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## **The Advantages of Existing English-Medium Models in Meeting the Linguistic Needs of Elementary ELL Students**

Molly Neumann

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The Advantages of Existing English-Medium Models  
in Meeting the Linguistic Needs of Elementary ELL Students

by

Molly Jane Neumann

A capstone project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages.

Hamline University

Saint Paul, Minnesota

April 2021

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## CHAPTER ONE

### Introduction

#### Research Question

Through my personal teaching experiences in working with elementary English Language Learner (ELL) students, beginning as a mainstream classroom teacher and later moving to an ELL teacher role, I have observed the separation between content and language instruction that these students experience every day in their academic learning environments. In an attempt to further help ELLs overcome the achievement gap they face, and assist fellow educators in doing so, the question I seek to answer through this study is: *Which existing English-medium ELD program model (Pull-out, Push-in, Co-teaching) is most effective in meeting the linguistic needs of elementary ELL students, and how can these models be more successful?*

#### Chapter Overview

This section provides an overview of all upcoming sections within this chapter. In this chapter which serves as the introduction to my study, I explain the context, significance, and rationale for the above research question. I provide stories of my personal teaching experience in different English-medium ELD models, along with highlighting the necessity for this topic of study by including some research from the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) instruction. The anecdotal information provides qualitative information from my lived-experiences as a mainstream and ELL teacher, while the research serves as data to drive the rationale for this study.

In the first subsection, I explain my personal connection to the research question, listing the benefits and limitations I experienced in working to meet the linguistic needs of elementary ELL students within different ELD models. My personal observations of various language instruction models while teaching in different roles are the foundation of what formed my research question. In order to define some key terms seen throughout the study, the second section provides a context for the study. This section also serves to introduce the student population who is the focus of this study, as well as the stakeholders who will benefit from the culminating project of the study: [\*Guide to an Effective English-medium ELL Program Model\*](#). In the next section, I further detail the events and individuals that developed my interest in this topic, as well as how the specifics of it changed and progressed over time. The following section serves to explain my rationale for this study by illustrating its significance through research that indicates the need for present and future focus on the topic. Finally, in the last section I summarize the highlights of the chapter by briefly reviewing the information detailed in each preceding section. The chapter ends with a brief overview of what to expect throughout this Capstone, with a transition into the literature review.

### **Personal Connection to Research Question**

The purpose of this section is to explain the personal events that influenced my interest in the topic of this study. When I was a mainstream Kindergarten teacher several years ago, I remember feeling frustrated that my ELL students were missing content instruction when they were taken out of my room for their scheduled English Language Development (ELD) lessons. The school I taught at during that time implemented the



English-medium model of Pull-out services. However, after I moved into the ELL teacher role within the same school several years later, my perspective shifted, and I wondered how else these ELLs would receive such explicit language instruction unless I brought them into my classroom to target their specific linguistic needs. I continued to teach with the mindset that explicit language instruction occurred only in my ELD class, which some students only attended for 60 minutes a week. However, I simultaneously had a somewhat negative view of Pull-out language instruction, because students were missing valuable content from their mainstream classroom during that time. I had read about Co-teaching and discussed it with some colleagues, only to discover it was not a system that was easily implemented. I then tried a Push-in model with some classes, but due to a lack of collaborative planning, I often felt this resulted in lost instructional minutes that I could have dedicated to more explicit language instruction using the original Pull-out model.

A few years later, I was hired as the ELL teacher at an elementary school that valued collaboration on content-language instruction between teachers in all roles. I continued using the Pull-out ELD service model that was pre-selected by that school, but was also welcomed to observe mainstream classrooms in a type of Push-in model that also involved a coaching role. I began to wonder how Pull-out in this learning environment appeared much more holistic in meeting the linguistic needs of ELL students, while I was still delivering the same type of language instruction as in my previous positions. I questioned if different ELD service models were more successful in some settings than others, and if so, what the contributing factors were. It also sparked

curiosity when I suddenly felt more empowered to deliver content and language instruction simultaneously, as I was still using the same Pull-out model as in my previous setting.

