assist English language learners, these programs have different objectives and have tended to limit students' access to a comprehensive and rigorous curriculum. Callahan (2006) found that, consequently, the existing academic literacy gap is likely to increase.

Educators no longer have the luxury of time for students to acquire English in isolated ESL programs before they are required to perform on high stakes academic assessments. Integration of language and content of the core curriculum throughout the ELLs' time in school is paramount. Research indicated that students needed 5 to 7 years to become proficient in academic language to perform on academic tests in English (Cummins, 1981b), or 7 to 10 years for language learners who have had little or no instruction in their native language (Thomas & Collier, 2002). These statistics must be improved upon. In Batt's (2008) survey of bilingual educators, teachers perceived that not all educators who worked with ELL students in their schools were qualified to work with linguistic minority students. In response to whether all staff members in their school who serve ELLs were highly qualified for their positions, 39% of the respondents indicated "no" and 55% of the respondents indicated "yes." Six percent did not respond to the question. On the same survey, 20% of respondents indicated that their colleagues' lack of knowledge and skills in educating ELLs was among their schools' top three challenges (Batt, 2008). Many teachers indicated that their colleagues lacked an understanding of diversity or multicultural education, Batt (2008) revealed the concerns as expressed through an educator:

> The problem in our school is that mainstream teachers and administrators don't understand LEP needs and how to teach them. We need some help here! The district's ESL program just doesn't have the staff resources, not to mention an

> adequate budget to do it alone. Everybody needs to own these kids. Require all staff members to attend classes on how to work with ESL and ELL students. I have people in my building that refer to my kids as "them". We need more consistency in our district from school to school. More . . . support from mainstream teachers toward ELL teachers and students. . . . We still have a high number of staff who say things like "They shouldn't be here," "Send them back to Mexico." (pp. 40–41)

Batt's study exposed major concerns that emerged, and the perceptions educators have of their EL students.

In a study of secondary teachers working with ELL students, the most commonly mentioned challenge was the language and culture barrier, followed by difficulty in motivating students (Gándara et al., 2005). Gándara et al. indicated typical seventh- through 12th-grade teachers commented on their ability in helping students feel comfortable enough to try their beginning English speaking skills, helping them feel integral to the class, convincing them school will assist them, and keeping them engaged and challenged with academic content appropriate to their English language skills. Secondary teachers also expressed concern about their students' ability to meet advancement and graduation requirements within the 4 years allotted for high school (Gándara et al., 2005). Adding to the burden of teaching ELL students has been the heterogeneity of this population. Secondary teachers believed that variability of students' academic skills, English language proficiency, and background were significant problems (Gándara et al., 2005). Rather than clustering ELL students by language needs, California's current policy has placed the great majority of ELL students in mainstream classes. Gándara et al.

found that their wide variety of skillsets could create a daunting challenge for teachers when they did not have adequate support from district resources, policies, and practices.

Recommended Instructional Practices for Teachers of Long-Term English Learners

Olsen (2010a) found that while acquiring English, ELLs had only as much access to the curriculum as the teacher was able to provide. There has been a greater need for classroom teachers to work with EL students effectively. However, teachers have been asked to work with these students with little support or incentive to develop the professional knowledge and skills needed to adequately serve their culturally and linguistically diverse students (Peter, Markham, & Frey, 2012). Secondary school teachers generally have not been prepared to teach reading and writing skills due to the lack of training in language development and the focus on teaching academic content to LTELs (Olsen, 2010a). All ELLs have always needed developmentally-appropriate materials to learn English and to master English Language Development Standards. However, Gándara et al. (2003) concluded that many have not gained access to such materials. Hayes and Salazar (2001), in their study of 177 classrooms in the LAUSD, noted that teachers discussed "the problematic lack of resources and training to assist them to provide quality services to ELLs" (p. 23). Teachers felt a need for more high-interest and varied English-language development materials and wanted guidance from scripted instructional programs on working with their EL students (Gándara et al., 2005). Furthermore, according to many teachers, the CELDT used to assess the English proficiency of all California's ELLs did not provide them with a great deal of useful information of a diagnostic nature (Gándara et al., 2005).

Walqui (2008) noted that teachers should be well versed in their subject matter to provide students with as many scaffolds as needed to assist their learning. They also should become involved in professional growth and form partnerships to discuss, peer-coach, and advance

theoretical understandings of their practice. Walqui found that academic instruction for ELLs needed to break traditional molds to provide a rich, stimulating, highly interactive curriculum for language minority students. The very best classes for ELL students would not only lead to improved student performance but also create more successful, aware, self-assured, and articulate teachers. For this to happen, districts and schools have to be supportive of the growth of teacher expertise in teaching ELLs (Walqui, 2008). In addition, high schools should no longer assume prior literacy ability among their ELL students, but instead have to be prepared to teach literacy in explicit ways. This means that academic language and literacy instruction should be infused into all subject areas (Menken et al., 2012).

Moll's (1998) research showed that ELL students were thriving in classrooms where teachers were given autonomy and opportunities to reflect upon their teaching in order to better meet students' needs. This model of reflective practice for professional development differed from the traditional model of the expert instructor transmitting new knowledge to the passive recipient of the professional growth (Freeman & Freeman, 2015). In contrast, a reflective practice model positioned the instructor as facilitator who supported learners as they constructed their own understandings (Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004). Gebhard and Oprandy (1999) found that within reflective practice, there were several ways to examine one's own teaching such as journal writing, observation, audio and video recording, lesson reports, conferencing with a supervisor, and action research.

Moll (1994) identified three key characteristics of effective teachers working with English language learners. Effective teachers articulated theory and explained their practices; they argued with administration to allow for materials and a curriculum planned through professional judgment; and they drew on support from like-minded colleagues. Gersten and

Jimenez (1994) concluded that effective instruction for language-minority students challenged the students, encouraged student involvement, provided them with opportunities for success, and included scaffolding with a variety of graphic organizers to draw on their background knowledge and give them access to content. In addition, they added that effective teachers gave frequent feedback, made their content comprehensible, encouraged collaborative interactions, and showed respect for cultural diversity. Freeman and Freeman (1998) found that the best way to help students learn from both English and school subjects was to teach language through content that was organized thematically. The complexity of working with ELL students further has been complicated when educators have been tasked with ensuring students were afforded access to content material while acquiring academic English skills. According to Freeman and Freeman (1998):

> Students get both language and content. Research has shown that students can learn English and subject-matter content material at the same time. Students don't need to delay the study of science or literature until they reach high levels of English. Instead, they can learn from both simultaneously. Given the time limitations older students face, it is crucial that classes provide them with both academic content-area knowledge and academic English. (p. 62)

Freeman and Freeman (2002) argued, "As students acquire a new language, the teacher's responsibility is to make the input comprehensible and to use appropriate methods to assess students' progress" (p. 65). Fillmore and Fillmore (2012) found that language demands were such that many students, but especially ELLs, needed instructional support from teachers to discover how to gain access to the ideas, concepts, and information that were encoded in the text. Freeman and Freeman stated, "by teaching language through academic content organized around

themes, teachers help students develop the academic, cognitive, and linguistic proficiency they need to succeed in school" (p. 84). Furthermore, Freeman and Freeman identified practices that need to occur for ELL students to close the achievement gap that between EL students and English proficient students:

1. Engage students in challenging, theme-based curriculum to develop academic concepts;
2. Draw on students' backgrounds, experiences cultures and languages;
3. Organize collaborative activities and scaffold instruction to build students' academic English proficiency; and
4. Create confident students who value school and value themselves as learners. (p. 138)

Challenging students by setting high standards has been another key to helping students succeed. However, unless teachers carefully scaffold their instruction, the students may feel overwhelmed and give up (Freeman & Freeman, 2002).

In addition, for meeting the specific needs of ELLs, teachers should know how to address language progressions, language demands, language scaffolds, and language supports (Santos et al., 2012). Teachers should know how to create classrooms that are supportive of using and learning language. Such classrooms would benefit all students and would be essential for ELLs. To do this, teachers should learn to:

- Create confident students;
- Build opportunities for students to learn language and content from each other through purposeful, carefully structured and scaffolded tasks;

- Create engagement and discussion opportunities that socialize students to the language of the discipline through structures and routines that develop skill in disciplinary discourse
- Carefully organized groupings (pair, small group, and whole group) in classrooms to amplify and enrich the opportunities for comprehension, discussion, and interactions with ideas;
- Consider student's language proficiency and native (home) language when organizing students in groups for the purposes of learning (mixing diverse proficiency levels of the same native language) and production (mixing students from diverse native languages); and
- Take advantage of the assets of diverse students by understanding students' language skills and their culture, background knowledge, and experiences. (Santos et al., 2015, p. 5)

Freeman and Freeman (2002) found that if students had predictable routines, they were more comfortable taking risks to meet the language and academic content challenges they faced. Listening to teachers read was one of the specific recommendations by Showers, Joyce, Scanlon, and Schnaubelt (1998) for second-language students in middle and high school who have been struggling with reading. They found that students built vocabulary and improved their reading through both reading and being read to in school and at home, and through the teaching of higher-order comprehension tasks such as identifying main ideas and interpreting what they read. Moreover, school success depended on the development of academic concepts throughout each discipline. Freeman and Freeman noted that studying the discipline involved gaining knowledge of the concepts and the language needed to talk about the concepts. Teachers could build

students' academic English proficiency by helping them develop both the concepts and the academic language used to express those concepts (Freeman & Freeman, 2002). Elfers, Lucero, Stritikus, and Knapp (2013) found that given the complexity of teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students, creating a supportive and effective learning environment for ELLs was a complex undertaking that has significant implications for the work of school and district leaders.

Conclusion

The literature documented a discontinuity between the policies impacting English language learners and the practices that have been demonstrated to promote success for this population. Teacher preparation programs should be evaluated to ensure that beginning teachers understand the diverse needs of LTEL students. Freeman and Freeman (2015) noted the importance providing educators with knowledge and strategies to meet the diverse needs of LTEL students. Professional development has been necessary to shed further light on a population of learners that has been marginalized for too long as well as to provide teachers with the appropriate knowledge to be confident but to honor the linguistic needs of ELL students (Hutchinson, 2013; Samson & Collins, 2012). Teachers working with ELL students should challenge their misperceptions of these students created under misguided policies and unreliable assessments and focusing on deficits rather than the assets students possessed (Freeman & Freeman, 2015). Garcia (2012) found that the achievement of LTEL students would only worsen unless they could be challenged academically by educators who have been trained to access demanding coursework. If so challenged, this population could continue its rapid growth on a national level (Garcia, 2012). Policies impacting English learners have existed (Gándara et al., 2005) as have practices that have been demonstrated to promote success for this population

(Walqui, 2008). Teacher preparation programs should be evaluated to ensure that beginning teachers understand the diverse needs of LTELs. Olsen (2010a) concluded that secondary school teachers were generally unprepared to teach reading and writing skills, due to a lack of training in language development and a focus on teaching academic content. A continuing lack of attention on preparing teachers to work with LTEL students could result in the continued underachievement of ELL students and increase high-stakes testing and instruction that focuses on rote memorization rather than active language learning in literacy through social contexts (Crawford, 2004).

With an increase in ELL students and a projection that soon half of all public-school students will have non–English speaking backgrounds (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013), current classroom teachers must gain competence in working with this population of learners. General education teachers have been more likely to have ELLs in their classrooms, yet continue to have limited knowledge and understanding of how to best meet their academic, linguistic, and sociocultural needs (Gonzalez & Soltero, 2011; Jones et al., 2013). Sociocultural theory highlighted the importance of a skilled tutor in growing knowledge in a child through social interaction (Vygotsky, 1978). Developing the academic language skills in LTELs has been difficult for teachers when they have not been prepared or given the tools to meet the academic language needs of LTEL students. Grounding professional development within sociocultural theory could promote higher mental functions through social interaction. Eun (2008) found that through social interactions between and among people development in educators has been realized.

The achievement of LTEL students will only worsen unless they can be challenged academically by educators who have been trained to provide them access to demanding

coursework. Freeman and Freeman (2002) found that educators could assist in the success of LTELs through theme-based curriculum, drawing on students' backgrounds, experiences, cultures, and language, as well as collaborative activities and scaffold instruction to build on students' academic English proficiency. The sociocultural approach of learning development recognized and validated the relationship a student has with the social environment and how their cultural contributions, such as language and background, are critical instructional tools to be used and facilitated within this environment (Vygotsky, 1978). Literacy educators working within a sociocultural framework often have created supportive learning communities and provided tools and resources to help students connect to their background knowledge, or schemata (Anderson & Pearson, 1984), to make learning meaningful and relevant. This approach to teaching could create "zones of possibility" (Moll & Greenberg, 1990), where students' funds of knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & González, 1992) are utilized to anchor new knowledge. Walqui and Heritage (2012) noted that this is accomplished through apprenticeship in which the learner is invited to become a member of a community of practice. Researchers have posited that students are socialized into the academic practices of disciplines through joint activity and by being provided with the support or scaffolding with the opportunity to practice and eventually own or appropriate practices so that they become generative (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Colombi & Schleppegrell, 2002; Walqui & van Lier, 2010). In this sense, scaffolding has been defined as the appropriate kind of support required by students to engage in practice that helps them mature processes which are at the cusp of developing, while simultaneously engaging their agency. What students did in collaboration in class, they would be able to do alone in the future if supported by a teacher's well-designed activity (Walqui & Heritage, 2012). Furthermore, educators should negotiate their relationship with students to build on students' "cultural and

linguistic knowledge and heritage to create biculturally and bilingually competent youth" (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 25). Due to the important role educators have been assigned in the acquisition of academic literacy for their LTEL students, further research is needed on the experiences of secondary content teachers working with LTEL students in developing academic literacy.

This chapter synthesized information regarding the inconsistency of language policies in the United States in addition to the failing language and literacy policies that led to the phenomenon of LTEL students in California. The teaching practices educators have relied on to ensure academic growth in LTEL students should be challenging and structured to ensure student success as well as welcoming students' lived experiences to ensure academic growth. Professional development is necessary to shed further light on a population of learners that has been marginalized for too long as well as to provide teachers with the appropriate knowledge to be confident in their skill set and reflective practices to encourage ongoing learning. Teachers working with ELL students should challenge their misperceptions of these students created under misguided policies and unreliable assessments focused on deficits rather than the assets each students possesses.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

Researchers have found that secondary teachers have been increasingly responsible for developing the academic literacy of students; however, they have not been being granted the support and knowledge needed to grow both academic and content knowledge in the classroom. As the population of LTEL students in secondary schools has grown nationwide, so has the need for research on how to serve their needs (Olsen, 2010b).

This research included an analysis of the perceptions, knowledge, and practices of six secondary teachers of LTEL students in an urban comprehensive high school in Los Angeles. The study was designed to identify how secondary LTEL teachers perceived of their knowledge and practices in the development of academic literacy, and to explore how these perceptions influenced their practices. The research included collecting data from surveys, interviews, classroom observations, and follow-up interviews. Following the research design, the setting will be introduced along with the participants, the selection process and how the participants self-identified into the study. The chapter then explores the different instruments used to collect data and how the data were analyzed. The analysis enabled an exploration of how educators perceived their readiness to work with LTELs, and identified classroom practices. The analysis also revealed modifications and school-wide approaches to better meet the needs of secondary educators and LTEL students.

Research Question

This chapter describes how a mixed-methods design answered the research question at the core of this study: *What are secondary teachers' perceptions about their knowledge and practices about the academic literacy development of long-term English learners?*

Research Design

To best answer the research question guiding this phenomenological study, the researcher applied a mixed-methods approach. Using a mixed-methods approach allowed the researcher to gain a comprehensive understanding of secondary teachers' perceptions about their ability to develop academic literacy in LTEL students. Creswell (2003) explained that a mixed-methods approach "begins with a broad survey in order to generalize results to a population and then focuses, in a second phase, on detailed qualitative, open-ended interviews to collect detailed views from participants" (p. 21). This mixed-methods approach allowed for both general and detailed findings (Creswell, 2003). Patton (2002) suggested that the use of multiple instruments would "strengthen a study by combing methods" of both qualitative and quantitative nature, to achieve triangulation (p. 247). Mixed-methods research combines elements of qualitative and quantitative data methods. Reasons to choose this method have included one or more of the following (a) insufficiency of one data source, (b) comprehensive explanation of the results from multiple methods, (c) generalizability of the results is essential, (d) benefit to the study from a second method, (e) the need to gather qualitative and quantitative data driven by the theoretical perspective, or (f) increased reliability of results from a dual-method approach through multiple phases (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Mixed-Methods Research Design

The mixed-methods research design included both qualitative and quantitative analysis. The qualitative approach provided an in-depth understanding of the knowledge of high school teachers and the instructional material they accessed to meet the diverse needs of LTEL students in an urban high school in Los Angeles. Merriam (1998) found that qualitative research was "based on the view that reality is constructed by individuals interacting in their social worlds" (p.

6). The aim of this case study was to provide new meaning, and the focus was particularistic, heuristic, or descriptive.

In this phenomenological mixed-methods study, research tools included a survey, one-on-one focused interviews, classroom observation, and follow up-interviews. The Teachers' Experiences and Practices with LTEL Population Survey was used to collect participants' demographic data. More importantly, this tool allowed six teachers of LTELs to self-identify as study participants into the study for the focused one-on-one interviews, classroom observations, and follow-up interviews. Once the questionnaire identified the six participant teachers, qualitative data were gathered through the use of eight interview questions to understand the perceptions of the participants. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) proposed that interviews contributed to the case study that was characterized by detailed examinations of one setting. Following the focused interviews, quantitative data were gathered through classroom observations using the OPAL tool to answer the research question. Through the interview responses and classroom observations, the aim of the study was to add to the limited research pertaining to LTELs and how educators perceived their ability to increase academic literacy as well as the practices used at an urban high school in Los Angeles.

Qualitative Methodology

The qualitative portion of this study investigated the perceptions of high school teachers' from a comprehensive urban high school in Los Angeles of their ability to develop the academic literacy of LTEL students. The qualitative aspect of the design uncovered data for answering the research question succinctly and with accuracy, which subsequently provided an enriched understanding of teachers' perceptions about their ability to develop the academic literacy of LTEL students. Merriam (1998) mentioned multiple realities and how the individual interpreted

these realities based on his or her interactions with the world. An in-depth understanding of teacher perceptions could only be attained through a qualitative research design where educators' beliefs and experiences could be captured. Qualitative methods provided the researcher with a unit of analysis that allowed for a rich understanding of the research question in this inquiry related to secondary content-area teachers. Merriam (1998) stated that qualitative research was "based on the view that reality is constructed by individuals interacting in their social worlds" (p. 6). Furthermore, qualitative research allowed the researcher to purposefully select participants, sites, documents, and visual material that lead to understanding the problem and the research question (Creswell, 2009).