I thought perhaps it was because the mainstream teachers and school administrators also supported and valued my initiative to push-into classrooms once a week to observe my ELL students, understand more about their grade-level curriculum, and provide constructive feedback to content teachers on the explicitness of language within their lessons. If that was the case, I wondered if a Co-teaching model would be even more effective at this school, despite what appeared to be a lofty execution of the program. Having so many questions about the effectiveness of the three different English-medium ELD models of Pull-out, Push-in, and Co-teaching, along with wondering what contributed most to their varied success in different settings, my research question became: *Which existing English-medium ELD program model (Pull-out, Push-in, Co-teaching) is most effective in meeting the linguistic needs of elementary ELL students, and how can these models be more successful?* In this section, I explained my personal connections to the research question through the events that inspired the focus of my study. The following section defines some key terms seen throughout the entire study, as well as introduces the student population that inspired this research.

### **Context for Study**

The purpose of this section is to describe the context of this study, including an explanation of key terms found within the topic. The context for this study is English Language Learner (ELL) students and educators who are in elementary schools that use

English-medium ELD models. For the purpose of understanding the context of this chapter, the key terms related to the study and research question are briefly defined below, but are explained in more detail in Chapter Two, the literature review.

### ***Key Terms***

The following key terms are introduced here so that all readers understand the main themes within the study from the beginning.

**English Language Learner (ELL).** An English Language Learner, or ELL, is understood as a student from “a non-English speaking background that has not yet developed sufficient proficiency to master an English-only curriculum and instruction in school” (Lloyd, 2014, p. 6).

**English Language Development (ELD) Program.** ELD refers to the instructional language services that must be offered in all public schools with ELLs in attendance. The regulations for ELD services are determined at both the federal and state levels (U.S. Department of Education, 2017).

**English-medium ELD Program.** An English-medium ELD Program is a form of ELL instruction that uses Pull-out, Push-in, Co-teaching, or a mixture of these models for language instruction. This type of ELD program is typically conducted in all English, as opposed to a bilingual or dual-language immersion model (De Oliveira, 2019).

**Pull-out Model.** “In a Pull-out instructional model, students are pulled out of mainstream classes for a small portion of the day to attend classes that focus on language development” (Lloyd, 2014, p. 8).

**Push-in Model.** In an ELL Push-in model, “the ELL teacher comes to the mainstream classroom for a designated amount of time each day or week to work with the ELLs in the class” (Lloyd, 2014, p. 21).

**Co-teaching Model.** “Co-teaching is the partnering of a general education teacher and ELL teacher who work together to jointly deliver instruction to a diverse group of students in a shared educational setting to meet the needs of these diverse learners” (Pearson, 2015, p. 11).

### ***Context of Key Terms***

ELL students and the various English-medium models they receive their ELD services through are the focus of this study. The number of elementary students learning English as an additional language is increasing faster than any other sub-group of the student population in U.S. schools (Baecher & Bell, 2017). According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau, it is projected that students with a home language other than English will comprise 40% of the PreK-12 population by 2030, which is noted as a very conservative estimate (Honigsfeld, 2009, p. 167). Additionally, a more recent study conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau in 2015 indicates that at the time there were more than 350 languages spoken throughout the United States, and that number has only increased (Simmons, 2018, p.1). With such a variety of linguistically diverse students attending U.S. elementary schools, meeting their linguistic needs is often left to the ELD program model selected by a school, which might only include one ELL teacher, depending on ELL student population and funding.

However, research consistently shows that K-12 ELL students academically underperform as compared to their native English-speaking peers. This includes data from standardized content test results, grade-level assessments, and highschool graduation rates (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). One reason for this is because content language is not always explicitly taught at an effective level in the instructional settings these students are a part of. This includes the language instruction they receive in their mainstream content classroom and the type of model they receive ELD services through. As a result, ELLs' content knowledge is measured in a language they are not yet proficient in, leading to inaccurate perceptions of their abilities (Honigsfeld, 2009). No matter which form of English-medium programming an ELL receives, they face the challenge of learning new content in a language they are not yet proficient in (Penke, 2011). Although this is not an equitable form of education, the central question of how to ensure that ELL students have equal access to a quality education has remained unanswered for many years (Perez & Holmes, 2010).

As a result, educators all around the U.S. are struggling with how to best serve this growing body of ELLs by navigating how to effectively teach content and language simultaneously within the given program models (Lloyd, 2014). To answer the question of how to best meet the linguistic demands of ELL students within such English-medium models, the culminating project of this study is a: [\*Guide to an Effective English-medium ELL Program Model\*](#). The purpose of this guide is further understood through the literature review in Chapter Two, and detailed in Chapter Three through a project description. This guide has the potential to equally benefit all educators and their ELL

students. In this section, I defined the key terms which are necessary to understand within this study, and introduced ELLs and the achievement gap they experience in English-medium settings. The upcoming section further explains how the topic and research question of this study were formed.

### **Development of Research Question**

The purpose of this section is to explain how my research question was developed and impacted. My research question was shaped by many experiences and resources, and has shifted in many directions throughout the research and writing process. My original topic statement began with a focus on K-12 ELL students, however, I then considered the various content-area and developmental levels with this wide grade-level group. With guidance from some content experts, I decided that the validity of my study would be maximized with a narrower group of students. After more research on the three most-used English-medium ELD program models (Pull-out, Push-in, Co-teaching), it became clear these models are most commonly used in elementary schools, which often include Kindergarten to 5th grade (K-5) students. Using this information, I decided to change my topic to focus on elementary-level ELL students. Although K-5 students still vary in their developmental needs and oftentimes their linguistic proficiency levels, students from this group would likely all be receiving ELD services from the three described models if they attend an English-medium school.

My research question was further shaped by the changes that distance learning brought to education during the COVID-19 pandemic. I expected the depth of language instruction I was providing to decrease due to the shift away from in-person learning, but

in my qualitative observations, it actually increased. One reason for this, which is further supported by the literature in Chapter Two, is that the need for effective collaboration was highlighted when mainstream teachers had the opportunity to observe my ELL lessons, which were previously Pull-out. This fostered a collaborative relationship between myself and mainstream teachers, as we began to view each other as experts in our respective fields. As a result, we sought out expertise from each other, modeled new strategies for one another, and I was able to provide effective linguistic scaffolds based on student observations in mainstream classes. I regularly pursued resources for maintaining an effective distance-learning classroom from the mainstream teachers I shared students with, and they often requested more linguistic support and scaffolds to aid in the challenges of teaching primary students virtually, both ELLs and their non-ELL peers.

As a result, my initial questions around if specific ELD models were more effective in some settings than others were impacted by the idea of collaboration as a contributing factor. This led me to focus on valuing effective collaboration in any English-medium model, and along with more research presented later in this study, inspired the idea to create a [\*Guide to an Effective English-medium ELL Program Model\*](#) as a project. My curiosity working within different English-medium program models, along with my positive experiences with collaboration, resulted in the research question: *Which existing English-medium ELD program model (Pull-out, Push-in, Co-teaching) is most effective in meeting the linguistic needs of elementary ELL students, and how can these models be more successful?* In this section, I explained how my research question was narrowed to focus on the academic success of K-5 ELLs within three different

English-medium models. Considering the linguistic challenges elementary ELL students face, alongside the program model uncertainties of their teachers, the following section explains the significance of the topic.

### **Rationale for Study**

The purpose of this section is to provide a rationale for the focus and intended outcome of this study, and state its importance. The continued study of which existing ELD model is more effective in meeting the linguistic needs of elementary ELL students is important because within the existing models, many ELL students are underperforming on state standardized tests as compared to their native English-speaking peers (Robinson, 2012). This information indicates a gap in equitable education for ELLs, resulting from challenges they face due to the cognitive demands presented when learning new grade-level content in a language they are not yet proficient in (Ross, 2014). With ELL students as the focus, the initial part of my research question is significant because in order for educators and school administration to choose an ELD program model that meets the varied linguistic needs of its students, the effectiveness of each model must first be understood. As the number of ELL students in U.S. elementary schools is rising each year, all educators need to advocate for the adoption of an appropriate ELD model through awareness of their effects (Honigsfeld, 2009). Many studies indicate that English-medium schools often choose just one of the three identified models for their setting (Simmons, 2018). However, as each has their advantages and disadvantages to meeting the linguistic needs of ELL students (Robinson, 2012), schools should consider



the option of a hybrid model that maximizes student growth by utilizing the advantages of each model. Some options for this are further examined in the following chapters.