Maxwell (1996) argued that the main benefit to conducting a qualitative study rested in the credible results and theories based on experiences, an opportunity to improve practice, and an ability to collaborate with participants instead of just studying them. Additionally, interviews enabled the researcher to analyze both the site as context and the individual cases, providing in-depth understanding of the site context and meaning for the individuals involved (Merriam, 1998). On this topic, Maxwell (2005) stated:

> The teachers are treated not as a sample from some much larger population of teachers to whom the study is intended to generalize, but as a case of a group of teachers who are studied in a particular context (the specific school and community). The selection of this particular case may involve considerations of representativeness (and certainly any attempt to generalize from the conclusions must take representativeness into account), but the primary concern of the study is not with generalization, but with developing an adequate description, interpretation, and explanation of this case. (p. 71)

Maxwell (1996) also acknowledged that qualitative work emphasizing the perspectives of educators in the school setting usually had high potential for informing educational practitioners.

Quantitative Methodology

The qualitative data that were collected and analyzed were enriched by the findings from the quantitative phase of the study. Using multiple modes of data collection including the Teachers' Experiences and Practices with LTEL Population survey and the OPAL allowed the researcher to triangulate data leading to enhanced validity of the results, and allowed for a cross examination of the information (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2009; Huberman & Miles, 1998). The quantitative data from the Teachers' Experiences and Practices with LTEL Population survey allowed the researcher to determine demographic information including participant gender, ethnicity, credentials, experience, knowledge, and how they rated their teaching when working with ELLs. The quantitative data from the OPAL allowed the researcher to rate the instruction and practices of teachers in developing the academic literacy of students in content-specific classrooms and assisted in answering what knowledge was demonstrated by teachers of LTELs in developing academic literacy. The quantitative data were analyzed through descriptive statistics. The use of descriptive statistics was an essential way of arranging and summarizing data and was vital in interpreting the results of the quantitative research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006).

Phenomenological Study

Hatch (2002) described phenomenological research as using interpretive methods and descriptive or phenomenological methods to examine the lived experiences of the research participants. According to Husserl (1970), phenomenology is about understanding people's perceptions of a phenomenon. Perception, according to Husserl is the primary source of

knowledge and is realized by integrating ones intentions and sensations (Moustakas, 1994). Van Manen described phenomenology as the "application of logos (language and thoughtfulness) to the phenomenon (lived experience), to what shows itself" (Van Manen, 1984, p. 4). Creswell (2009) defined phenomenological research as a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher identified the essence of human experience about a phenomenon as described by participants.

Research Setting

Northeast High School was the fictitious name used for the secondary school where this case study took place. This school was an urban secondary high school located in Los Angeles, with a diverse range of students including LTEL students at the time of this study. Northeast High School was a traditional public secondary school with an enrollment of approximately 1,033 students in grades nine through 12.

Northeast High School has educated the students in Los Angeles for over 100 years. Northeast served students that were primarily Latino (72%) and Asian (26%), most of whom were low income and all of whom receive free or reduced-price lunches. This secondary school had a total of 50 teachers. At the time of data collection, 20 teachers were female, and 30 teachers were male. The ages of the teachers at this site ranged from early 30s to early 60s. Two teachers were National Board Certified and 26 had masters degrees while one had a doctorate. Most of the teachers were Latino, followed by White and Asian (See Table 2, Teacher Population at Northeast High School).

Table 2

Teacher Population at Northeast High School

Total Population	Ethnic Composition	Advanced Education
Female – 20	Latino 44%	National Board Certified - 2
Male – 30	White 35%	Master's Degrees – 33
	Asian 12%	Doctorate Degree - 1

According to Northeast's website, its vision was to prepare literate, responsible, and thoughtful students. The website also indicated its mission was to graduate all students ready for college and career.

Participants and Selection Process

The researcher narrowed the field of 50 teachers to 16 with the assistance of Northeast High School's Literacy Coach, who provided information regarding each teacher's enrollment of English learners. With a total enrollment of 1,033 students at Northeast High, 111 students (10.7%) were classified as LTEL's per Northeast High School's 2015–2016 Accreditation Self-Study. Initially, 20 of the 50 teachers met the first requirement of the study by having a population of at least 10.7% of LTELs in their classrooms. However, not all 20 of these teachers identified were teaching mainstream academic content classes. The researcher found four of the teachers identified as meeting the population requirement of LTELs in their classrooms but teaching special education classes or English language development courses specifically designed to prepare LTELs to reclassify as English proficient. The researcher used the English Learner Master Schedule to identify which educators taught academic content classes and also had a minimum of 10.7% LTEL students to identify the 16 teachers that qualified for the case study (See Table 3). Having identified 16 mainstream academic content teachers with at least 10.7% of the students in at least one of their classes, the researcher used the English Learner

Monitoring Roster report generated by the Literacy Coach to confirm the English learners were properly labeled by ensuring students had received six years of instruction in U.S. schools as ELLs, thus granting them LTEL status.

Table 3

Teacher Candidates that Met Study Requirements

Teacher		Subject	Total Students	LTEL Population Percentage	Gender	Ethnicity
Mr. A	Period 5	US History	37	12.1%	M	L
Ms. B	Period 8	Biology	34	14.7%	F	A
Ms. C	Period 5	Algebra I	22	10.8%	F	L
Mr. D	Period 2	US History	38	12.1%	M	L
Mr. E	Period 1	Geometry	36	12.5%	M	L
Mr. F	Period 6	American Lit.	33	12.1%	M	W
Ms. G	Period 1	English 9	35	13.0%	F	L
Mr. H	Period 8	World History	30	23.3%	M	L
Mr. I	Period 1	Algebra I	38	16.3%	M	A
Mr. J	Period 8	Chemistry	38	18.4%	M	A
Mr. K	Period 3	Algebra II	39	13.1%	M	A
Mr. L	Period 6	English 10	33	12.1%	M	W
Ms. M	Period 1	Biology	36	12.2%	F	W
Ms. N	Period 1	Geometry	39	15.4%	F	L
Ms. O	Period 3	Biology	41	19.2%	F	A
Mr. P	Period 3	Geometry	31	12.9%	M	L

Of the 16 teachers who qualified for the study, three taught English, six taught mathematics, four taught science courses, and three taught social studies classes. Six of the teachers identified for this study were female and 10 were male. At the time of the study, the school site had not devoted any professional development time for educators to understand who the LTELs in their classrooms were for the school year. The teachers at this site met once a week for professional development, but these sessions had not exposed educators to the literacy needs of their ELL or LTEL students. One literacy coach served as a resource for the 50 teachers working with ELL and LTEL students.

There had been only one attempt to introduce the ELL and LTEL students to the teachers at this site: English Monitoring rosters were placed in teacher mailboxes for them to bring with

them with them to professional development; however, time did not allow for these rosters to be reviewed, and administration never returned to them.

This study employed a convenient and purposeful sampling to select the secondary content teachers whose LTEL enrollment mirrored that of the overall LTEL student enrollment at this school. Sixteen teachers who meet the requirements of this study were sent the researcher provided the Teachers' Experiences and Practices with LTEL Population Survey (Appendix A) through an email link to these teachers. Of the 16 teachers, a total of six teachers representing the four different content areas of English, mathematics, science, and social studies and having the highest percentage of LTEL students were prioritized to continue in the study. The researcher first sent letters to the selected teachers requesting their participation in the research study, informing them of the purpose of the study, and reminding them of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses. When possible, the letter was hand delivered to allow the researcher to answer any questions or address any concerns. By taking part in the survey, the teachers were volunteering to take part in the study. The results of the surveys were also used to identify demographic information including years of experience, education level, type of credential to teach, and years of experience working with LTEL students (See Table 4)

Table 4

Participants Selected for One-on-One Interviews, Classroom Observation and Follow-up Interviews

Teacher	*Period*	*Subject*	**EL %*	***LTEL %*	*Ethnicity*
Mr. A	*5*	*U.S. History*	*21.2%*	*12.1%*	*Latino*
Ms. B	*8*	*Biology*	*29.4%*	*14.7%*	*Asian*
Ms. C	*5*	*Algebra I*	*29.7%*	*10.8%*	*Latino*
Mr. D	*2*	*U.S. History*	*21.2%*	*12.1%*	*Latino*
Mr. E	*1*	*Geometry*	*36.1%*	*12.5%*	*Latino*
Mr. F	*6*	*American Literature*	*24.2%*	*12.1*	*White*

*Note. * EL student less than 6 years as English learner ** LTEL student more than 6 years as English Learner*

To continue past the survey, teachers provided their contact information to allow the researcher to schedule one-on-one interviews. Following the surveys, the volunteers who self-initiated into the study later took part in one-on-one interviews, followed by classroom observations, and follow-up interviews. The researcher led the interviews; observed classrooms with the OPAL tool, and led the follow-up interviews.

Access

Access to Northeast High School was obtained by the researcher who was working at the site as at the time of the study. The principal of Northeast signed a letter authorizing the researcher to conduct this study at this school site. Having spent 6 of his 8 years teaching at Northeast High and teaching there at the time of the study, the researcher was familiar with the setting and had worked collaboratively with many of the teachers. Therefore, a relationship of trust existed with many of the educators who participated in the study.

Methods of Data Collection

The researcher must choose what type of data to collect to best aid in answering the specific questions (Merriam, 1998). The methods of data collection in this study allowed for both qualitative and quantitative data to be collected to provide specific data throughout the research process (See Figure 1).

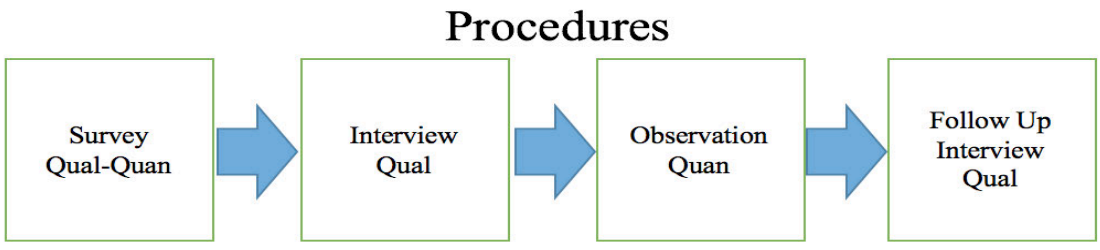

Figure 1. Mixed-methods procedures process.

In this case, to gain an accurate account of secondary teachers' knowledge and perceptions, surveys, one-on-one interviews, classroom observations, and follow-up interviews were used to collect data (See Table 5). The data were collected between February 2016 and March 2016 over a 30-day period.

Table 5

Procedures and Instruments for Data Collection

Method	Teachers' Experiences and Practices with LTEL Population Survey	One-on-One Interview	OPAL	Follow-Up Interviews
	Appendix A	Appendix B	Appendix C	Appendix D
Who?	All participants who volunteered to take part in survey.	Six participants selected based on their ELL/LTEL population.	Researcher observed participants with ELL/LTEL population.	Researcher met with all six participants individually.
What?	Demographic data survey and perspectives of working with LTEL students.	Closed and open-ended questions on teacher experiences with LTEL students.	Classroom observations using OPAL.	Open-ended questions for clarification and further exploration.
Where?	Northeast High School	Classrooms of teachers at Northeast High School	Classrooms of teachers at Northeast High School	Classrooms of teachers at Northeast High School
How?	Participants completed a survey that was emailed to them by the researcher.	Researcher interviewed six participants who volunteered and have an ELL/LTEL population.	Researcher observed participants classrooms and take notes of classroom practices.	Researcher interviewed each of the six participants asking questions based on analyzed data.
Why?	The data allowed the researcher to become familiar with the participants to identify six focus teachers.	Interviewed teachers regarding their professional training, professional development on site, and perceptions regarding LTELs.	Collected quantitative data of classroom practices of teachers in developing the academic literacies of LTELs.	The researcher needed to ask further clarifying questions regarding teacher knowledge and perceptions about their work with LTELs
Duration?	10-15 minutes for participants to complete.	10 days to interview and transcribe data. 45–60 minutes per participant per interview.	Six days for classroom observations. One hour per participant per observation.	15–30 minutes per interview during teacher's conference period after school and three hours to transcribe data.

Instrumentation

This study included the use of five methods of data collection: (a) teachers' perceptions of LTEL Preparation survey (See Appendix A), (b) one-on-one interviews (See Appendix B), (c) classroom observations using the Observation Protocol for Academic Literacies (OPAL), an instrument developed by Lavadenz and Armas (2009) (See Appendix C), (d) interviews (See Appendix D) for qualitative data, and (e) follow-up interviews to individually clarify findings. Teachers completed the Teacher's Perceptions of LTEL Preparation Survey, a survey that included demographic questions, along with questions to determine their experience with English language learners, the challenges of working with ELL students, and their professional development needs when working with this group of students that was adapted from an instrument previously used by Gándara et al. (2005). The One-on-One LTEL Teacher Interview questions were intended to provide educators with a means to articulate their experiences when working with LTELs, specifically, how they perceived their ability to develop the academic literacy of this population of students in their classrooms. The researcher used the quantitative data analyzed through the one-on-one interviews as well as the notes from the OPAL to create questions for further clarification through follow-up interviews with the six participants. Emergent design (Creswell, 2007) has been one of the hallmarks of qualitative research, and in emergent design adhering to the prepared interview protocol exactly (rather than being flexible and responsive during data collection) does not allow for the design to emerge naturally when research is conducted. To record classroom observations, the researcher used the Observation Protocol for Academic Literacies (OPAL) (Lavadenz & Armas, 2009) (See Appendix C). The OPAL is a research-based behavioral observation tool that measures teacher practices and classroom interactions from sociocultural and language acquisition perspectives.

Teachers' Experiences and Practices with LTEL Population Survey

After speaking to the staff of the school regarding the purpose of their study and the important role their responses would play in better understanding teachers' experiences working with LTELs, the researcher collected demographic data through a survey that was open to the educators at the school site who met the requirements of the study. The researcher administered a survey using Qualtrics. Participants completed the online questionnaire in about 15–20 minutes. The researcher used the results from the survey to determine the six teachers who had a minimum LTEL population of 10.7% in one of their classes and to better understand the experiences and perceptions of educators tasked with developing the academic literacy of LTELs.

Merriam (2009) noted that all questionnaires should contain questions referring to the particular participant demographics such as age, income, education, and number of years on the job relevant to the research study. The specific survey that was used for this research supplied information including gender, age, ethnicity, education, years of experience, classes taught, percentage of ELL/LTEL students, experience working with ELL students, challenges of working with ELL students, and professional development needs. The survey was emailed to the researcher by Dr. Patricia Gándara for use in this study. Every question that appeared on the Teachers' Experiences and Practices with LTEL Population Survey was formulated by Dr. Gándara, with the exception of question number eight, which was adapted from two different questions supplied by Dr. Gándara.

One-on-One Interviews

Following the survey, six respondents were chosen to take part in the one-on-one interviews, classroom observations, and follow-up interviews. Before the one-on-one interviews took place, the researcher used a pre-observation interview and verified that each of the teachers

who self-selected into the study had a minimum population of 10.7% LTEL students to continue as a research participant. The one-on-one interviews were composed of closed-ended and open-ended questions to understand how teachers perceived their readiness to develop the academic literacy of LTEL students in their classrooms (See Table 6).

Table 6

Interview Questions and Sources (Interview Protocol [Appendix B])

	Source	Question
Professional Knowledge	Adapted from Gándara et al. (2005)	4) How do you view your knowledge and preparation for meeting the needs of LTELs?
	Adapted from Batt (2008)	8) How well do you feel your colleagues are prepared to serve LTELs highly qualified for their positions?
	Researcher Generated	9) How and when were you made aware of the LTELs in your classroom, and how has the school supported you in working with your specific LTELs?
Professional Development	Adapted from Menken et al. (2012)	1) How many LTELs do you serve?
	Adapted from Gándara et al. (2005)	4) How do you view your knowledge and preparation for meeting the needs of LTELs?
	Adapted from Menken et al. (2012)	6) What assessment data have you collected about the LTEL students at this school?
	Adapted from Gándara et al. (2005)	7) What are your views of the professional development and other support that would best help you meet the challenge of teaching LTELs?
Perceptions	Adapted from Menken et al. (2012)	2) What do you see are the strengths and challenges for LTEL students in school?
	Adapted from Menken et al. (2012)	5) What methods or teaching approaches have you tried that you think are effective with LTELs?
	Adapted from Gándara et al. (2005)	7) What are your views of the professional development and other support that would best help you meet the challenge of teaching LTELs?

The interviews took place on the campus of Northeast High and in the classrooms of the educators being interviewed. The researcher interviewed six participants who volunteered and had a minimum LTEL population that reflected the school's population, one time for an initial interview, and again for a follow-up interview. The interviews took place in a span of 10 days and included time to transcribe data. Each interview lasted approximately 45 to 60 minutes. The interviews were semistructured with open-ended questions, and the conversations were documented through notes as well as audio recordings using an iPad with a voice notes application to assist with future transcribing and analysis.

Classroom Observation: The Observation Protocol for Academic Literacies

The OPAL (Lavadenz & Armas, 2009) was used for collecting classroom observation data and curricular documents (See Appendix C). Classroom observations were conducted using the OPAL to provide the researcher an opportunity to record notes and rank participants as they taught classes with ELL/LTEL students reflecting the school population. The OPAL was designed as a research-based classroom observation tool, and has been established as a reliable and valid classroom observation measure (Lavadenz & Armas, 2010). The OPAL used a six-point Likert scale, with scores assigned by trained observers, based on low to high levels of implementation, to rate instruction for academic literacies (Lavadenz & Armas, 2010). The classroom practices in the OPAL were measured in four areas: rigorous and relevant curriculum, connections, comprehensibility, and interactions (Lavadenz & Armas, 2009). It was used as the instrument by which effective practices for ELLs were identified. The researcher had attended an OPAL Institute to build expertise in identifying and providing feedback on effective practices for ELL students and had received certification for the instrument's use.

The classroom observations took place in the classrooms of the six focus teachers at Northeast High School. They enabled the researcher to collect qualitative data to analyze whether the classroom practices of teachers were developing the academic literacies of students. The one-hour observations were conducted in the classrooms of the six secondary teachers during the hours of 8:00 in the morning to 3:00 in the afternoon during late February and early March 2016 for the teachers who consented to be observed. The classrooms observed were examples of several different disciplines. The first three classrooms were observed in a one-week period and the remaining three classrooms were observed the following week. The observations took place on separate weeks to allow time for some preliminary analysis of the first three before observing the remaining classrooms. The classroom observations also allowed for detailed notes of the practices employed by the educators that added depth in data to the profiles created in this study.

Follow-Up Interviews

The OPAL observations were followed by interviews to clarify the participants' previous responses, to better understand classroom practices observed, and to allow for probing questions. During the interviews, participants were asked to describe their experiences, personally and professionally, of teaching long-term English learners in the general education setting. The interview protocol addressed the perceptions of these educators working to develop the academic literacy of LTELs. The six follow-up interviews allowed deeper insight as well as clarification of anything that was noticed during the one-on-one interviews and observations. Interviews were more personal than the OPAL and allowed each individual teacher to have a unique voice (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Interviews took place at the high school and were semistructured with open-ended questions:

1. How has assessment data informed your choice in text for your LTELs?
2. How do you select literacy skills for your LTELs and how do you monitor progress toward reading proficiency?
3. How do you select vocabulary and plan for scaffolds to ensure students understand the meanings?
4. What scaffolds do ELLs benefit from to develop academic literacy skills?
5. What is the value in using students' background knowledge and/or experiences to engage them?
6. How do you create the conditions where students have academic interactions in group settings?
7. How are assignments selected to allow for ELLs to develop literacy skills?
8. How do you monitor students understanding?
9. How do you select language goals for your lessons?
10. How has your credentialing program helped you in designing lessons that include language and literacy activities?
11. What ELL professional development have you received since your credential program? How has this training informed your teaching practices?

Creswell (2007) suggested being flexible with constructing research questions. In addition, the researcher should be prepared with follow-up questions or prompts to obtain optimal responses from participants. The researcher reconstructed questions to reduce misunderstanding and was able to design effective follow-up prompts to further understanding (Creswell, 2007). The follow-up interviews were used to address information that was unclear and needed further clarification (See Appendix D). The conversations were documented through notes and audio

recordings using a smart phone with a voice notes application, and were transcribed and analyzed. The researcher conducted follow-up interviews with the six teachers one at a time for approximately 30 minutes each at the end of March 2016.

This research developed six profiles, examining the experiences of different teachers teaching different content areas within the same school. Lichtman (2010) found that profiling was a process of transforming collected words into meaningful words. In this case, this research investigated the knowledge, experiences, and practices of secondary educators working to develop the academic literacy of LTELs.

Methods of Data Analysis

Multiple methods of data collection in this mixed-methods research design provided a rich variety of data on which to build a better understanding of the knowledge and experiences of LTEL secondary teachers. Creswell (1999) noted that a mixed-methods research design mixed both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis in a single study. When quantitative data precede qualitative data, the intent is to explore with a large sample first to test variables and then to explore in more depth with a few cases during the qualitative phase. Creswell (2002) described this approach as consisting of collecting quantitative data and then collecting qualitative data to help explain or elaborate on the quantitative results. Ivankova, Creswell, and Stick (2006) noted that a mixed-methods approach was desirable when seeking a more "robust analysis" than either qualitative or quantitative research alone could provide (p. 3). The researcher gathered quantitative data through the Teachers' Experiences and Practices with LTEL Population survey and determined how educators rated their knowledge in practices and preparation to work with LTELs. The information gathered through the qualitative phase of the

study consisting of the one-on-one interviews, the OPAL, and the follow-up interviews, which were meant to complement the quantitative phase (See Figure 2).

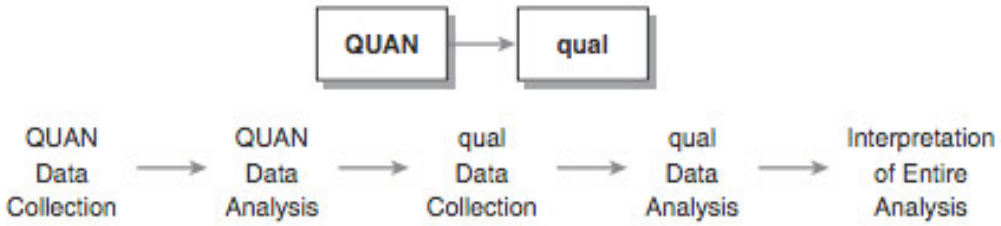

Figure 2. Mixed methods research process.

Qualitative Data Analysis

Researchers have described qualitative data as being read, reread, coded, and organized into domains, and quantitative data as being analyzed by statistical significance. This analysis, where patterns create connections that generate general statements about the phenomena being investigated has been described as inductive analysis (Hatch, 2002). In this particular case, secondary teachers' perceptions of their ability to develop academic literacy in LTELs were analyzed. The patterns that emerged were created through the collection of various forms of data with the goal of discovering emerging themes. Once these themes were recognized through the triangulation of data, evidence supporting or contradicting them was grouped to identify and further understand the perceptions of urban secondary teachers' readiness to meet the academic literacy needs of their LTEL population (See Table 8).

The first step toward recognizing emerging themes was to transcribe the data after they were gathered. After the data were transcribed, the researcher read and organized them. Next, the data were coded. Once the data were coded, a preliminary analysis was used to create a

description and generate themes. Creswell (2014) noted that discussion of interconnecting themes could be generated before making an interpretation.

Quantitative Data Analysis

Creswell (2009) described the key aspect of data analysis in mixed-methods research as "to check the validity of the quantitative data and the accuracy of the qualitative findings" (p. 219). The researcher used the OPAL to access and analyze quantitative data. A rating scale between 1 and 6 was used to observe rigorous and relevant curriculum, connections, comprehensibility, and interactions and a rating of *NO* was used when an item was "not observable" (Lavadenz & Armas, 2009). Each area of the OPAL (Lavadenz & Armas, 2009) was coded based on a rating system 1–6 in which 1–2 was *low*, 3–4 was *medium*, and 5–6 was *high*. The curricular analysis of the observations used this coding system to observe problem solving/critical thinking, access to materials, technology, resources, organized curriculum and teaching, high expectations, access to content in native language, transfer of skills, relating to students' social realities, helping students make connections, making learning relevant and meaningful, scaffolding instruction, amplifying student input, explaining key terms, feedback/checks for comprehension, informal assessment to adjust instruction, facilitating student autonomy, modifying procedures to support learning, communicating subject matter knowledge, and using flexible groupings (Lavadenz & Armas, 2009). Beyond rating instructors' classroom practices, the OPAL provided the researcher with qualitative data through notes that were taken to account for what the researcher observed in each classroom visit. The qualitative notes were used to generate additional questions for the follow-up interviews that took place after the classroom observations to clarify observations and elaborate on the findings. Furthermore, the study was designed (See Table 7) to attempt to gauge the perceptions of

educators in regard to their professional training, professional development, and ability to develop the academic literacy of LTELs.

Table 7

Research Design

Research Question	Instrument	Analysis
What are secondary teachers' perceptions about their ability to develop academic literacy of long-term English learners?	Survey	Descriptive Statistics
	One-on-One Interviews	Coding
	Observation Protocol for Academic Literacies (Lavadenz & Armas, 2009)	Descriptive Statistics
	Follow-Up Interviews	Coding

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics exist for the purpose of extracting meaning from numerical data (Anastas, 1999). In this study, the use of quantitative data was represented in the form of numbers that alone did not hold much significance. However, through descriptive statistics, the data was described more efficiently (Anastas, 1999). Descriptive statistics obtained from the OPAL and the results were integrated with the survey, initial interview, and follow-up interview to provide meaning for each numerical value and to associate each score with participant feedback and evidence of their practices. For each of the OPAL Domains, numerical data were generated through teacher practices, however, to provide context for the quantitative data, the researcher integrated qualitative data from responses on the Teachers' Experiences and Practices with LTEL Population Survey, one-on-one interviews, classroom observation notes and follow-up interviews by recording notes of teacher perceptions, teacher knowledge, and teacher practices in three different columns on a spreadsheet.

Profiles of Teachers of LTELs at Northeast High School

After all of the quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed, six teacher profiles were developed experiences of different teachers teaching different content areas within the same school. Lichtman (2010) found that profiling was a process of transforming collected words into meaningful words.

Criteria of Trustworthiness

Merriam (1998) spoke of three criteria that determine the quality and worth of a qualitative study: credibility, transferability, and dependability. Credibility referred to the internal validity. Transferability specified the congruence with others' experiences. Dependability revealed the internal consistency of data and the process of obtaining that data. If these criteria have been explored, a qualitative study can be deemed trustworthy.

Credibility

Merriam (1998) wrote, "Credibility is internal validity [and] deals with the question of how research findings match reality" (p. 201). In this study, the credibility question was: Will the interviews and the field notes which the researcher created truly depict the perceptions of the participants? For this reason, multiple data sources were necessary to secure an authentic representation of teachers' perspectives. Reflective field notes were used to bring awareness of assumptions, theoretical frameworks, and personal perspectives that might expose the researcher's biases and in retrospect affect the findings of the study.

Conclusion

The use of a mixed-methods study with a case study design was meant to explore secondary teachers' experiences working with and developing the academic literacy of LTEL students. Various types of data were analyzed through an inductive process to uncover emerging

themes. Chapter Four provides findings that reveal how these educators of LTELs perceived their knowledge and practices in developing academic literacy in their content areas. Chapter Four documents the teachers' discomfort regarding their knowledge and practices for developing the academic literacy of their LTEL students. Chapter Five analyzes the practices in place at the time of this study and the patterns that emerged.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Restatement of the Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to understand the perceptions, knowledge, and practices of secondary content area teachers on LTEL students' academic literacy development through various sources. The research included the use of multiple instruments of data collection for the purpose of triangulation, which helped offset potential threats to validity (Glesne, 1999). The Teachers' Experiences and Practices with LTEL Population Survey was a series of 33 questions to better understand the participants through both qualitative and quantitative methods. Data from the survey yielded descriptive information from the 16 teachers identified by the researcher as fulfilling the requirements of the study and allowed them the option to self-identify into the study. Seven teachers self-nominated to be part of the study; six were selected to continue to the one-on-one interviews, classroom observations, and follow-up interviews based on the criteria set. The researcher analyzed data from the one-on-one interviews, classroom observations, and follow-up interviews to comprehend the experiences provided to LTELs at an urban high school in Los Angeles. In sum, analysis of these data addressed the study's research question: *What are secondary teachers' perceptions about their knowledge and practices about the academic literacy development of long-term English learners?*

Context of the Study

Long-term English learners have been defined as English learners enrolled in any grade between sixth and 12th in schools in the United States for six years or more, who have remained at the same English language proficiency level for 2 or more consecutive prior years, or have regressed to a lower English language proficiency level as determined by the English language

development test identified or developed pursuant to Section 60810 (Senate Bill, 750, 2015). In this phenomenological study, the research explored the knowledge, practices and support of six secondary teachers working with LTEL students at a comprehensive urban high school in Los Angeles and analyzed the instructional knowledge and practices that informed how educators worked to develop academic literacy as well as the factors that were promoting academic literacy and challenges.

Setting: Northeast High School

At the time of the research, Northeast High School was an urban high school with approximately 1,033 students enrolled in grades nine through 12, located five miles from downtown Los Angeles. The ethnic groups that comprised the student population consisted of Latinos (72%), Asian (26%), and Other (2%). Of the total population, 10.7% of the students were classified as LTEL students.

Participants

The study participants consisted of six content area teachers from Northeast High School. The researcher utilized convenience and purposeful sampling according to (a) consistency with overall schools' LTEL student enrollment numbers (10.7%) and (b) their willingness to participate. They were selected from an overall pool of 16 teachers who met the requirements of the study. Merriam (2009) found that a researcher should first determine what selection criteria were essential in choosing; the people or the site to be studied. The criteria established for purposeful sampling directly reflected the purpose of the study and guided in the identification of information-rich cases (Merriam, 2009). This study employed a Teacher's Experiences and Practices with LTEL Population Survey (Appendix A), an initial interview, a classroom

observation, and a follow-up interview to allowing for a case study to emerge of teachers' experiences, beliefs and practices.

Instrumentation

This study included the use of five methods of data collection: (a) Teachers' Perceptions of LTEL Preparation survey (See Appendix A); (b) one-on-one interviews (See Appendix B); (c) classroom observations using the Observation Protocol for Academic Literacies (OPAL), an instrument developed by Lavadenz and Armas (2009) (See Appendix C); (d) interviews (See Appendix D) for qualitative data; and (e) follow-up interviews to individually clarify findings. Teachers completed the Teacher's Perceptions of LTEL Preparation Survey, a survey that includes demographic questions, along with questions to determine their experience with English language learners, the challenges of working with ELL students, and their professional development needs when working with this group of students. This survey was adapted from an instrument previously used by Gándara et al. (2005). The One-on-One LTEL Teacher Interview questions were intended to provide educators with a means to articulate their experiences when working with LTELs—specifically, how they perceived their ability to develop the academic literacy of this population of students in their classrooms. The researcher used the quantitative data analyzed through the one-on-one interviews as well as the notes from the OPAL to create questions for further clarification through follow-up interviews with the six participants. Emergent design (Creswell, 2007) has been one of the hallmarks of qualitative research and, in emergent design, adhering to the prepared interview protocol exactly (rather than being flexible and responsive during data collection) does not allow for the design to emerge naturally when research is conducted. To record classroom observations, the researcher used the Observation Protocol for Academic Literacies (OPAL) (Lavadenz & Armas, 2009) (See Appendix C). The

OPAL is a research-based behavioral observation tool that measures teacher practices and classroom interactions from sociocultural and language acquisition perspectives.

Data Derived from the Teachers' Experiences and Practices with LTEL Population Survey

Prior to their one-on-one interviews, the participants completed an initial survey independently. This instrument allowed the researcher to gain familiarity with each participant. More importantly it allowed participants to self-initiate into the study. The survey included some demographic questions including gender, ethnic origin, teaching authorizations, educational level, years of experience, number of LTELs taught, and hours of ELL in-service professional development.

Results from the Observation Protocol for Academic Literacies

The researcher observed six secondary classrooms during the months of February and March in 2016. Each observation lasted one hour. The classrooms of two social studies teachers were visited, Mr. A and Mr. D; two math teachers Ms. C and Mr. E; one science teacher Ms. B; and one English teacher, Mr. F. The OPAL tool was used to identify effective practices for ELL students. The results from the observations were first presented quantitatively then qualitatively to allow for triangulation. Merriam (1998) noted that observational data offered a firsthand account of phenomenon of interest to qualitative researchers (Merriam, 1998). To avoid bias, ethnographic field notes were used to represent reality versus what the researcher imagined was occurring. As Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995) asserted:

> Writing ethnographic field notes that are sensitive to members' meanings is primarily a matter not of asking but of inferring what people are concerned with from the specific ways in which they talk and act in a variety of natural settings. (p. 140)

The OPAL observation tool was used as the instrument by which effective practices for English language learning students were identified. The OPAL used a six-point Likert scale, with scores assigned by trained observers, based on low to high levels of implementation, to rate instruction for academic literacies (Lavadenz & Armas, 2010). The OPAL has proven to be a research-based classroom observation tool, and was established as a reliable and valid classroom observation measure (Lavadenz & Armas, 2010) enabling examination of four domains:

- Rigorous and Relevant Curriculum: The curriculum was cognitively complex, relevant, challenging, and appropriate for linguistically diverse populations.
- Connections: Teachers were mindful about providing opportunities for students to link content to their lives, histories, and realities to create change.
- Comprehensibility: Instruction allowed for maximum student understanding, and teachers utilized effective strategies to help students access content.
- Interactions: Varied participation structures allowed for interactions that maximize engagement, leadership opportunities, and access to the curriculum.

The information provided by the OPAL instrument revealed the degree of effective practices for EL students that were being incorporated in the classrooms of six content area teacher participants. The researcher recorded classroom practices along the four domains of OPAL to code each teacher's practices for themes, as well as to rank the facilitation of academic literacies for long-term English learners. An implementation score of 1–2 was *Low*, 3–4 *Med*, 5–6 *High*, and n/o was recorded as *Not Observable* using the OPAL research-based tool.

The scores indicated an average of 2.86 (Low) in the area of Rigorous and Relevant Curriculum, 2.45 (Low) in the area of Connections, 2.81 (Low) in the area of Comprehensibility, and 2.45 (Low) in the area of Interactions (See Table 8).

Table 8

OPAL Domain Scores

Teacher/ Domain	Rigorous and Relevant Curriculum	Connections	Comprehensibility	Interactions	Average
Mr. A	3.00	2.67	3.20	2.75	2.91
Ms. B	2.67	3.00	2.83	2.50	2.75
Ms. C	3.00	1.67	3.20	2.25	2.53
Mr. D	2.83	2.33	3.20	2.50	2.72
Mr. E	3.00	1.67	2.20	2.50	2.34
Mr. F	2.67	3.33	2.20	2.25	2.61

After transcribing and reviewing material from the classroom observations, the researcher coded them for themes. The data that emerged from the field notes generated insight about the supports, knowledge, and practices of educators working with LTELs.

Teacher Characteristics

The survey reported demographic, content expertise, and experience of the six participant teachers. The participants included Mr. A, a social studies teacher in his early 50s with 23 years of experience in the classroom. Mr. A was beloved by his students, as demonstrated by his three-year win streak as "Most Popular Teacher" among the graduating class. Mr. A's United States history classroom included 12.1% LTEL students.

Ms. B was a science teacher in her late 30s who had 15 years of experience as an educator. Ms. B committed many hours to academic programs at the school as a coach of the Academic Decathlon team. Ms. B's Biology class included 14.7% LTEL students.

Ms. C, a mathematics teacher in her late 30s with 13 years of teaching experience, was an alumnus of the school with an abundance of pride in her craft and strong rapport with students. Ms. C's Algebra I classroom included 10.8% LTEL students.

Mr. D, a social studies teacher in his late 30s with 13 years of teaching experience, was also an alumnus of the school and demonstrated his support of students' learning and growth through the various field trips he chaperoned on weekends. Mr. D's United States history class included 12.1% LTEL students.

Mr. E was a mathematics teacher and former administrator in his mid-50s who had 19 years of teaching experience. Mr. E had a background in the military and prided himself in creating an environment of learning through discipline. Mr. E's geometry class included 12.5% LTEL students.

Mr. F was an English teacher in his early 50s who had 20 years of classroom experience. Mr. F's classroom displayed many artistic artifacts, each piece created by students to demonstrate learning. Mr. F took on various roles at the school, including leadership positions and guiding beginning teachers. Mr. F's American Literature class included 12.1% LTEL students.

Based on the survey responses to demographic questions, all participants had more than 10 years of experience teaching (See Table 9). Four of the six participants had an authorization as a language specialist in addition to their single subject credential. None of the participants had master's degrees in English language development, but two had master's degrees in Education and Educational Administration. None of the participants was able to provide an accurate number of the LTEL students in their classrooms. Also varying was the number of hours of EL training each reported receiving in the last 3 years.