The second theme within the research question is how to improve the given English-medium models, considering research that points to the shortcomings of each (Whiting, 2019). As a present ELL teacher, I am personally seeking more ways to provide my students with ELD instruction that focuses on teaching content and language simultaneously, as research shows this promotes the linguistic advancement of ELLs (Robinson, 2012). As previously mentioned, I have personally experienced the positive effects of collaboration in a hybrid ELD model, and wonder if this is a contributing factor to the effectiveness of any ELD program model. Some of what I suggest in my project already organically happened in my setting, which led me to wonder if other teachers might effectively be doing something similar as well, although most schools adopt only one ELD program model (Simmons, 2018). Therefore, the findings in this study and the project created as a result could benefit educators by providing clearer guidance on how to use the advantages found within each ELD model.

Lastly, this study is significant because there is a lack of current research on which English-medium model has the most positive effects on meeting the linguistic needs of its students (Baecher & Bell, 2017). In my research, the vast majority of studies I found to support my research question focus on the effectiveness of one ELD program model, and some compared two. However, studies that comprehensively compared the effects of all three English-medium models were scarce, and I could not locate any that were specifically dedicated to using a hybrid model of these ELD service models. As a

result, I focused my literature review on synthesizing information on the effects of all three ELD program models. Finally, the culmination of research in this study results in a [\*Guide to an Effective English-medium ELL Program Model\*](#). This can be a resource for all educators and school administrators seeking to improve their existing ELD services by leveraging more model advantages. In this section I explained the rationale for this study as it relates to the themes within the research question. The following section summarizes the information detailed in the previous sections of this chapter.

### **Chapter Summary**

In the opening of this chapter, the research question of the study was introduced as follows: *Which existing English-medium ELD program model (Pull-out, Push-in, Co-teaching) is most effective in meeting the linguistic needs of elementary ELL students, and how can these models be more successful?* All major sections of Chapter One were then identified in a chapter overview, with the first being my personal connection to the research question. In this section, some personal anecdotal information about my experiences in different ELD program models was provided to highlight the importance of the chapter in a meaningful way. In the following section, the context for the study was described through some key terms and an explanation of the academic challenges that ELLs experience while learning new content alongside an additional language. Next, the development of the research question was explained through the path taken from a K-12 setting scope to elementary (K-5), and some influences of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the final section, the rationale for the study was presented as significant to all educators and school administrators that serve ELL students. The rationale also highlighted the

inequities present in ELL academic instruction and the need for collaboration as well as continued research on the topic.

Following this section is a literature review in which I synthesize existing research around the advantages and disadvantages of the three existing ELD English-medium program models (Pull-out, Push-in, Co-teaching), and offer an option for a hybrid model to better serve elementary ELL students. With this information, in Chapter Three I illustrate a detailed project description, as well as the framework and timeline used to implement it. Finally, in Chapter Four I provide a critical reflection of the study and project as a whole.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Literature Review

#### Research Question

This chapter serves as a review of literature on the topic of this study, in order to answer the research question. The purpose of this study is to examine the effects of existing ELL program models on the academic achievement of elementary ELL students, specifically in MN elementary schools using an English-medium model. The following research question guided the information presented in this literature review: *Which existing English-medium ELD program model (Pull-out, Push-in, Co-teaching) is most effective in meeting the linguistic needs of elementary ELL students, and how can these models be more successful?*