Table 9

Participant Demographic Information

Participant	Mr. A	Ms. B	Ms. C	Mr. D	Mr. E	Mr. F
Authorization(s)	Single Subject Credential CLAD or other ELD specialist credential	Single Subject Credential	Single Subject Credential BCLAD or other bilingual specialist credential	Single Subject Credential BCLAD or other bilingual specialist credential	Single Subject Credential BCLAD or other bilingual specialist credential	Single Subject Credential
Master's degree	None	Education	None	None	Educational Administration	None
Years of experience	23	15	13	13	26	20
Estimated LTELs	28	10	20	20	33	12
Actual LTELs	6	5	10	9	13	8

Specific Attention to ELL Students

Half of the participants responded that ELL students in the classrooms did not receive any in-class instructional assistance other than what was provided by the classroom teacher. One participant answered that he/she was unsure, while the two remaining participants indicated ESL/ELD lessons from a resource teacher and other paraprofessional support.

Five out of the six participants maintained that their greatest challenge in teaching ELL students was large class size. The remaining participant answered that locating material was both helpful and challenging; this participant mentioned large class size as the second greatest challenge in teaching ELL students.

The second greatest challenge for the remaining participants in teaching ELL students was low basic skill level. One educator did not feel he had been communicating effectively with ELL students as a result of his limited knowledge along with their performance in his classroom.

Other issues included a lack of resources to assist ELLs, mixed-level classrooms leading to students being distracted, annoyed, or cheated for having to wait for instructions to be given to ELL students. One participant felt there was not enough time to assist his/her ELL students in class. Together, these problems created tension for educators. All six participants indicated that, in addition to professional development, two issues that would help them improve their ELL teaching were ESL/ELD materials and more time and support for teacher collaboration.

Participant Self-Rating

The participants were also asked to rate their own teaching ability of ELLs (Appendix A). None of the participants believed his/her practices was poor. When teaching pedagogy and strategies for teaching content to ELL students, half of the participants rated themselves as *Fair*, two rated themselves as *Good*, and one rated himself as *Excellent*. When asked to rate their development of oral English language, three of the participants rated themselves as Fair, two rated themselves as Good, and one rated himself as Excellent. When asked to rate primary language reading, four of the six participants rated themselves as Fair and the remaining two rated themselves as Good. The participants then rated their primary language writing. Three of the six participants rated themselves as Fair while the other three rated themselves as Good. Respondents varied in the number of hours of ELL training they had received in the last three years although they were at the same setting. Many could not recall trainings or did not find training effective in assisting them in their work with ELL students.

Themes Derived from Classroom Observations and Interviews to Create Profiles

The four themes that emerged through the study were:

1. Challenges Educators Encounter with LTEL students
2. Limited Knowledge and Support

3. No Clear Approach by the School Site Beyond Lowered Expectations
4. Professional Development Requested

Each one-on-one interview took place in the participant's classroom. Each interview was scheduled 1 week in advance, and participants were given the option of interviewing in another setting if they desired more privacy. The researcher interviewed the six participants in a one-week period during the month of February in 2016. Each interview was scheduled for one hour. However, most lasted approximately 45 minutes. The researcher used the interview protocol to guide the conversations. Each interview was audio recorded and transcribed. After transcribing and reviewing material from the interviews, the researcher coded them for themes. The data that emerged from the interviews generated insight into the supports, knowledge, and practices of educators working with LTEL students. Creswell (2009) suggested a general procedure for analyzing qualitative data that included organizing the data into different types, reading through the data, writing notes, and ending with a coding process. Researchers have described qualitative data as being read, reread, coded, and organized into domains, and quantitative data as being analyzed by statistical significance. This analysis, in which patterns create connections that generate general statements about the phenomena being investigated, has been described as inductive analysis (Hatch, 2002). The first step toward recognizing emerging themes was to transcribe the data after they were gathered. After the data were transcribed, the researcher read and organized them. Next, the data were coded. Once the data were coded, a preliminary analysis was used to create a description and generate themes. In this study specifically, secondary teachers' perceptions of their ability to develop academic literacy in LTELs were analyzed. The patterns that emerged were created through the collection of various forms of data with the goal of discovering emerging themes. Once these themes were recognized through the triangulation of

data, evidence supporting or contradicting them was grouped to identify and further understand the perceptions of urban secondary teachers' readiness to meet the academic literacy needs of their LTEL population. The first step toward recognizing emerging themes was to transcribe the data after they were gathered. After the data were transcribed, the researcher read and organized them. Next, the data were coded. Once the data were coded, a preliminary analysis was conducted to create a description and generate themes.

To maintain the anonymity and confidentiality of the educators and their responses, pseudonyms were used to link each participant to their survey, one-on-one interview, classroom observation, and follow-up interview.

Data Related to OPAL Domains

A significant part of the strength of a mixed-methods study is the triangulation of data on the same phenomena from several different sources. The four domains of the OPAL instrument were used to organize data about the classroom practices and perceptions of the participant teachers, with each domain measured on an implementation scale of *low* (1–2), *medium* (3–4), *high* (5–6), and *not observable*.

High Expectations but Little Support

Mr. A was a social studies teacher. At the time of his interview, he was in his 23rd year of teaching. Mr. A was one of the most popular teachers at the school, and had a reputation for challenging his students. Mr. A could not identify who his LTEL students were and expressed frustration with meeting their needs. Mr. A's OPAL Domain Scores averaged 2.91, falling between low and medium. In his interview, Mr. A said that he expected his students to be able to interact with their textbooks, and his classroom practices tasked students with independent reading along with the completion of worksheets assigned from the textbook. Mr. A believed

students should be able to complete grade-level reading and writing tasks; this belief and practice contributed to a low OPAL Connections (2.67) and Interactions (2.75) score. Mr. A felt expecting anything less from students in his classroom would be a disservice to them and would only set them up for failure in their post-secondary ventures. Mr. A was persistent in his practices even if students struggled because he understood that many of his student would attend college after high school, therefore, they would have to make the necessary changes if they wished to succeed.

Mr. A believed a challenge of LTEL students in his classroom was their low reading comprehension. His classroom practices did not allow for a remedy since the students were asked to read worksheets and the textbook independently with little support in graphic organizers, differentiated instruction, or other scaffolds for students to understand the curriculum. The lack of student production made him question whether students had trouble following instructions, did not understand the instructions, or were choosing to do nothing. Like many of the teachers, Mr. A felt inadequately prepared to meet the needs of his ELL students and felt they were partly to blame for their lack of success in his classroom despite his admitting to feeling ill prepared to meet their unique needs. Mr. A did provide one-on-one support for students who approached him for additional help, but did not individually target his ELL population to ensure they understood their task or reading. One example of support Mr. A offered was the explanation of vocabulary verbally and through hand-drawn images, but he rarely used graphic organizers or other scaffolds to promote the acquisition of vocabulary. Although Mr. A admitted LTELs could speak and read with ease, he was concerned that these students had a difficult time understanding readings and instruction. Mr. A did demonstrate a mid-level OPAL score of 3.2 in Comprehensibility through his explanation of key terms, he rarely used graphic organizers or other assignments that allowed

students to refer to challenging vocabulary. Another challenge in educating his LTEL students was that Mr. A's class sizes were too large to give the individual attention required.

Mr. A felt he was not equipped to meet the needs of LTELs and relied on providing students with more time to complete work as well as more one-on-one help, stating, "I have no knowledge on how to meet the needs of LTELs, except giving them more time and one-on-one help" (Mr. A Interview, One). Effective approaches Mr. A found when working with LTELs were providing clear explanations and breaking down information. Mr. A had altered his practices to accommodate his lessons to diverse learning needs. The primary learning tool in Mr. A's classroom was the school-issued textbook, which posed problems for many of his students. Mr. A also provided students with background knowledge they would need to understand abstract concepts or definitions using examples from his life. Although students struggled with the workload he provided, they were always eager to go to his class and hear his stories.

Mr. A had collected data revealing the reading level of his students but did not feel as though more data on his LTEL students would be helpful. He stated, "I have not collected anything except STAR Testing, which helps me understand the reading level of my students, but I do not plan on collecting any further data" (Mr. A Interview, One). Although readily available, his students' performance data did not change his approach to using the grade-level textbook in his curriculum despite the lower reading level of his students. The high expectations with little support to promote the acquisition of content knowledge was present in his classroom, including engaging and relatable examples for students to grasp content; however, students were not challenged to answer complex questions on their exams. Consequently, Mr. A's practices demonstrated a higher score for Rigor and Relevance 3.0 due to the support to match the increased level of difficulty for students. Due to overcrowded classrooms, Mr. A's students took

multiple choice tests to allow efficient grading but never challenged students to problem solve or think critically independent of textbook readings and accompanying worksheets. Another accommodation for ELL students was a lower grading scale so more could pass with at least a D.

Mr. A wanted to know how to help LTEL students; specifically, strategies, lesson demonstrations from professionals, models, and ongoing learning over time, articulating, "having a professional teach the class so I know what is going on" (Mr. A Interview, One). Mr. A began his teaching career as a teacher assistant and picked up strategies he thought were useful and learned from what he saw did not benefit students. Much like the other teachers at the school site, Mr. A did not feel comfortable with the level of knowledge he possessed and sought content-specific professional development. Through our dialogue, Mr. A was embarrassed to admit he did not know who his LTEL students were, but was open to learning more about how to effectively work with ELL students though insisting that training be purposeful and supports realistic.

Mr. A was reserved about critiquing whether he believed his colleagues were highly qualified in their preparation to serve LTEL students because he felt LTELs were never discussed but was blunt about not feeling highly qualified: "We never talk about LTELs, so I do not know. I can only speak for myself, I do not think I am highly qualified, and the recommendations I have been given are unrealistic" (Mr. A Interview, One). A limited focus on LTEL students may have contributed to Mr. A's low Connections and Interactions OPAL Domain Scores, usually utilizing the book and connections to the students' lives, but never fully integrating the community and issues within it into his curriculum. Mr. A did not know who his LTEL students were until we met to confirm if his LTEL students were still enrolled in his class. In addition, lacking awareness of his LTEL population, Mr. A often placed students into teams.

While students were working in collaboration, Mr. A went around the classroom to ask questions of random students in each team. Before this, students were reminded that each was responsible for knowing everything that the team has been assigned. Mr. A did this to encourage collaboration, but more so because he understood that many of his students required support that he could provide with large class sizes and diverse learning needs.

Regarding support provided by the school, Mr. A could only identify a teacher assistant placed in his class with the most LTELs. However, he found that the teacher assistant was no more skilled in working with LTEL students. He stated, "The school has placed a teacher assistant in one of my classes, but I do not think he is prepared to help my LTELs and I have not seen any benefit" (Mr. A Interview, One). Mr. A expressed that he had to make do with the resources available to him; as a result, in an attempt to allow LTEL students the opportunity to benefit from the knowledge of their peers, Mr. A placed students in groups to foster academic interactions. Once in groups, students were assigned individual questions to answer; they were assigned roles, and the group was meant to provide mutual support but also to monitor each other's progress. If one person got the wrong response, they all lost points, so the group shared the responsibility of making sure everyone's answers were correct. Although the intent of placing students in a team setting was to foster interaction, at no point was the necessary verbal communication given to clarify expectations. Students were able to simply swap papers to look at the responses that were created. As a result, Mr. A's Interactions on the OPAL Doman Range were limited and further hindered by the nature of the group work that punished everyone because students with higher comprehension skills moved away from assisting students with lower skills and did their portion of the task instead.

Mr. A monitored students by questioning them during classroom discussions to check their understanding of the material being taught and refocus on the part of the lesson that students were not grasping. Another method used by Mr. A to monitor understanding was to ask students to comment or elaborate on others' student responses. The language goals were selected based on the vocabulary that was essential for a student to participate in the lesson. Like many of the teachers interviewed, Mr. A expressed a desire to learn more about how to address the needs of his ELL and LTEL students but stressed the importance of the training being content specific and practical enough to implement with large class sizes.

Mr. A was well-intentioned, caring, and committed to preparing students for life after high school. However, his incomplete knowledge of LTEL students' needs placed a limit on the scaffolds he could provide at the time of the interview. Mr. A was aware that his students read, on average, at the fifth-grade level, yet readings from the textbook were at the 11th-grade level. Mr. A attempted to differentiate readings for his students, but felt that it created too many problems. Students who were given less challenging texts felt embarrassed, and those with more challenging texts were upset that they had more difficult work. The tension in the classroom—in addition to the lack of support to continue differentiating reading assignments from the school—discouraged Mr. A from trying to support ELL and LTEL students. Mr. A also struggled with the dilemma of not adequately preparing students for college because of his own experience as well as experiences his former students had shared with him of transitioning or failing to transition.

Watering Down the Curriculum and Expectations

Ms. B was a science teacher at the time of this study and was in her 15th year of teaching. Ms. B was highly involved with programs that challenged students academically and, as a sponsor, spent most of her afternoons coaching students. Ms. B estimated that she had about 10

LTELs enrolled in her classes; however, at the time of the interview, she was only teaching five LTEL students. Ms. B said she was challenged by the lack of persistence on the part of her LTELs. Ms. B articulated that LTELs were her students who did not commit themselves to the assigned tasks, stating, “There is no persistence, these are the ones that do not try sometimes, or sometimes they try for a bit or they do not try at all” (Ms. B, Interview One). The lack of perseverance on the part of her LTEL students may have contributed to the lowered expectations and low Rigor and Relevant Curriculum OPAL Domain Score of 2.67. Furthermore, Ms. B believed, “There is a lot more negative energy coming from LTELs, it’s like they do not want to be in school” (Ms. B, Interview One). Ms. B viewed her LTEL students as reluctant learners who created barriers to their academic success, as a result to accommodate their apathy, she lowered the rigor and use of academic literacy in her curriculum to ensure a higher rate of students passing her class.

Ms. B wondered if her LTEL students had limited reading skills because they were able to complete questions when text was read out loud. Ms. B’s final exam had evolved to include half multiple-choice questions, while the other half was lab stations that were specific for the class. There was a practicum section that required students to follow written instructions and answer in short answers, however, the inability of students to perform on the more challenging assessment, pushed her to include more problems students could respond to, even if they were randomly selecting a letter to bubble. The lowered expectations matched with strategies that did not support literacy but produced a low Comprehensibility OPAL Domain Score of 2.83 as students were not supported to access the content, they were simply given the content. Not only were her assessments watered down to increase the passage rate, but Ms. B also changed her approach to disseminating content information by also reducing exposure to academic literacy.

Ms. B admitted she was supposed to assign reading a chapter each section, but the process of incorporating the book was too daunting. Instead, she turned to incorporating more graphic interpretations and classroom discussions about visual text. Ms. B intended to use a novel, but was unsure how much they could read on their own or how long it should take them. She recommended reading it out loud as a class because of the lack of pictures. Once again, a lack of training, professional development, and awareness of LTEL student needs limited the approach to learning Ms. B used in educating her ELL students. Indeed, she admitted to not being able to monitor student progress toward reading proficiency. In an effort to promote reading among her students, she offered extra credit to LTEL students but did not offer students additional support. She articulated her lack of familiarity with incorporating reading in her content class: "I really don't have a lot of reading unfortunately. Not in my classroom, not in science. Just textbook and maybe science articles. We looked at the Los Angeles Times, but we looked more at diagrams" (Ms. B, Interview Two).

Further challenging was the perceived resistance of her LTEL students. Ms. B added that they always questioned the work assigned to them. She indicated, "These students always seem to ask 'why?' and complain about having to do work" (Ms. B, Interview One). Ms. B dealt with the negativity of her students and low reading skills by relying heavily on PowerPoint presentations with worksheets that required students to fill in blanks using the slides. Although the information presented to students made connections to their lives and communities posting an OPAL Doman Score of 3.00, this task did not allow for much in the areas of Comprehensibility or Interactions. Furthermore, the worksheets were not rigorous, nor did they promote literacy as they usually took the form of notes and fill-in-the-blank worksheets.

Ms. B said her greatest challenges in educating LTELs were that she did not know the difference between LTELs and other students. She also noted the irregular attendance of these students, adding, “My biggest challenge is that the LTEL students are not here; they have sporadic attendance. Attendance is a big issue” (Ms. B, Interview One). Furthermore, she felt it was difficult to work with students with a lot of negative energy, as though they did not want to be in school.

She reported that group work was effective until the students decided not to work in a group. As a result, Ms. B limited assignments that provided students with leadership opportunities for fear that they would not work effectively. Consequently, the reduction in teacher-facilitated dialogue and team discussion impacted her low OPAL Domain Sore of 2.50 in Interactions. In addition, Ms. B found reading out loud, not accepting blank work, encouragement, and positive feedback to be effective practices with LTEL students.

Ms. B had not reviewed any assessments and felt that her roster should provide more information on which students are classified as LTELs, conveying, “I do not look at any assessments. If I were to look at my roster, I would not know who my LTELs are” (Ms. B, Interview One).

Regarding her preparation and knowledge, Ms. B viewed her credentialing program helpful, but could not recall any specific trainings that helped her work with LTELs. She stated, “My credential program ended 15 years ago, I think I got pretty good training, but at this school site, I cannot recall any specific training on LTELs” (Ms. B, Interview One).

Ms. B believed professional development on the different needs of English learners would be helpful, along with small class sizes, teacher assistants, and increased funding for hands-on tools, models, and manipulatives. With regard to preparation to serve the needs of

LTELs, Ms. B insisted that her colleagues were prepared with a variety of activities and approaches to make content relevant, stating, “I think we are actually prepared because we do an assortment of activities and try to make class relevant. I think we have good staff here, but LTELs might need smaller class sizes” (Ms. B, Interview One).

Although Ms. B stated she believed that she and the faculty were prepared with an array of activities to make classroom learning relevant, she exhibited and expressed an over reliance on worksheets and PowerPoint presentations to cover material. Ms. B was also made aware of her LTELs when we met to review her roster and understood that the school supplied her with a teacher assistant for her class with the most LTELs. Aside from the teacher assistant, she did not feel as though the school had focused on LTELs and vaguely remembered a professional development session aimed at strategies for ELL students, maintaining, “I think it is assumed that any strategy for ELLs would work for LTELs, but we have not focused on them in a long time” (Ms. B, Interview One).