#### Chapter Overview

This section provides an overview of all upcoming sections within this chapter. The literature review begins with a section containing a deeper description of the topic, and explains the linguistic challenges many ELL students face in English-medium settings. This provides rationale for reviewing the current ELD program models that exist to support the linguistic needs of ELLs. The next section narrows the topic by explaining the scope and limitations used to guide the study. Within the scope and limitations, some important key terms related to ELD program models are defined as the foundation of the research. After that, the ELD Program Requirements section briefly outlines State requirements for an English Language Development (ELD) program in MN schools, and references the Minnesota Academic Standards (K-12) and WIDA's ELD Standards

utilized by these programs. In the following section, literature is presented on the goals of an effective ELD program model. Using this information as a comparison, the following three sections compare the effectiveness of each of the three English-medium ELD program models (Pull-out, Push-in, Co-teaching) in meeting the linguistic needs of the student's they are intended to serve. This synthesis ends with a section on the results of the ELD program model review, leading to the suggestion of a hybrid model that incorporates the advantages of each of the three existing models. The study concludes with a summary of what was learned in the preceding sections, including rationale for the creation of a [\*Guide to an Effective English-medium ELL Program Model\*](#) as the culminating project of this study. The section provided an overview of the upcoming sections in this literature review. The upcoming section describes the academic challenges faced by ELL students, as their academic success is the topic of this study.

### **Description of Topic**

The purpose of this section is to provide a deeper description of the topic of study, as it relates to ELLs, ELD programs, and English-medium models. An English Language Learner, or ELL, is understood as a student from “a non-English speaking background that has not yet developed sufficient proficiency to master an English-only curriculum and instruction in school” (Lloyd, 2014, p. 6). Other common terms used to describe this type of student are English as a Second Language (ESL) students, Limited English Proficient (LEP) students, or just EL for English Learner (Lloyd, 2014). These terms are often implicitly used in a deficit-based manner, as they imply that English is a superior language which students are lacking skills in. However, linguistic achievement in a

non-native language is not equal to the background knowledge and academic achievement these students can produce in their native language (Penke, 2011). As a result, there is a very recent shift toward the preferred terms of Emergent Bilingual or Multilingual Learner (Garcia, Kleifgen, & Falchi, 2018), which position their multilingualism as a resource and asset, both socially and academically (Suto, 2020). These terms are asset-based, because they focus on the knowledge and skills students already have in their native languages, while placing value on multilingualism. No state ELD programs have fully adopted these terms in their schools yet. However, NYC, which has an ELL student population of 8.8%, uses the term Multilingual Learner to refer to these students in their Department of Education's Policy and Reference Guide for the 2020-2021 school year (New York City Department of Education, 2020). ELL students are multilingual learners who should be provided with effective English language development services that value their background knowledge. However, the case of referring to this entire student population through a deficit-based lens is just the beginning of the educational inequities these students face in schools (Garcia et al., 2018). For the purpose of this study though, these students are referred to as ELLs because it is the most widely understood and identified term at this time. However, ELLs are positioned as assets throughout this study and in the culminating project.

According to research conducted by Honigsfeld (2009) on providing equitable language instruction in U.S. public schools, K-12 ELL students academically underperform on standardized assessment scores as compared to their non-ELL peers. This population is also increasing faster than any other student group in U.S. schools

(Baecher & Bell, 2017). In a recent study by Kimani (2018) on national standardized assessments, it was reported that there was an average 36 point gap between ELL and non-ELL students on 4th grade state standardized tests, and a 44 point gap between the same student populations on 8th grade state reading assessments (p. 12). Using the academic systems present in U.S. schools today, it usually takes a minimum of five years for ELL students to reach the same academic standards as their native English-speaking peers (Penke, 2011). This data highlights the language and literacy gaps ELL students face in their daily academic settings that must be addressed if they are to reach the level of proficiency expected of them on standardized assessments (Calderon et al., 2011). However, Lloyd (2014) explains that the language proficiency and academic achievement of ELLs are two specific constructs and should be measured separately; ELL students have a lot of academic background knowledge, even if they are not yet at a proficiency level that allows them to communicate that information in English. Therefore, adequately meeting the linguistic needs of ELLs will result in their academic achievement.

One possible reason for the existing gaps in the academic achievement of ELLs is that content and language are often isolated from one another, while research shows the highest language and academic growth in students when they are taught simultaneously (Honigsfeld, 2009). When students whose first language is not English spend their content learning time in English-only mainstream classrooms, they must translate back and forth between their native language and English. If the English academic language used to teach the content is new to the ELL student, then they will also have increased difficulty activating any background knowledge they have on the topic in their native

language (Ross, 2014). Honigsfeld (2009) found that another contributing factor to lower academic achievement by ELLs compared to their non-ELL peers could be English-medium settings themselves, if they do not value and support the assets and usage of students' first languages. The data from this study concluded that ELLs who attended English-only mainstream programs for their language instruction showed large decreases in reading and math achievement by 5th grade when compared to students who participated in dual-language or bilingual programs (Honigsfeld, 2009). Another reason for ELL underperformance found in research is the understaffing of qualified language instructors in schools, compared to the growing population of ELL students requiring language services (McClure & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2010).