Seeking Professional Guidance

Ms. C was a mathematics teacher at the time of her interview, and was in her 13th year of teaching. Ms. C had a welcoming smile and warm personality. Ms. C knew the total number of LTEL students in her classes because she wanted to prepare for the interview, explaining that she verified she had 12 LTEL students before we met. It did not surprise me that Ms. C went out of her way to know how to respond but, unfortunately, her knowledge of LTEL students was limited to the total she was teaching. Ms. C was under the impression, like most of the teachers in the study, that LTEL students were challenged by a lack of motivation and skills, stating, “the first thing that comes to mind as challenges is lack of motivation, apathy, and very low basic skills (Ms. C, Interview One). Ms. C also had the challenge of following a pace to ensure

students were exposed to content that would appear later in the year in Smarter Balance Testing. The pace and content students in her class were being exposed to resulted in an OPAL Domain Score of 3.00 for Rigor and Relevant Curriculum. Further, she lacked culturally relevant lessons or lessons that connected with the lives of students. Ms. C's OPAL Domain Score in Connections was a low 1.67. For someone with such a strong connection to the community and an alumni of the school, Ms. C felt restricted by the scripted pacing plan and was unhappy with the lack of support and professional development to meet the needs of ELL students.

She felt that another challenge was that teachers in her school did not have the "resources or support to teach LTELs adequately the way it should be" (Ms. C, Interview One). The greatest challenge identified by Ms. C was her students not seeing the benefit of education even though she felt students did aspire to reach college, arguing,

> LTEL students do not see the benefit of education, and I think the students do care. I think they have been shaped by society to feel that they are entitled to things, but an education is something you have to work for. (Ms. C, Interview One)

As someone who grew up in the same community and attended the same school, Ms. C was faced with a dilemma of working with students whom she believed lacked motivation even though they attested to wanting a college degree. Ms. C worked with the strategies she had found most effective given her training, but felt little was directed to address ELL students specifically.

Ms. C worked to make the content comprehensible, for instance, a typical lesson involved her solving an algebra problem while the students took notes. Next, the Ms. C would provide students with another algebra problem to solve and asked for their participation in helping her solve the problem. Finally, the students would be tasked with solving algebra problems individually. Students were also provided with notes including sample problems and the steps to

solve each problem as they worked individually to complete their task. When introducing new vocabulary, Ms. C selected literacy skills that allowed students to understand the words. Most reading came from instructions and word problems. Ms. C believed that if students understood the instructions, they could also translate the word problem to an equation, and then write their own questions. Ms. C was concerned with students being able to understand vocabulary and concepts and, despite the pacing plan, provided students with multiple ways to comprehend the content and engage in literacy development.

The students used graphic organizers to compare and contrast, to provide extra examples, and to write their own questions on their Cornell notes. The practice of using Cornell notes allowed her students to more easily comprehend the material and gave them a chance to refer to the examples they were provided. These practices did increase Ms. C's Comprehension OPAL Domain Score to 3.20. However, little effort was made to connect the content to the students' lives or foster interactions among students, and that may be attributed to the rigid nature of a scripted pacing plan along with a greater need for professional development.

Ms. C did not think she had the necessary knowledge, but at least she tried to help students and felt discouraged about how poorly equipped she was to teach ELL and LTEL students, stating, "Being bilingual is not enough" (Ms. C, Interview One). The approaches that she believed were effective with LTEL students included chunking lessons, breaking down information step by step, sometimes group work, and one-on-one support. Although Ms. C had looked at assessment data, their performance in her class played a bigger role in assessing their knowledge as well as skillset.

Reflecting on professional development, Ms. C believed the school did not provide enough information on LTEL students and required teachers to master skills without guidance or feedback to determine if they were implementing a strategy or lesson effectively; she said:

> I think the school provides us with a small sample, but we have to go on our own to explore the training in our classrooms, so we do not know if we are doing it right or wrong. It is frustrating to not know whether you are implementing a strategy correctly or if you are wasting the students' time. (Ms. C, Interview One)

Furthermore, Ms. C wanted professional development centered on motivating students, best practices for LTELs in math courses, and differentiated instruction strategies to replace direct teaching, indicating, "I want to learn strategies that force students to interact more, learn through each other . . . versus direct teaching, because students are tired of hearing me talk" (Ms. C, Interview One). Ms. C's OPAL Domain Scores demonstrated a need for further support in establishing Connections and strategies that increase Interactions due to her low score of 2.25 given the significant amount of time dedicated to teacher-led instruction. Ms. C recognized the need for professional development and also expressed interest in gaining the tools to enhance all of her students' learning experience, especially LTEL students.

Ms. C believed her colleagues had some knowledge but were not highly qualified to work with LTEL students because she had not seen this knowledge put into practice. Specifically, she remarked, "I think that the teachers try their best with whatever knowledge they have to prepare LTELs, but they are not highly qualified. We are all doing what we can with what we have been provided" (Ms. C, Interview One). Ms. C recalled being made aware of LTELs in her class toward the end of the first semester—in late November or early December—even though the school year started in August, stating, "There has been minimal support and training. We were

promised a training, but it never happened. I was expecting hands-on training, but right now LTEL students are not the focus of the school" (Ms. C, Interview One).

Misdirected Awareness of LTEL Student Needs

Mr. D was a social studies teacher at the time of his interview and was in his 13th year of teaching. Mr. D was an alumnus of the high school and long-standing member of the local community. Mr. D was not sure how many LTEL students were enrolled in his classes, and guessed about 20 students. Regarding the strengths of LTEL students, Mr. D believed there was a program that made sure they got reclassified as soon as possible. In addition, Mr. D expressed his belief that "some LTELs try, since some want to move ahead" (Mr. D, Interview One) but he was not convinced that every LTEL student was determined to succeed. Regarding the challenges for LTEL students, Mr. D noted their attendance, maintaining:

> A big challenge is the attendance of my LTELs; a lot of LTELs are chronically absent and because of this they are failing. When they do show up to class, they are lost, and the challenge of catching up causes them not to try. (Mr. D, Interview One)

The greatest challenge for Mr. D as he worked with LTELs was that their lack of confidence stifled their work. He added, "I think being labeled as an LTEL makes them feel incapable at times and brings down their confidence. They do not want to lose the little confidence they have so they do not risk trying" (Mr. D, Interview One). Contributing to an overall OPAL Domain low average score of 2.72 was the overuse of the history textbook to disseminate content. Mr. D cautioned, "You cannot provide LTELs with the same workload of other students because they will drown" (Mr. D, Interview One). Mr. D understood lowered expectations to be a practical and well-meaning accommodation to support LTEL students in his

classes. The limited expectations on the part of his LTEL students may have contributed to the low Rigor and Relevant Curriculum Doman Score of 2.83, as well as low Connections and Interactions scores. Mr. D questioned his knowledge of LTELs, stating, "It is difficult to meet the needs of LTELs in classrooms with mixed populations. Sometimes I forget to meet the needs of LTELs since you have to teach to their needs and every LTEL has specific needs" (Mr. D, Interview One). Mr. D felt he was not prepared to meet the needs of LTELs and recommended, "LTELs should have a class of their own in isolation from other students" (Mr. D, Interview One).

Mr. D implemented Cornell Notes to provide his LTEL students with a way to organize their thoughts regarding an issue or event, define key terms in the section, and summarize the information. Effective practices that met the needs of LTELs were shorter assignments, lowering the grading scale, providing them with alternate assignments such as PowerPoints, posters, research papers, and quizzes that were oral. Mr. D's willingness to adapt his assignments to include visual components and remove writing were reflected in his OPAL Doman Score in Comprehensibility to 3.20, but were negatively reflected in his Connections and Interactions scores.

Also, responsible for Mr. D's mid Comprehensibility score, which surpassed all other domains, was that he monitored LTEL students' progress toward reading proficiency. Mr. D asked LTELs to talk about what they understood and what they wanted more clarification and support with. It was important for him to get students to talk to him, and he offered help before and after school. However, students were not assisted much when it came to dialoguing in class, nor was there an established routine for students to engage in discussion as most of the classroom work was independent work. Consequently, Mr. D's Interactions score was a low 2.50. One

literacy skill Mr. D had chosen involved reading, but he used readings that were easier for LTELs to understand. From each textbook chapter, Mr. D selected only the most essential vocabulary words. Additionally, he had students create flashcards in their notebooks by making three columns, each filled with the word, the definition, and pictures for the vocabulary words. Aside from the flashcards, Mr. D built vocabulary through chunks of reading, note taking, providing a small project with scaffolds and plenty of time to finish.

Mr. D had seen the assessment data provided by the administration but also claimed it was not useful because he found, "It is difficult to figure out the information that is being provided" (Mr. D, Interview One).

Mr. D would have appreciated professional development aimed at strategies and observing practices that would benefit LTELs and that would avoid feeling as though he was doing something wrong. Mr. D was not sure what to think of how qualified his colleagues were, but was able to express his frustration with not being able to teach his LTELs, stating:

> I would love to see some strategies from Mr. X. He's the only teacher I think knows what he is doing. Sometimes I feel lost because other teachers are reporting success, so I wonder if I am doing something wrong. Qualified or not, I do not know how to reach my LTEL students. (Mr. D, Interview One)

Mr. D was made aware of his LTELs in the middle of the semester but could not definitively recall the number of LTELs because he felt the focus for the year had been special education students. A lack of attention to the specific needs of his LTEL population may have contributed to the overall low support for this group of students and an over reliance on the textbook, Cornell notes, and visual projects to assess student learning. Another challenge was the lack of support once information on students had been disseminated. The lack of resources,

including how to assist LTEL students, may have attributed to the low Connections Domain Score of 2.33. Furthermore, Mr. D stated that it was up to teachers to figure out what everything means: “No one has come into my classroom to provide support of any kind” (Mr. D, Interview One). Mr. D’s frustration epitomized a sentiment shared by most of the teachers in this study, each of whom wanted to learn strategies to benefit their LTEL students; however, they felt that they were not being adequately supported.

Knowledge in a Cabinet

Mr. E was a mathematics teacher at the time of this study and was in his 19th year of teaching. He estimated that he had taught 33 LTEL students throughout all of his classes. Unlike other teachers who believed that LTEL students’ biggest problem was a lack of motivation, Mr. E found that a greater challenge to these students was improper programming; stating:

> LTEL students need to be programmed properly in the classes they need so they do not get a teacher that does not speak their native language at all. Even with a BCLAD, teachers might not be ready to meet the needs of LTELs. (Mr. E, Interview One)

What also distinguished Mr. E was that at one point in his career he was an administrator of a secondary school. The experience as an administrator provided him with more knowledge of specialized programs but his knowledge seldom translated into deliberate strategies to assist ELL students.

Another challenge he discussed was motivating students to develop academic language. Although he identified a need to motivate students to develop academic language, Mr. E dedicated significant amounts of instructional time to allow students to work independently. Mr. E’s Rigor and Relevant Curriculum Domain Score of 3.00 revealed complexity in the problems

students were being assigned; however, limited language support was provided, and students were not required to incorporate content-specific language in their work. Students were never asked to explain their response, even though they had to walk to the front of the room to record their steps and response. Mr. E's classroom appeared to be more student centered; however, beyond students answering questions on the white board, the limited student interactions, limited writing and reflective practices demonstrated a largely teacher-centered learning environment. According to Mr. E, "LTEL students think they know what words mean in different settings, but the jargon of a discipline requires different knowledge of the word" (Mr. E, Interview One). Mr. E believed that LTEL students possessed many strengths including the fact that they could redesignate at any time. He also believed that LTEL students could demand to take the CELDT anytime. Mr. E's confidence in their abilities may have contributed to a higher Rigor and Relevant Curriculum OPAL Domain Score. However, this confidence may have limited his efforts in making content relevant to students and their lives. In addition, his practices promoted limited comprehension and limited interactions. Even though students repeatedly walked to the front of the classroom to solve problems, not once were they asked to justify their responses or explain the problem-solving process either verbally or in writing, although the task could have easily integrated literacy. It may be that Mr. E was not prepared to meet the language needs of his students. He expressed being challenged with the different learning levels in the classroom. Mr. E felt that, as a whole, the school was not equipped to meet the language challenges including limited vocabulary, all of which are made worse when the academic expectations do not align with school support, training and focus. "Classrooms are created where the needs of students are treated the same even though LTEL needs are different than other students" (Mr. E, Interview One). Interestingly enough, a thoughtful insight about the need for differentiated

learning for LTEL students was not practiced in his classroom. Consequently, the lack of differentiated learning and an overreliance on assigning problems from the text may have contributed to a low Comprehensibility OPAL Domain Score of 2.20. His classroom walls demonstrated no differentiated lessons or literacy despite his awareness of the unique needs for LTEL students.

Concerning his knowledge and preparation, Mr. E believed that "There is an art to teaching which includes figuring out what will work with students and being flexible because what might work with one group may not work for another" (Mr. E, Interview One). Mr. E felt equipped and comfortable to work with any group of students, but did not continually seek to understand if students comprehended content or connections, whether he was providing enough time to interact, and whether the lesson was appropriate for the skill level and age of the students. As a result, Mr. E's OPAL Domain Score in Connections of 1.67 may have been impacted by his inability to link content to the lives of students despite awareness of an array of strategies. "Methods that had been effective with LTEL students according to Mr. E included, SDAIE, AVID strategies help students learn the language of the class. Cornell Notes, PQ5R. but nothing matters in a classroom without great classroom management" (Mr. E, Interview One).

Mr. E easily named different strategies that would have increased his low Comprehensibility score of 2.20, but exhibited no effort to use any of these strategies when observed, and the student work on his classroom walls did not show signs of strategies meant to increase student comprehension and learning. There were stacks of knowledge in Mr. E's cabinets, and he flipped through a resource guide and read off different ones he used in his classroom; but it seemed as though he was only prepared to read them and not implement them. For all the strategies Mr. E could name, he demonstrated greater pride in establishing a learning

environment, believing nothing would work without first establishing good classroom management.

Mr. E had only viewed the assessment data on LTEL students that was provided at the beginning of the year but could not remember exactly when in the year, stating, “The data was handed out but there was never time devoted to understanding what was on paper” (Mr. E, Interview One). However, Mr. E used assessment data in his choice of texts for LTEL students. In addition, he felt it was impractical to follow a pacing plan. He reported teaching in response to students’ needs rather than to topics or standards that needed to be completed by the end of the year.

Mr. E chose literacy skills for LTELs and monitored progress toward reading proficiency through informal assessments, verbal questions, and deciding whether students’ needs were math-based or related to language. If a student spoke another language, he sought to understand if that person had transferable skills. Students wrote little in his class because it was another challenging skill that must be taught. Writing took place approximately three times each month because of factors such as classroom management, writing skills, reading comprehension, and math skills.

Mr. E said he would appreciate professional development that provided follow-up support that directly impacted learning for LTELs. Regarding whether his colleagues were highly qualified to work with LTELs, Mr. E offered an ambivalent response; he said he would like to assume

> Everyone is highly qualified; everyone has gone through the same training; we work for the same district. If I am being honest, I would say a C minus. That is

the grade we deserve for our knowledge and support of LTEL students. (Mr. E, Interview One)

Mr. E asserted that the school had not supported him in any way to address who his LTELs were or how to best meet their needs, stating, “On paper the school might argue that there is support and training, but it is all deception, no one has supported me” (Mr. E, Interview One).

He believed he created the conditions for students to have academic interactions in group settings as soon as they come into his classroom. “The tone is set by implementing daily procedures” (Mr. E, Interview Two). However, there was no structure to the conversations taking place and the audible discussion was not mathematics related. Furthermore, students were told that they needed to talk to each other about the subject matter of the class, but never asked to reflect on the conversations that took place or held accountable in any other way. The lack of student discussion or literacy may have limited Mr. E’s OPAL Domain score in Interactions, which was a low 2.50. Students were asked to listen, compare arguments, identify flawed logic, and ask questions to clarify or improve arguments but were never provided the support, guidance, or scaffolds to do so.

There were no specific assignments for ELL students to develop literacy skills. They were asked to meet the same grade-level standards as other students. In addition, Mr. E believed it was an ELL’s responsibility to get into discussions using the essential vocabulary words, if not in English, in Spanish. True to his word, he did not help facilitate the use of vocabulary words, and much of the classroom time was devoted to solving problems.

Mr. E monitored student understanding by circulating around the room, sending students up to the board to answer questions, and asking students to talk to each other. He also monitored

students discussing the problems of the day, intervening as necessary to correct students' language or mathematics.

Mr. E selected language goals for each lesson based on the textbook's recommendations. He stated he taught the words on the core vocabulary list. However, there was no evidence of writing samples anywhere in his classroom or on the worksheets students were assigned.

Mr. E felt his credentialing program prepared him to design lessons that included language and literacy activities because he was taught about standard templates and the standard approach to building a lesson plan after deciding what students needed to learn from the textbook.

One-Size-Fits-All Scaffolding

Mr. F was an English teacher at the time of this interview and was in his 20th year of teaching. Mr. F was always interacting positively with students and made every effort to make them smile or even giggle. Mr. F believed that he served about 12 LTELs and came to this approximation based on observation, interaction with students along with formal and informal assessments but did not recall ever being given any official documents that would have provided this information.

A strength that Mr. F had witnessed most frequently was the work ethic of LTEL students. He stated, "This population of students has to work twice as hard as other students" (Mr. F, Interview One).Mr. F also expressed what he found as challenges of working with LTEL students:

> Language acquisition, unfamiliar vocabulary, reading and writing skills. Even more so, these students often feel uncomfortable and as if they do not fit in with other students. They lack confidence in social interactions including vocal

presentations, and cooperative learning groups have proven to be difficult for them. (Mr. F, Interview One)

The greatest challenge he faced was "differentiating instruction to accommodate LTELs and providing the required additional scaffolding" (Mr. F, Interview One). A result of attempting to address the challenge of differentiating instruction and using scaffolds to support learning, Mr. F's OPAL Domain Scores were low in Rigor and Relevant Curriculum, Comprehensibility, and Interactions. Writing tasks in Mr. F's classroom incorporated content familiar to the students such as the city they lived in, but the expectation was that they were not capable of producing more than a couple of sentences at a time. Consequently, Mr. F's grading practices highlighted the minimum students needed to accomplish to pass with a "C," and he consistently reminded students while they were tasked with completing writing that they were capable of at least a "C" since the expectation was low. The expectation for a "B" and an "A" were also explained, however, Mr. F stressed producing at least "C" work more than anything. To assist students to reach at the minimum a "C," he provided students with a sentence starter that helped them begin their first sentence, for example, "The author believed Los Angeles was magical because . . ." (Mr. F, Classroom Observation). Another support for students in his classroom was that Mr. F was conscious of the need for students to hear words pronounced correctly, so he read the articles aloud. Beyond a sentence stem to begin their response and the article being read to them, students were not given support.

Mr. F felt he must repeat himself continuously and did so as a support for his LTEL students but felt it burdened students who did not need supports: "It becomes challenging when the other students become frustrated because they are ready to move on, yet I must be sure everyone is ready" (Mr. F, Interview One). Mr. F faced friction from some students when trying

to teach college preparatory writing, when there were students who did not have a command of basic grammar. He reflected, “LTEL students need individualized instruction; unfortunately, I do not always have the class time to provide it” (Mr. F, Interview One). The observations demonstrated a one-size-fits-all approach to providing scaffolds to his students with little effort to differentiate whether it be a lack of knowledge or perceived time.

Although Mr. F claimed he tiered the readings for students’ different levels, but only recently was he made aware of a website that had tiered readings for different levels and could provide him with more choices in text for LTEL students. When observed, only one article on Los Angeles was assigned to everyone, and it was read to the students by the teacher. The lack of scaffolds and differentiated practices along with low expectations in his classroom may have contributed to a low OPAL Domain Score in Rigorous and Relevant Curriculum of 2.67. Also included were assessments that were visual and meant to provide students with options that were creative but not literacy based.

Mr. F chose literacy skills for LTEL students based on formative assessments such as the STAR reading test. In his lessons, Mr. F monitored what students “lacked and built a lesson around that” (Mr. F, Interview Two). However, he never articulated to the researcher or the students what the goal of their writing was, therefore there was not a clear understanding regarding what skill was being developed. Another way Mr. F claimed he monitored progress toward reading proficiency was through occasional one-on-one conversations. No one-on-one conversations happened during the classroom observation, but Mr. F could be heard reminding students to complete the task.

Vocabulary and scaffolds were planned according to Mr. F to ensure students understood meanings through contexts or “word walls.” Then he used a tiered format whereby the words

grew more complex. Students were verbally encouraged to seek the help of other students if they needed support in completing their task, but no clear structure for students to engage in dialogue existed. On the day of the visit, although the article read was complex and used rich vocabulary, students were not provided a graphic organizer or another way of decoding the meaning of words, which may have contributed to a low OPAL Domain Score of 2.25 in Interactions. In addition, no word wall was visible, but students did have access to dictionaries but none of them was seen using this resource. Mr. F compared his approach to building vocabulary as teaching synonyms to a degree. However, beyond the article read to them, the students had no way of accessing the vocabulary needed to comprehend the reading unless they knew what every word used meant or had the skills to decode meaning.

Sentence stems, thinking maps, and group collaboration were scaffolds from which ELL students benefitted to develop academic literacy skills according to Mr. F, and he clearly used sentence stems on the day of the observation. However, no group collaboration or other scaffolds were visible.

Mr. F believed he would benefit from professional development to provide him with strategies to differentiate instruction, stating:

> It is difficult for me to address the needs of all students when they have so many different needs. It would also be beneficial to have more information about the students' academic history and progress as far as language is concerned. (Mr. F, Interview One)

Mr. F did not think he had had sufficient professional development to meet all of the challenges experienced while teaching this population of students, stating, "I would benefit from professional development that demonstrates how to best to meet ELL individual needs, as well as,

professional development that informs planning that caters to all learners" (Mr. F, Interview One). Mr. F asserted that teachers at his school were highly qualified and were good at what they did. However, he also argued:

> This particular population of students is often overlooked. Classes are overpopulated and there is little time to provide individualized attention. It was easy to become engrossed in a lesson and focus on the end product and forget to meet the needs of LTEL students. (Mr. F, Interview One)

Regarding when Mr. F was made aware of his LTEL population, he was not sure if he had been formally made aware. He reflected, "Perhaps I was given a printout of information, I do not clearly remember. Nonetheless, there is never any real discussion about the population in question" (Mr. F, Interview One). Similarly, to the other teachers involved in the study, Mr. F had little information regarding his LTEL students and their ability levels but strived to know more to provide this unique population with proper supports.

Rigorous and Relevant Curriculum

The data in this study showed that observed lessons were rigorous. However, the subject matter was not always meaningful to the students nor did it provide them with opportunities to transfer skills between their primary language and target language. One of the key domains of the OPAL involved the implementation of a rigorous and relevant curriculum, and as Lavadenz and Armas (2010) noted:

> Teachers need to maintain high expectations for student learning while organizing curriculum that builds students' understanding of universal themes. Expectations are established based on content and performance standards as well as knowledge of students' academic, developmental, and linguistic needs. (p. 11)

Data from the OPAL Rigorous and Relevant Curriculum domain ($X = 2.83$) indicated that the participants were still in development along the learning path to teach language continuum. Although the participants engaged students in critical thinking, incorporated the use of a variety of texts and supplemental resources, and tried to connect themes to show relationships, they lacked linguistically appropriate learning goals that were attached to grade-level academic content reading.

Connections

The data in this study showed that observed lessons consisted of basic attempts by the participants to relate instructional concepts to social conditions in the students' community. Participants were able to help students see relationships and connections between subject matter and previous learning, usually relying on visuals and questions to draw connections. Data from the OPAL Connections domain ($X = 2.45$) indicated that the participants were still in development along the learning to teach language continuum.

Comprehensibility

The data in this study showed that observed lessons allowed for student understanding but would benefit from the use of more scaffolding strategies to make subject matter more understandable to LTELs. The OPAL domain on comprehensibility of classroom instruction indicated:

> Teachers should identify key vocabulary for content and language development. It was critical to provide multiple opportunities for students to use and internalize academic vocabulary as well as language structures. This maximizes comprehensibility during directed instruction and scaffolds comprehension during independent reading. (Carlo et al., as cited in Lavadenz & Armas, 2010, p.14)

Observed lessons consisted of participants often checking for understanding through incisive questions during instruction. Furthermore, participants used the questions they asked to check for understanding to amplify students' input. In addition, often participants provided students with visuals to help them understand concepts and allowed students to illustrate their responses. Lacking in the classroom observations were scaffolding strategies and devices to make subject matter understandable. Data from the OPAL Comprehensibility domain ($X = 2.81$) indicated that the participants were still in development along the learning to teach language continuum.

Interactions

The data in this study showed that observed lessons consisted of participants making basic attempts to employ classroom structures that involved student choice and opportunities for students to critically interact with and examine content through diverse perspectives. Participants sometimes redirected students in a positive manner with a focus on learning and modifying lesson sequence to accommodate student learning. Participants also sometimes used appropriate target language, including pronunciation, articulation, tone and age-appropriate/ level-appropriate language, often relying on grade-level content and reading to access course material. There were basic attempts to use flexible groupings to promote positive interactions and accommodations for individual and group learning needs. Students were often asked to collaborate with students in the area if they had questions. When students were placed into groups, accommodations to support LTELS were not evident. Data from the OPAL Interactions domain ($X = 2.46$) indicated that the participants were still in development along the learning to teach language continuum.

Review of Scores

A review of the scores on the OPAL survey revealed what the educators had expressed: they were not prepared to provide their LTEL students with the literacy opportunities needed for the development of their literacy skills. Upon further reflection, the scores exposed that none of the participants was able to score in the high range of effective practices in developing the academic literacies of ELLs. Instead, they operated within the low and medium range.

Aware of their limitations, the participants insisted on the need for ongoing professional development as well as a desire to increase their limited understanding of the needs of ELL and LTEL students. Although limited, each of the participants had integrated in their classrooms practices that could benefit ELL and LTEL students. Nonetheless, the need to increase their capability to impact the literacy skills developed by students in their classroom remained.

The scores also reflected the lack of willingness of educators to embark on practices or strategies that had not been fully developed due to limited professional development and school site support. Although the participants understood they were not assisting ELL and LTEL students as well as they wanted to, within the classroom and through their practices, they were all on the brink of providing their ELL and LTEL students with the supports and classroom experience to develop their literacy skills.

Data Derived from Follow-Up Interviews

The researcher conducted follow-up interviews with all of the teachers to clarify their previous responses, which focused on their knowledge, practices, and perceptions regarding LTEL students; to comment on the classroom practices observed; and to allow for probing questions (See Table 10). The focus of the follow-up interview questions was to determine how data informed the decisions teachers made to select, plan, teach, and monitor LTEL students'

literacy development. These interviews took place at the end of February 2016 in the classrooms of the participants. They were scheduled at the convenience of each participant and lasted approximately 30 minutes. The researcher used the following interview protocol to guide the conversations:

1. How has assessment data informed your choice in text for your LTELs?
2. How do you select literacy skills for your LTELs, and how do you monitor progress toward reading proficiency?
3. How do you select vocabulary and plan for scaffolds to ensure students understand the meanings?
4. What scaffolds do ELLs benefit from to develop academic literacy skills?
5. Is there value in using students' background knowledge and/or experiences to engage them?
6. How do you create the conditions wherein students have academic interactions in group settings?
7. How are assignments selected to allow for ELLs to develop literacy skills?
8. How do you monitor students' understanding?
9. How do you select language goals for your lessons?
10. How has your credentialing program helped you in designing lessons that include language and literacy activities?
11. What ELL professional development have you received since your credential program? How has this training informed your teaching practices?

Table 10

Follow-Up Interview Questions

Question	Follow up to question	Literature review
1. How has assessment data informed your choice in text for your LTELs?	#6	Provide experiences within ZPD
2. How do you select literacy skills for your LTELs and how do you monitor progress towards reading proficiency?	#2	Scaffold support, frequent checking for understanding
3. How do you select vocabulary and plan for scaffolds to ensure students understand the meanings?	#5	Scaffolds while teaching vocabulary
4. What scaffolds do ELLs benefit from to develop academic literacy skills?	#4	Explicit instruction of metacognitive and cognitive strategies
5. Is there value in using students' background knowledge and/or experiences to engage them?	#5	Building on students linguistic and cultural strengths
6. How do you create the conditions where students have academic interactions in group settings?	#5	Fostering academic interactions
7. How are assignments selected to allow for ELLs to develop literacy skills?	#4	Opportunity to participate in instructional practices that help students
8. How do you monitor students understanding?	#2	Guiding language
9. How do you select language goals for your lessons?	#4	Identify language demands; set clear goals for readings
10. How has your credentialing program helped you in designing lessons that include language and literacy activities?	#4 #3	Designing language and literacy activities
11. What ELL professional development have you received since your credential program? How has this training informed your teaching practices?	#7 #9	Designing language and literacy activities

During the follow-up interviews, the data presented practices that were repeated throughout the data collection process including heavy use of grade-level textbooks in each of the content classrooms except in Mr. F's class, which had recently begun using readings closer to the reading levels of his students. The scaffolds provided for students often included visuals, and help often came in the form of repeating instructions, stressing key words, or placing students into groups. The teams in which students were placed did not come with clear roles and expectations for each team member.

Every teacher with the exception of Mr. E found value in—and admitted to—trying to incorporate relevant lessons for their students when possible. Mr. A emphatically argued in favor of the value of using students' background knowledge and/or experience to engage them. Accordingly, he used examples they could relate to because they understood them better. For instance, sometimes they did not remember the academic term, but they remembered his example. Furthermore, Ms. B found value in using students' background knowledge and experiences to engage them, stating, "The material or lesson becomes more memorable; it leaves with them out of the classroom and allows for future discussions" (Ms. B, Interview Two).

Through their efforts to develop academic literacy, no uniform strategy was used or implemented by the participant teachers. One teacher had students read newspaper articles. Ms. Ms. B ensured that one of the questions on student exams was open ended. Ms. C focused on having her students find definitions, stating, "I provided the students with definitions, examples, and I tried to make connections with prior knowledge" (Ms. C, Interview Two).

Regarding their credential programs, most teachers found that the programs focused on creating lessons plans without catering to the specific needs of different populations, including English learners. Only Ms. C found that her credentialing program prepared her "somewhat in

designing language and literacy activities" (Ms. C, Interview Two). The program focused more on providing teaching strategies in differentiating and scaffolding techniques. Teachers felt that the school could help them improve their knowledge and practices with ELLs by focusing more on trainings and providing time to facilitate discussions that would lead to curriculum development.

Themes from Teacher Profiles

Four themes emerged through an inductive analysis of the one-on-one interviews. These themes explain the experience of six urban public secondary teachers' knowledge, practices, and perceptions about their work with LTELs. The four themes were:

5. Challenges educators encounter with LTEL students
6. Limited knowledge and support
7. No clear approach by the school site beyond lowered expectations
8. Professional development requested

Challenges Educators Encounter with LTEL Students

The participant teachers felt there were several challenges involved in teaching LTEL students. With the exception of one teacher, all of the participants felt overwhelmed with large classes and unable differentiate instruction for all of their learners. Half of the participants believed that their LTEL students demonstrated a lack of confidence in their ability, and one added that being label a LTEL might have impacted their assertiveness academically. Participants believed that policies that placed emphasis on preparing students for college took precedence over ensuring their students' distinct needs were met. The focus on college readiness by the school and district, along with the phasing in of state assessments, spurred the participants to maintain a rigorous pace in their classrooms. In continuing their lessons without providing the

proper supports to their LTEL population, the participants demonstrated a lack of confidence in their ability to reach the spectrum of learning abilities in the classrooms. Additionally, half of the participants felt there was not enough persistence or motivation on the part of LTEL students. Furthermore, half of the respondents felt that LTELs' skills were not increasing, due to low basic skills that kept them from understanding readings or instruction. Another challenge conveyed by half of the participants was a lack of attendance; one teacher described the attendance of LTEL students as "sporadic."

Limited Knowledge and Support

Most of the participants did not use the available data on their ELL and LTEL students. Two of the participants did not know the difference between LTEL students and other ELL students in their classrooms. All but one of the participants did not have an understanding of who the LTEL students in their classrooms were. Three of the six participants accessed assessment data, while two stated they were provided data but were not sure what the data were, and one admitted to never seeing assessment data. One of the participants stated that the data meant nothing.

The lack of comprehension derived from the limited support that was granted to the participants. Five of the six participants conveyed that they did not have the necessary knowledge to differentiate and meet the needs of ELLs and LTELs. Furthermore, the school site had promised a series of professional development events that never occurred. One participant felt comfortable with his/her knowledge because it is about figuring out what works for students.

No Clear Approach by the School Site Beyond Lowered Expectations

The participants had strategies that assisted their work with LTEL students. However, with the exception of two practices, the educators varied in the strategies they implemented to

reach this population of students. Two of the participants indicated the use of explicit instruction as a beneficial strategy. Three of the six participants used group work as a tool; however, they also admitted that group work was not always successful. Although the participants did not state that they were being supported by the school site in designing curriculum to support LTEL students, all of them tried to connect class content to the students' backgrounds when possible. Other strategies included providing students more time, positive feedback, shorter assignments, alternate assignments, AVID strategies, and reading out loud and checking for understanding. Four of the six participants also felt it was necessary to lower their expectation for their LTEL students by limiting literacy, reducing the length of assignments, and lowering their grading school in the absence of knowledge and practices to assist LTEL student learning.

Professional Development Requested

The majority of the participants felt there was not enough of a focus on the needs of LTEL students in the professional development they experienced. Most of the participants desired more ongoing support to meet the needs of LTEL students throughout the entire school year. Nearly all of the participants believed they would benefit from strategies appropriate to LTEL students as well as training on how to differentiate instruction for this population of learners. Half of the participants wanted professional development in planning lessons and practices specific to LTEL students. Furthermore, teachers were interested in professional development regarding alternative assessments, understanding the different categories of ELL students, and motivating LTEL students.

Conclusion

Chapter 4 detailed the experiences and perceptions of six urban secondary public-school teachers in Los Angeles and their lack of awareness and support to develop the academic literacy

of their LTEL students. After reviewing the data collected from a survey, one-on-one interview, classroom observation, and follow-up interview, several themes emerged. The teachers believed that they were unable to meet the needs of LTEL students. Even though efforts were made to differentiate instruction, most teachers relied on visual texts as a resource. When their LTEL students were disengaged or apathetic, the participants felt their accommodations were ineffective but had limited knowledge to remedy the situation. Almost all of the teachers felt unprepared to develop the academic literacy of LTEL students and expressed concern that the school had not offered practices, resources, or ongoing support. All of the teachers believed that the school's staff as a whole was unprepared to meet the needs of ELLs. All of the teachers indicated that the school site had not devised a plan to ensure the needs of LTEL students were met. Each participant used an array of practices in his/her classrooms to deliver content, but there was no uniformity in practices aimed at developing academic literacy. In the end, they requested more support in best practices, assessments, differentiating instruction, and ongoing support from the school and their colleagues. Chapter Five provides a summary of the findings, answers to the research question, analysis of the findings, implications, and recommendations for future studies.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this study was to analyze the knowledge and practices of teachers' impact on LTEL students at an urban high school in Los Angeles. The findings suggested particular knowledge and practices that had contributed to the development of LTEL students. It is crucial to understand and address these issues to enrich the knowledge, practices, and support shaping the experiences of educators whose students were being tasked with developing both content knowledge and academic language. This chapter includes a summary of the study, analysis of the knowledge and classroom practices that defined the opportunities for LTEL students to develop academic literacy in core content classes, an assessment of the significance of the findings, and recommendations for practice and further research.

Summary of the Study

Subjects of the study were six core-content teachers from Northeast High School. The six participants met the criteria of the study because they taught at least one content class with a minimum 10.7% population of LTEL students. Senate Bill 750 (2015) defined LTELs as English learners who:

- Are enrolled in any of grades 6–12;
- Have been enrolled in schools in the United States for six years or more;
- Have remained at the same English language proficiency level for two or more consecutive prior years; or
- Have regressed to a lower English language proficiency level as determined by the English language development test identified or a score developed by the superintendent on any successor test.

- In any grade six to nine, has scored far below basic or below basic on the prior year's English language arts standards-based achievement test.

For the purpose of triangulation, the research incorporated multiple methods of data collection in this phenomenological study. Sixteen teachers were identified as meeting the requirements of the study and were provided a link to take a survey with the option of self-initiating the next phase of the study. Based on survey results and self-selection, the convenience and purposeful sampling used in this study included four males and two females. Following the survey, participants contributed data in one-on-one focused interviews, classroom observations using the OPAL instrument (Lavadenz & Armas, 2010), a research-based behavioral observation tool that measures teacher practices and classroom interactions from sociocultural and language acquisition perspectives. The OPAL used a six-point Likert scale with scores assigned by trained observers based on low to high levels of implementation to rate instruction for academic literacies (Lavadenz & Armas, 2010). The classroom practices in the OPAL were measured in four areas: rigorous and relevant curriculum, connections, comprehensibility, and interactions (Lavadenz & Armas, 2009) as well as follow-up interviews, all of which provided an assortment of data for analysis and triangulation to produce teacher profiles. The researcher analyzed the quantitative and qualitative data in terms of its relevance to the research question. The findings indicate ways to improve the academic experiences of both LTEL students in secondary schools and the educators tasked with developing content and academic literacy proficiency.