Both qualitative and quantitative research shows that as the number of school-age ELLs rapidly increases in the U.S., educators are struggling to make decisions on how to meet both the language and content needs of these students (Baecher & Bell, 2017). According to Lloyd (2014), this task often falls on the teachers themselves as they attempt to find innovative ways to help ELLs succeed in mainstream classrooms and on high-stakes tests. In direct response to this information presented by research, the purpose of this study is to understand the effects and possible improvement of existing English-medium ELL program models (Pull-out, Push-in, Co-teaching) on ELL student academic achievement. The desired outcome of this study is to create a [\*Guide to an Effective English-medium ELL Program Model\*](#) that both educates and inspires more effective ELD program models for all teachers delivering instruction to ELLs. The purpose of this section was to provide a description of the topic of this study, including



ELLs and possible reasons for the achievement gaps they face in existing English-medium settings. The following section defines the scope and sequence of this literature review and the culminating project it resulted in.

### **Scope & Limitations**

This section serves to clarify the scope and limitations of the information presented throughout this study. It begins with the definitions of some key terms that are necessary to understand within this study, and is followed by an explanation of the scope as related to the key terms.

### ***Key Terms***

The following key terms include the major themes of this study, as indicated in the research question.

**English Mainstreaming.** For the purpose of this study, mainstreaming is understood as placing ELL students in content grade-level classes where they receive all of their instruction in English. Teachers of content grade-level subject areas, or general education teachers, are often referred to as mainstream teachers (Penke, 2011).

**English-medium ELD Program.** An English-medium ELD Program is a form of ELL instruction that is most commonly seen in the categories of Pull-out, Push-in, and Co-teaching for language instruction. This type of program is typically conducted in all English as opposed to a bilingual or dual-immersion language model (De Oliveira, 2019). In English-medium models, the ELL student spends the majority of their day in an English-mainstream classroom, but also receives a specified amount of more explicit language instruction in some form (Simmons, 2018). An English-medium program

fulfills the requirements of a school having an “English Language Development (ELD) Program of techniques, methodology, and special curriculum designed to teach ELs explicitly about the English language, including the academic vocabulary needed to access content instruction, and to develop their English language proficiency in all four language domains (i.e., speaking, listening, reading, and writing)” (U.S. Department of Education, 2017, p. 25).

**Pull-out Model.** In this model within an English-medium ELD program, students spend most of the day in a mainstream classroom, but are pulled out to receive language instruction for a specified amount of minutes each week based on their language level needs (Lloyd, 2014). In a Pull-out model, the school’s ELL teacher provides ELD services in a separate classroom with the purpose of explicitly teaching language skills to a specific ELL student or group of students (Simmons, 2018). The language instruction in the ELL classroom differs within each school and for each student, but the goal of Pull-out instruction is to help students gain the necessary skills to reach English-language proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Pearson, 2015).

**Push-in Model.** In this English-medium program model, the ELL teacher provides English language services by offering language support within the mainstream classroom. Instead of taking the ELL students to a separate classroom for language instruction, the ELL teacher is more of an as-needed language support to the student on their grade-level classwork (Simmons, 2018). Push-in instruction could be conducted with ELL students grouped together in the mainstream classroom, but is most commonly a form of 1:1 support (Whiting, 2019). Even though Co-teaching also involves an ELL

teacher providing instruction within the mainstream classroom, Push-in differs from Co-teaching because the ELL teacher is discreetly providing language support only to the assigned ELL students, and not directing their instruction to the entire class (Pearson, 2015).