Research Question

This qualitative, mixed-methods, phenomenological study sought to answer the question: What are secondary teachers' perceptions about their ability to develop academic literacy of long-term English learners?

Sociocultural Theory Lens

The researcher analyzed the data through the lens of sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky noted that much important learning by the child occurs through social interaction with a skillful tutor. The tutor might model behaviors or provide verbal instructions for the student through social interactions. A child seeking to understand the actions or instructions provided by the tutor using the information to guide or regulate his/her own performance is referred to by Vygotsky as cooperative or collaborative dialogue. Vygotsky asserted that there was a difference between what a child could achieve independently and what a child could achieve with guidance and encouragement from a skilled partner. Vygotsky argued that zones of proximal development are areas in which the most sensitive instruction or guidance should be given, thus allowing the child to develop skills he or she would then use on his or her own and foster higher mental functions. Consciousness, the notions of self and identity, physical skills, and mental abilities all have their origin in social interaction between the child and parent, and among the child, peers, and others, including teachers (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky (1978) stated that "Human learning presupposes a specific social nature and a process by which children grow into the intellectual life of those around them" (p. 88). Solitary work, either on tests or in classroom activities, is incompatible with Vygotsky's conception of pedagogy.

Within the context of their work, the participants in the study overwhelmingly questioned their preparation and the support provided by the school site to understand the needs of their LTEL students. For example, Ms. B felt she had received good training to teach her content; however, when asked about her training and preparation to work with LTEL students, she replied, "I cannot recall any specific training on LTELs" (Ms. B, Interview One). There was a general discomfort among the teachers in responding to questions related to LTEL students but also a

concern by teachers who wanted to be better informed of the needs of LTEL students. To illustrate this point, Ms. B stated, “The problem is I do not know the difference between LTELs and other students” (Ms. B, Interview One). Olsen (2010b) found that LTEL students remain an invisible group, and that was true on the campus of Northeast High. None of the educators knew the number of LTEL students in their classes, perpetuating a problem that existed for LTEL students, as their individual needs remained overlooked, and they were boxed into a group with other students building English proficiency. This issue highlights the need for educators to be knowledgeable of the students in their classrooms and to understand how to access information about their students. Educators are a resource for LTEL students; however, their impact hinges on their training, knowledge, and practices. It is imperative that educators receive support to effectively give LTEL students opportunities to succeed in the classroom.

Purpose of the Study

This qualitative case study focused on the experiences of six urban public secondary teachers in Los Angeles and their knowledge and practices for building LTELs’ academic literacy in their content-area classrooms. Lastly, it was important to hear from the teachers what support systems they needed to develop the academic literacy of LTEL students.

Findings

In a 6-week period, the researcher conducted a survey, one-on-one interviews, classroom observations, and follow-up interviews with secondary teachers of Northeast High School, a public school with a rich history and one of the oldest schools in the community. The data were analyzed through a multistep inductive analysis that produced themes that emerged from the participants’ responses. Their experiences, knowledge, beliefs, and practices provided insights into their ability to develop academic literacy in LTEL students and exposed a lack of school-

level focus on the needs of LTEL students and the educators who work with them. The lack of commitment to educating LTEL students reflects the lack of initiative and consistency in recognizing the distinct language needs of LTEL students. Despite strides toward distinguishing the needs of students with limited English fluency, the nation and California has failed to establish particular instructional approach or a research-based time table to provide English learners with the needed language supports as well as the appropriate amount of time to acquire proficiency in their native language.

The four key findings in this study were framed by the themes and domains in the literature and were verified by the various data collected over a 6-week period. They were

1. Secondary educators are challenged with meeting the needs of LTEL students and see LTELs as reluctant learners.
2. Secondary teachers believe they have limited knowledge and afforded little support to impact the academic literacy development of LTEL students leading to a sense of inadequacy.
3. There is no clear approach or set of practices aimed at supporting LTEL students or their teachers; instead. educators lower their expectations to compensate for their lack of knowledge and support.
4. Professional development throughout the school year is requested to better address the needs of English learners.

Discussion of Findings

Challenges of Meeting Needs of LTEL Students

This section contains a summary of the study's findings, indicating a number of challenges facing educators who work with LTEL students at Northeast High. The research

participants did not feel that the site was preparing them to work with LTEL students, much less identifying what it meant for students to be classified as "Long-Term English learners." Only two of the six participants responded that they were provided assessment data on their English learners, but they never engaged with the data because the school never followed up. The respondents overwhelmingly admitted that LTELs were overlooked. Mr. F stated, "There is never any real discussion about the population in question" (Mr. F, Interview One). When training did take place, most of the teachers expressed their frustration with a lack of consistency and a lack of time to adjust their lesson plans.

Teachers also need to know their students—who they are, what matters to them, and how they experience school. Much of the research literature related to language minority youth cited the importance of "culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy" and "empowering pedagogy" (Waxman & Téllez, 2002). This literature calls upon teachers to draw upon students' life experiences and wisdom, to focus upon helping students develop their own voice, to provide opportunities for students to make choices, to emphasize critical and deep thinking and reflection, and to find and include relevant texts that matter to students and captivate their attention. Besides being marginalized, LTEL students are being met by educators that do not feel they have resources to meet their needs or the classroom environment. Four of the six participants mentioned the difficulty in meeting the diverse needs of all students in their overpopulated classrooms. One teacher noted the dilemma of managing a classroom with gifted students, average students, ELLs, and special education students. As Olsen (2010b) found, all students learn by making connections between what they already know and the new experiences, perspectives, and information they encounter. However, educators viewed the different skills levels and varying needs of their students as a challenge rather than an asset.

A challenge of working with LTEL students has been that they have arrived at secondary schools that are struggling academically and with distinct language issues (Olsen, 2010b). Olsen indicated that LTEL students could function well socially in both English and their home language but had inadequate preparation for academic expression and communication. The LTEL students had weak academic language and significant deficits in reading and writing skills (Olsen, 2010b). Due to the language needs—including language development, literacy development, and academic gaps—Olsen noted that LTEL students needed rigorous and relevant lessons, positive relationships at school, and maximum integration with other students. A comprehensive secondary school program for LTELs based upon these principles might look like this:

- A specialized ELD course designed for LTELs, emphasizing writing, academic vocabulary. and engagement.
- Clustered placement in heterogeneous and rigorous grade-level content classes mixed with English proficient students and taught with differentiated SDAIE strategies.
- Explicit language and literacy development across the curriculum. Teachers need to know their students and engage in careful analysis of the language demands of the content they are teaching as well as develop skills in implementing appropriate instructional strategies.
- Native speakers' classes (in an articulated sequence through Advanced Placement levels).
- Systems for monitoring progress and triggering support, and a master schedule designed for flexibility and movement as students make progress.

- A school-wide focus on study skills. (Olsen, 2010b)

Limited Knowledge and Support

In an attempt to meet the needs of their students, teachers used assessment data to select texts for LTEL students, but most still used the grade-level textbook as the primary means of covering content. To help navigate the textbook for their students not reading at grade level, including LTEL students, an increasing amount of visual material replaced reading and writing in each of these classrooms. Participants also indicated the use of less formal assessments because the results of formal assessments were not favorable. Participants alluded to an issue LTEL students need addressed if they are going to make academic gains at the secondary level. The secondary years are crucial to LTEL students as a final opportunity to close academic gaps and develop language proficiency and literacy. Olsen (2010b) noted that by high school, LTELs had only a few short years left in the schooling system to overcome deficits accumulated since kindergarten. This meant that whatever courses and instruction LTELs received needed to be particularly targeted to most efficiently, most directly, and most powerfully address their needs (Olsen, 2010b) to ensure they were not further marginalized.

The data from the classroom observations in this study revealed that the educators selected literacy skills based on what they expected students to be able to do, not their literacy level. Mr. A illustrated his expectations of his students by stating, “I do not select literacy skills but expect students to be able to read a newspaper written at the fifth or sixth grade level and have them make comments or write a summary” (Mr. A, Interview Two). It seems clear that students, including LTEL students, were expected to be proficient enough to access the content of a newspaper. Unfortunately, Mr. A, like many of his colleagues in this research, did not feel prepared to meet the language needs of their students, insisting that they attain content

knowledge through grade-level textbooks. However, transformations are necessary regarding educators' understandings of language, language learning, and language learners, and that such changes are vital for equitable classroom learning experiences and applies to educators at all levels and in all subject areas, (Kibler et al., 2015).

Five of the six participants admitted that there was value in providing students an environment that honored their background knowledge and experiences. Ms. B shared her experience with using background knowledge and student experiences, stating, "The material or lesson is more memorable, and it leaves with them out of the classroom so we can discuss it later. It is about experiencing the words and their connection to the world" (Ms. B, Interview Two). It is imperative that educators validate the lives and experiences of all the students who walk into their classrooms. As Olsen (2010b) found, empowering pedagogy builds upon teachers' genuine interest in and caring about students. It brings into the classroom the topics that matter to students, and uses strategies that engage students in critical thinking, asking questions, and making meaningful choices.

Olsen (2010b) believed that pedagogy that encouraged and supported students to bring their experiences, culture, heritage, and language into the classroom maximized learning by allowing students to build upon the full foundation of their prior knowledge. Of the six participants, only one attempted to incorporate the culture of the students in the classroom, while others demonstrated an ability to connect content to the lives of students. Freeman and Freeman (2002) found that educators could assist in the success of LTELs through theme-based curriculum, drawing on students' backgrounds, experiences, cultures, language; organizing collaborative activities; and scaffolding instruction to build on students' academic English proficiency. According to Vygotsky (1978), the sociocultural approach of learning development

recognizes and validates the relationship a student has with the social environment and how his or her cultural contributions, such as language and background, are critical instructional tools within this environment. Furthermore, educators should negotiate their relationship with students to build on students' "cultural and linguistic knowledge and heritage to create biculturally and bilingually competent youth" (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 25). Educators at this site were explicitly teaching content, usually guided by textbooks; however, not enough was done to value the cultures and native languages of LTEL students.

Although the participants in this study saw value in honoring their students, educators at this school were not pushed by any policy to recognize their students as individuals or encouraged by standardized testing to understand the lives and realities of their students. Instead, these educators had been taught to view their students as data. Although there is value in looking at data, future policy should address different methods of assessing students that recognize their distinct needs and lives to promote the integration of their world experiences in the classroom.

No Clear Approach to Meet the Needs of LTELs Beyond Lowered Expectations

Although the participants had similar approaches to teaching vocabulary, the scaffolds they highlighted as beneficial to developing the academic literacy of ELLs varied dramatically—from one teacher enunciating words and repeating them to another using models, hands-on activities, group work, demonstrations, videos, and diagrams. Also included as scaffolds were using pictures on Post-It notes, breaking down assignments, chunking reading, allowing plenty of time to finish, showing sentence stems and thinking maps, and doing small projects. One participant indicated that he or she translated academic language into students' primary language to provide them with definitions, examples, and connections to prior knowledge.

The data from the classroom observations in this study revealed that the educators did not have a uniform approach to selecting assignments to allow ELL students to develop literacy skills. Mr. E stated, "There are no specific assignments for ELL students to develop their literacy skills. They are asked to rise to the grade-level standards of the class" (Mr. E, Interview Two). One participant mentioned the use of a short answer question on each assessment along with content articles to develop literacy skills for ELLs. However, she did not feel that she was effectively meeting the needs of ELL students. Another participant admitted that assignments were not selected with ELL students in mind. Mr. D was the only educator in the study to select assignments for ELL students based on their reading level. Freeman and Freeman (2002) argued, "As students acquire a new language, the teacher's responsibility is to make the input comprehensible and to use appropriate methods to assess students' progress" (p. 65). They also stated, "By teaching language through academic content organized around themes, teachers help students develop the academic, cognitive, and linguistic proficiency they need to succeed in school" (p. 84). Furthermore, language learning is not solely the accomplishment of individual students but is also fundamentally a socially constructed process of apprenticeship in which interaction is (and becomes) the engine driving development (Kibler et al., 2015). None of the participants indicated using ELL students' home language when attempting to select assignments to allow for their development of literacy skills. Olsen (2010b) felt that an ELL students' home language played an important role in their overall language and literacy development. To capitalize on the knowledge with which students enter their classrooms, educators should provide a text-rich multilingual landscape with academic language and models. Instead of providing scaffolds and language supports, the participants mostly found themselves lowering their rigor and expectations of LTEL students by shortening assignments, lowering their grading

scales, relying more on visuals and reducing the amount of reading taking place. As a system, policies must be present that provide educators with an array of tools, knowledge, and resources to adequately assess the needs of all their students. Educators are provided mixed messages when, on a macro level, policy measures the success of students on standardized assessments, while on the micro level, policy focuses on graduation rates. Both levels neglect the individual needs of students and the educators working with them. Given the pressure to graduate students, participants mentioned the need to simplify their content to allow more students to pass so the administration would not question their teaching or practices.

Professional Development Requested

All of the participants mentioned the need for more professional development aimed at supporting all English learners but stressed the need for ongoing learning to occur throughout the school year. The advancement of expertise to work with ELL students in ambitious ways requires an investment in professional development different from the isolated, piecemeal workshops many teachers had experienced. Profound transformative knowledge can only be brought about through sustained, focused professional development (Valdés et al., 2014). Olsen (2010b) felt that professional development should be provided to teachers in differentiation and in appropriate Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) strategies to scaffold access to the content. The success of LTELs in these classes should be carefully monitored and should trigger academic support as needed (e.g., Saturday School, tutors, homework support, online tutorial support, etc.) (Olsen, 2010b).

Olsen (2010b) noted that teaching subject matter to English Learners required direct, explicit instruction on the strategies needed to build vocabulary, comprehend grade-level texts, and participate in discussion about the content. Moreover, educators should have the skillset

needed to explicitly instruct students on language strategies as well as the content area they are expected to master. All classes should be designed for explicit language development and focus on academic language as needed for studying the specific academic content of the class. Olsen's research determined that LTELs needed explicit instruction in academic English, with a focus on comprehension, vocabulary development, and the advanced grammatical structures necessary to comprehend and produce academic language. Menken and Kleyn (2010) stated that high schools should prepare to explicitly teach LTELs academic literacy skills, rather than simply assuming the students arrived in high school having already developed these competencies. For in-service teachers, developing this expertise while teaching is important and necessary. Because teacher expertise is not only knowledge (in this case, theoretical and pedagogical knowledge about language, language learning, and language teaching) but also the ability to successfully enact it in situated practice, teachers must adapt what they have learned in coursework to the specifics of their classes (Valdés et al., 2014). Lessons should be designed around carefully structured language objectives for integrating subject matter content, vocabulary development, and content-related reading and writing skills (Olsen, 2010b). Academic instruction for English learners could break traditional molds to provide a rich, stimulating, highly interactive curriculum for language minority students (Walqui, 2008). Walqui maintained that teachers should be well versed in their subject matter to be able to provide students with as many scaffolds as needed to assist their learning. They also should become involved in professional growth and form partnerships to discuss, peer-coach, and advance theoretical understandings of their practice. Language learning is not solely the accomplishment of individual students, but is fundamentally a socially constructed process of apprenticeship in which interaction is (and becomes) the engine driving development. As all knowledge and ability has arisen in social activity, all learning has

been co-constructed, and nothing has ever been gained by taking interaction out of the learning process (Vygotsky, 1978). The primary process by which learning has taken place has been interaction, more specifically, through engagement with other learners and teachers in joint activities focused on matters of shared interest that contain opportunities for learning (Walqui, 2006). Vygotsky proposed that students develop new concepts by working with an adult or more capable peer who asks questions or points out aspects of a problem. Instruction within a student's zone of proximal development (ZPD), the area just beyond the student's current level of proficiency, serves as a scaffold to mediate learning. What students can first do with help, they can later do independently. For this reason, teachers might be encouraged to organize learning activities so that students are provided opportunities to work collaboratively. Kozulin et al. (2003) found that "at the heart of Vygotsky's theory lies the understanding of human cognition and learning as social and cultural rather than individual phenomena" (p. 1). In this sense, cognitive growth is only possible through social interaction between or among people, ultimately leading to internalization by the pupil. Eun (2008) found the need to ground professional development within Vygotsky's theories due to the human progress spurred by social interaction. While exposure to new curriculum and information has been an important component of professional development for teachers, just providing information has not been sufficient to ensure facilitated teacher learning. Learning is as an ongoing process of socialization with higher mental functions being formed via social interaction. Therefore, professional development, in order to be realized, must rely on social interactions between and among people (Eun, 2008). Moreover, the advancement of expertise to work with ELL students in ambitious ways requires investment in professional development different from the isolated, piecemeal workshops many teachers have

experienced. Deep transformative knowledge can only be brought about through sustained, focused professional development (Valdés et al., 2014).

The very best classes for English Language learners will not only improve students' performance, but will also create more successful, aware, self-assured, and articulate teachers. Needless to say, for this to happen, districts and schools need to support the growth of teacher expertise in teaching EL students (Walqui, 2008). Teachers must understand the importance of getting students to talk about academic content to support the learning and processing of that content, and should work collaboratively to plan around common language functions and concepts (Olsen, 2010b). Tasked with the responsibility of working with LTEL students, the participants in this study recognized their inefficiencies and professed their insecurities in positively impacting LTEL students. More importantly, all the educators expressed a desired to learn, grow, and better assist their English learners, but for this to happen they must be empowered with the skillset to create the rich learning environments needed for the development of literacy in their content classes.

Recommendations

LTEL students have both language development and academic gaps that cannot be overlooked by their classroom teachers. Building skills and addressing gaps should become the responsibility of the entire school (Olsen, 2010b). There should be a concerted effort to accelerate and support LTEL students' progress at each school site. For this to take place, all stakeholders, especially teachers, should be able to identify their LTEL students at the start of each school year.

At the time of data collection, the participants were operating under decades of inconsistent programs developed to address English language needs for students who had not

been reclassified as English proficient. The rigid and punitive confines dictated practices within the participants' classrooms and shaped their inattention to the needs of ELL and LTEL students and a focus solely on content-specific information. As achievement targets have become increasingly stringent, virtually all schools serving ELLs were destined to be labeled as failures, thus derailing efforts toward genuine reform (Crawford, 2004). Working under the scrutiny of their school site and district, the participants developed practices that assisted in the rote memorization of facts and the development of basic skills that assisted their students in achieving on standardized assessments. Unfortunately, many of the participants had not deviated from the practices that proved fruitful when their students were tasked with a standardized assessment that measured student growth based on whether they filled in the correct bubble. Language development for LTEL students needs to take place throughout all content areas with the assistance of knowledgeable teachers to guide literacy practices.

High schools can no longer assume prior literacy ability among their ELL students but instead should be prepared to teach literacy in explicit ways. Menken et al. (2012) noted that this means that academic language and literacy instruction had to be infused into all subject areas. Similarly, Olsen (2010b) found that ELD classes should be a part of the school day wherein students could receive the language development that they need for academic success in their other classes. LTEL students have been, and continue to be, neglected, and if their needs are discussed, it is done to fulfill a requirement not because their best interests are in mind. If schools were to operate with the needs of LTEL students in mind, the school year would begin with each teacher learning about their ELL and LTEL students and their specific learning needs. Teachers would be given time to prepare to differentiate their lessons with the aid of a literacy coach or language specialist. The reading scores of ELL and LTEL students at the school site

used in this study revealed a need to create a plan for developing ELL and LTEL students' academic literacy. The plan should involve the educators tasked with educating every student who walks into their classroom. A meaningful plan calls for each teacher to know every student, along with their strengths and areas of need in English literacy. After gaining an awareness of their students, the staff should identify three different areas of growth for their students and vote to select one literacy skill they will build on to provide students with mastery before moving onto another literacy skill. An awareness of students via data available on them will help educators set priorities and develop consensus regarding what the school needs to rally around in support of students. The professional development activities that follow will need to continue to foster conversations on literacy development through practices and curriculum throughout the school year, including training on team collaboration within the classroom that is structured with defined roles for each member.

School Policy

Olsen (2010b) showed that teaching subject matter to ELLs required direct, explicit instruction on strategies needed to build vocabulary, comprehend grade-level texts, and participate in discussion about the content; as a result, educators must be assisted in meeting the academic literacy needs of their LTEL population through pedagogical expertise. All classes should focus on explicit language development and academic language as needed for studying the specific academic content of the class. Olsen (2010b) found that LTELs needed explicit instruction in academic uses of English, with a focus on comprehension, vocabulary development, and the advanced grammatical structures needed to comprehend and produce academic language. Menken and Kleyn (2010) stated that high schools need to prepare to very explicitly teach LTELs the academic literacy skills they need, rather than simply assume the

students arrived in high school with these skills. Lessons should be designed around carefully structured language objectives for integrating subject matter content, vocabulary development, and content-related reading and writing skills (Olsen, 2010b). The implicit and explicit language and literacy demands of the new standards ensure that more will be required of teachers and students in learning the language practices of subject areas and acquiring subject-specific knowledge and expertise through the use of language (Kibler et al., 2015). Teachers should become involved in professional growth and form partnerships to discuss, peer-coach, and advance theoretical understandings of their practice. Apart from traditional course-taking, in-service teachers can develop expertise at their school or district sites by taking part in workshops and through professional learning communities that support being coached by more capable peers (and eventually learning how to coach others), collaboratively analyzing student work, offering and receiving constructive feedback on lesson plans or videotaped instruction, and engaging in analysis of other problems of practice (Valdés et al., 2014). The very best classes for ELL students will not only improve students' performance but also create more successful, aware, self-assured, and articulate teachers. Walqui (2008) noted that for this to happen, schools should expand teacher training in working with ELLs. Language objectives should target the language forms needed for academic work. Classes should be interactive, with structured activities in which students actively use language and engage with the academic content (Olsen, 2010b).

District Policy

Olsen (2010b) recommended clustered placement in heterogeneous and rigorous grade-level content classes (including honors, A-G) mixed with English-proficient students, and taught with differentiated instructional strategies. The goal is to maximize integration with English-

proficient students, increase interaction with strong English models, and ensure curricular rigor. LTELs should be placed into grade-level content classes in intentional clusters that mix similarly competent LTELs with English-proficient students (Olsen, 2010b). All courses for LTEL students should be aligned and focused on the students' development of academic language and literacy in English and their home language, both orally and in writing, building upon and extending their strong language skills for social purposes and dynamic translanguaging practices (Ascension-Moreno, Menken, & Kleyn, 2013). LTEL students should not comprise more than one-third of the class. Olsen (2010b) proposed that the teachers of these classes have a CLAD credential and be provided with information about the specific language gaps and needs of the cluster enrolled in their class. It is in the power of educational leadership to create policies and practices and to mobilize at the state and district levels to provide direction and support for schools to address the needs of LTEL students in secondary schools.

Recommendations for Future Research

The findings of this study highlight the need for additional research in the areas of preparing educators with knowledge and practices to develop the academic literacy of LTEL students across content area classrooms. Additional research is recommended in the following areas:

- Case studies on the impact of ongoing professional development in English language development at a secondary school to develop academic literacy throughout content area classes.
- Case studies on the impact of teacher collaboration in developing lesson plans focused on explicit teaching practices to improve the learning outcome of LTELs.

- Case studies on the impact of the OPAL instrument on classroom lessons and practices that promote the growth of academic literacies for LTELs.

Conclusion

Secondary schools can represent hope and academic growth for LTEL students, but only if educators are properly trained to meet these students' needs. The nation, as well as California have contributed to inconsistent policies and programs aimed at meeting the needs of ELLs; however, providing content teachers with the knowledge, preparation and tools to meet the diverse needs of this population of students can deter its growth. Overwhelmed with large class sizes, declining budgets, and the mandate to teach content-area knowledge, educators overlook the needs of their most vulnerable students. Some reforms have intended to support LTEL students, but there remains a dearth of knowledge and classroom practices to scaffold learning for English learners. There is a huge misconception in secondary schools linking social skills to academic literacy. As a result, LTEL students are asked to perform grade-level tasks without the assistance, explicit teaching, and scaffolds they require to demonstrate their knowledge. LTEL students deserve the same opportunities afforded to their peers; however, to achieve this goal, secondary teachers need to advocate on behalf of a population that has been marginalized far too long. Secondary teachers should become more knowledgeable about who their LTEL students are and how to best address their needs. Further, teachers should work in collaboration with administration to foster training and dialogue to provide this population of students with a meaningful and challenging curriculum.

APPENDIX A
Teachers' Experiences and Practices with LTEL Population Survey

TEACHER BACKGROUND

1. Please check all that apply:

I am currently a secondary classroom teacher. ____

I am currently a secondary resource teacher. ____

Other, please specify: _____

2. What is your gender? Male ____

Female ____

3. What is your ethnicity? Please check all that apply.

African American ____

Asian/Pacific Islander ____

Chicano/Mexican American ____

Other Hispanic/Latino ____

Native American ____

White ____

4. Please check the kind of school you work in:

Charter school ____

Regular school ____

Opportunity school ____

Alternative school ____

Continuation school ____

5. Please check ALL teaching authorizations you currently hold:

Multiple subjects credential ____

Single subject credential ____

CLAD or other ELD specialist credential ____

BCLAD or other bilingual specialist credential ____

Emergency credential ____

Special education credential ____

Other, please specify: _____

6. If YOU HAVE ONE OR MORE SINGLE SUBJECT CREDENTIALS IN A LANGUAGE/S OTHER THAN ENGLISH, please indicate which language/s below.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

7. IF YOU HAVE ONE OR MORE SINGLE SUBJECT CREDENTIALS IN OTHER SUBJECTS, please indicate the subject/s below.

English ____

Math ____

Science ____

Social Science ____

Other: _____

8. Do you have a MASTER'S DEGREE(S), please indicate which topic/s:

_____

TEACHER EXPERIENCE

9. How many years have you been a classroom teacher? ____

10. How many years have you taught English language learners in your classroom? ____

11. How many English learner students from each language background are currently in your class?

Spanish ____

Vietnamese ____

Chinese ____

Hmong ____

Russian ____

Other ____

12. How many students are currently enrolled in your class? ____

13. What is the program model in your current classroom?

Mainstream ____

Structured English immersion ____

Bilingual ____

Dual immersion ____

ELD resource ____

Bilingual resource ____

Other, please specify: _____

14. How many years have you taught ELS in the following secondary school subject areas?

Math	____	Science	____
History	____	ELD	____
English	____	Spanish	____

French	____	German	____
Other language	____	Art	____
Music	____	Physical Education	____
Other	____		

15. Please check all grade levels you currently teach:

9th	____	10th	____
11th	____	12th	____

16. Please list the title of each class you currently teach (eg, Freshman Math, Chemistry, etc.):

1. _____	2. _____
3. _____	4. _____
5. _____	6. _____

17. For each class section listed above (keeping the same order), please indicate the approximate number of total (not just ELL) pupils.

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____

5. _____ 6. _____

18. For each class section listed above (keeping the same order), please indicate the approximate number of English language learners.

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____

5. _____ 6. _____

19. What instructional assistance do your ELL students receive OUTSIDE of your classroom?

ESL/ELD instruction ____

Reading and/or writing instruction ____

Math instruction ____

Other academic instruction ____

Other academic assistance ____

Other, please specify: _____

20. What IN-CLASS instructional assistance do your ELL students receive other than from you, the regular classroom teacher?

ESL/ELD lessons from resource teacher ____

ESL/ELD lessons from paraprofessional ____

Other paraprofessional assistance ____

Primary language support from paraprofessional ____

Primary language support from resource teacher ____

Other academic assistance from resource teacher ____

Other, please specify: _____

20a. How do your students receive ELD instruction?

Daily in-class ELD lesson _____

Daily pull-out ELD lesson _____

Via content in class _____

Other (please describe)_____

THE CHALLENGES OF TEACHING ENGLISH LEARNERS

21. What is the greatest challenge you face teaching your English language learner students?

_____

22. What is the second greatest challenge you face teaching your English language learner students?

_____

23. What is the third greatest challenge you face teaching your English language learner students?

_____

24. During the last three years, how many clock hours of in-service have you had with a particular focus on improving teaching of EL students in the following in-service topics? (Please put a 0 next to topics in which you have had no in-service.)

Linguistics ____

ELD/ESL ____

Second language reading and/or writing ____

Community/cultural issues ____

Other academic subjects ____

Other, please specify: _____

25. Which professional development mentioned above was MOST useful to you?

_____

26. Why was it the MOST useful?

_____

27. Of the professional development areas mentioned above, which was LEAST useful?

_____

28. Why was it the LEAST useful?

_____

29. For each of the in-services you noted above in # 24, please indicate, *by whom was it provided (district office, county office, university course, university presenter, textbook company, other materials company, other private professional development company)*:

Linguistics _____

ELD/ESL _____

Second language reading and/or writing

_____

Community/cultural issues

_____

Other academic subjects

_____

Other, please specify:

_____

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

30. How do you rate your own ELL teaching ability in each of the following areas? (Please rate all that apply no matter what subject(s) you teach.)

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Pedagogy and strategies for teaching content to ELL students				
Oral English language development				
Math				
Science				
Social Science				
English reading				
English writing				
Primary language reading				
Primary language writing				

31. Please list, from most to least important, three areas of professional development that would most help you improve your teaching of ELL students:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

32. Please list, from most to least important, what you consider to be the most important features of ANY good professional development:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

33. In addition to professional development, please indicate any of the following factors that would help you improve your ELL teaching:

Better English language academic materials ____

Better ESL/ELD materials ____

Better primary language materials ____

More time to teach ELL students ____

More paraprofessional assistance ____

More coherent standards for ELL students ____

More time and support for teacher collaboration ____

More principal support ____

Other, please specify: _____

Thank you for your time and for your assistance in determining what challenges confront teachers of Long-Term English learners. All of the information on this survey will be kept anonymous and confidential. The researcher would like to invite you to further contribute to the study by making yourself available to take part in an interview, classroom observation and follow up interview. All the information gathered will be anonymous and confidential; if you would be willing to participate as a volunteer to the next portions of the study please provide your contact information below:

Name:

Email:

Phone Number:

Best method to contact you:

APPENDIX B
Interview Protocol

I am interested in learning as much as possible about your thoughts and feelings related developing the academic literacy of Long-Term English learners in the regular education setting. We will be together for approximately one and a half hours. During that time I will conduct a semi-structured interview with you. Semi-structured means that I have a set of questions to ask, but there is also a lot of room to discuss other issues as they come up. I will first ask you general questions about your experience while working with Long-Term English learners and how you feel the overall response has been to the increasing number of long-term English learners at your school. Then we will spend the remainder of the time talking about what practices you feel work best to develop the academic literacy of long-term English learners as well as the role you would like the school or district to take in supporting teachers working with this population.

Interview Questions:

1) How many Long-Term English learners do you serve?
2) What do you see are the strengths and challenges for long-term ELL students in school?
3) What are the greatest challenges you face in educating LTELs?
4) How do you view your knowledge and preparation for meeting the needs of LTELs?
5) What methods or teaching approaches have you tried that you think are effective with LTELs?
6) What assessment data have you collected about the long-term ELL students at this school?
7) What are your views of the professional development and other support that would best help you meet the challenge of teaching LTELs?
8) How well do you feel your colleagues are prepared to serve Long-Term English learners highly qualified for their positions?

9) How and when were you made aware of the LTELs in your classroom, and how has the school supported you in working with your specific LTELs?

APPENDIX C
OPAL Rubric

OBSERVATION PROTOCOL FOR ACADEMIC LITERACIES (OPAL©)

SCHOOL _____ TEACHER _____ GRADE LEVEL _____ SUBJECT _____ LESSON FOCUS _____

ELD LEVEL (S) _____ TYPE OF PROGRAM _____ OBSERVER NAME _____ DATE _____ TIME OF VISIT _____

The OPAL is a research-based tool for observing teacher practices, classroom interactions, and educational contexts from sociocultural and language acquisition perspectives. Recorded observations allow educators and researchers to reflect on and deepen knowledge about effective practices that promote student access to rigorous, relevant and empowering learning across content areas. Academic literacies are defined as a set of 21st century skills, abilities, and dispositions developed through the affirmation of and in response to students' identities, experiences and backgrounds.

COMPONENTS OF EMPOWERING PEDAGOGY	Implementation Scale *Low* 1-2 *Med* 3-4 *High* 5-6 n/o = Not observable	IMPLEMENTATION EXAMPLES and NEXT STEPS *[Evidence of effective teaching and recommendations]*
RIGOROUS & RELEVANT CURRICULUM *The curriculum is cognitively complex, coherent, relevant, challenging and appropriate for linguistically diverse populations.*		
1.1 Engages students in problem solving, critical thinking and other activities that make subject matter meaningful	1 - 2 - 3 – 4 - 5 – 6 n/o	**Evidence (specify for which indicator):**
1.2 Facilitates student and teacher access to materials, technology, and resources to promote learning	1 - 2 - 3 – 4 - 5 – 6 n/o	
1.3 Organizes curriculum and teaching to support students' understanding of instructional themes or topics	1 - 2 - 3 – 4 - 5 – 6 n/o	**Next Steps:**
1.4 Establishes high expectations for learning that build on students' linguistic and academic strengths and needs	1 - 2 - 3 – 4 - 5 – 6 n/o	
1.5 Provides access to content and materials in students' primary language	1 - 2 - 3 – 4 - 5 – 6 n/o	
1.6 Provides opportunities for students to transfer skills between their primary language and target language	1 - 2 - 3 – 4 - 5 – 6 n/o	
CONNECTIONS *Teachers are mindful about providing opportunities for students to link content to their lives, histories, and realities to create change.*		
2.1 Relates instructional concepts to social conditions in the students' community	1 - 2 - 3 – 4 - 5 – 6 n/o	**Evidence (specify for which indicator):**
2.2 Helps students make connections between subject matter concepts and previous learning	1 - 2 - 3 – 4 - 5 – 6 n/o	
2.3 Builds on students' life experiences and interests to make the content relevant and meaningful to them	1 - 2 - 3 – 4 - 5 – 6 n/o	**Next Steps:**

COMPONENTS OF EMPOWERING PEDAGOGY	Implementation Scale *Low* 1-2 *Mod* 3-4 *High* 5-6 n/o = Not observable	IMPLEMENTATION EXAMPLES and NEXT STEPS *[Evidence of effective teaching and recommendations]*
COMPREHENSIBILITY *Instruction allows for maximum student understanding and teachers utilize effective strategies to help students access content.*		
3.1 Uses scaffolding strategies and devices (i.e. outlines, webs, semantic maps, compare/contrast charts, KWL) to make subject matter understandable 1 - 2 - 3 – 4 - 5 – 6 n/o		**Evidence (specify for which indicator):**
3.2 Amplifies student input by: questioning/restating/rephrasing/expanding/contextualizing 1 - 2 - 3 – 4 - 5 – 6 n/o		
3.3 Explains key terms, clarifies idiomatic expressions, uses gestures and/or visuals to illustrate concepts 1 - 2 - 3 – 4 - 5 – 6 n/o		
3.4 Provides frequent feedback and checks for comprehension 1 - 2 - 3 – 4 - 5 – 6 n/o		**Next Steps:**
3.5 Uses informal assessments of student learning to adjust instruction while teaching 1 - 2 - 3 – 4 - 5 – 6 n/o		
INTERACTIONS *Varied participation structures allow for interactions that maximize engagement, leadership opportunities, and access to the curriculum.*		
4.1 Facilitates student autonomy and choice by promoting active listening, questioning, and/or advocating 1 - 2 - 3 – 4 - 5 – 6 n/o		**Evidence (specify for which indicator):**
4.2 Makes decisions about modifying procedures and rules to support student learning 1 - 2 - 3 – 4 - 5 – 6 n/o		
4.3 Effectively communicates subject matter knowledge in the target language 1 - 2 - 3 – 4 - 5 – 6 n/o		**Next Steps:**
4.4 Uses flexible groupings to promote positive interactions and accommodations for individual and group learning needs 1 - 2 - 3 – 4 - 5 – 6 n/o		

APPENDIX D
Follow-Up Interviews

Question	Follow up to Question	Literature Review
1. How has assessment data informed your choice in text for your LTELs?	#6	Provide experiences within ZPD
2. How do you select literacy skills for your LTELs and how do you monitor progress towards reading proficiency?	#2	Scaffold support, frequent checking for understanding
3. How do you select vocabulary and plan for scaffolds to ensure students understand the meanings?	#5	Scaffolds while teaching vocabulary
4. What scaffolds do ELs benefit from to develop academic literacy skills?	#4	Explicit instruction of cognitive and metacognitive strategies
5. Is there value in using students' background knowledge and/or experiences to engage them?	#5	Building on students linguistic and cultural strengths
6. How do you create the conditions where students have academic interactions in group settings?	#5	Fostering academic interactions
7. How are assignments selected to allow for ELs to develop literacy skills?	#4	Opportunity to participate in instructional practices that help students
8. How do you monitor students understanding?	#2	Guiding language
9. How do you select language goals for your lessons?	#4	Identify language demands; set clear goals for readings
10. How has your credentialing program helped you in designing lessons that include language and literacy activities?	#4 #3	Designing language and literacy activities
11. What ELL professional development have you received since your credential program? How has this training informed your teaching practices?	#7 #9	Designing language and literacy activities

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