**Co-teaching Model.** The final English-medium model is Co-teaching, which is defined as “the collaboration and shared teaching that occurs between English language teachers and their general education partners to provide instruction to a wide-variety of students” (Simmons, 2018, p. 2). In Co-teaching, the goal is for the ELL teacher to work directly with the grade-level teacher in order to provide explicit language instruction within the mainstream classroom. In this model, both teachers actively collaborate to plan their instruction based on both ELL and mainstream content area standards. There are many different models of Co-teaching, with different approaches and responsibilities for both teachers involved (Pearson, 2015). Push-in and Co-teaching are sometimes referred to interchangeably, but the planning and execution of them are very different; in a Push-in model, the ELL teacher often plays a more discrete support role in the mainstream classroom, while in Co-teaching they are more visible in explicit language instruction within the classroom (McClure & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2010).

### ***Scope of Study***

Based on these key terms, the research presented in this Literature Review is limited to the scope of elementary-level ELL students, because research shows that Pull-out, Push-in, and Co-teaching ELD program models are most commonly used in elementary schools due to the nature of their schedules (Baecher & Bell, 2017). However,

the findings presented in this study have the potential of helping other grade levels who choose to utilize the adaptive resources found in the [\*Guide to an Effective English-medium ELL Program Model\*](#). When referring to content and language standards, the scope is somewhat limited to the Minnesota Academic Standards (K-12) and WIDA's ELD Standards Framework due to my teaching location and experiences. However, this is only to have a point of reference when referring to content and language instruction, as Minnesota has adopted the WIDA Framework for its ELD programs. The study is also limited to English-medium schools rather than other forms of language instruction, such as dual-language or bilingual education. Research shows ELD programs that utilize multilingual instruction are more successful in teaching language and content simultaneously, however, English-medium programs are more widely used (Honigsfeld, 2009). As a result, I chose to focus on improving the effectiveness of English-medium models, as they are the most widely used in U.S. elementary schools.

### ***Limitations of Study***

The study is also limited to a focus on the overall models for delivering language instruction, not on the specific language instruction or curriculum itself. Although research by Lloyd (2014), Honigsfeld (2009), and Baecher & Bell (2017) all suggest the use of Structured English Immersion (SEI) or the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) for language instruction, these could be implemented in any type of effective ELD program model. Therefore, the study is focused on the best model for delivering language instruction within, and allows for choice in the curriculum and pedagogy chosen by the school for their specific student population. Finally, for the

purpose of this specific study and the culminating project, the implementation is limited to stakeholders within the ELD program model, including: ELL teachers, mainstream teachers, elementary ELL students, and school administrators. Although research shows that collaboration with ELL families is a necessary part of a holistic ELD program model (Simmons, 2018), this specific project aims to find ways to improve model effectiveness between in-school educators through instructional collaboration. The purpose of this section was to explain the scope and limitations of the study in reference to the key terms that were defined. The following section describes the general requirements of an English Language Development (ELD) program, specifically within Minnesota (MN).

### **ELD Program Requirements**

The purpose of this section is to first identify the requirements for an English Language Development (ELD) program, and why knowledge of the choices involved is important for educators. The ways ELD program requirements are commonly met in MN are then described using both content and language academic standards. Lastly, a brief statement of the actual amount of instructional minutes provided in comparison to what is required within an ELD program is presented. Specifically in MN, every public school that serves ELL students as designated through The Minnesota Automated Reporting Student System (MARSS) is required to provide an ELD program designed to explicitly instruct ELLs in English language usage (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). Pearson (2015) notes that even from an overall national perspective, “The accountability to which schools are held to is clear: they must provide a language program for second-language students, the program must be academically sound, reasonable for the resources that are

available to them, and show progress” (p. 8).

One major piece of legislation that resulted in this requirement was the Supreme Court ruling of *Lau v. Nichols* (1974). This ruling determined that it is illegal to place an ELL student in an English mainstream class without language support if they do not yet have the English language skills to participate meaningfully. Along with Title Six of the Civil Rights Act (1964), schools are guided by the federal regulations that it is a violation to provide ELL students with the exact same education as their native English-speaking peers, as research shows this is not an equitable form of instruction. Before the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was passed in 2015, federal guidelines also set the expectations for high-stakes assessments, which all students were required to meet regardless if they were ELL or not. However, one change with the shift to ESSA (2015) is that each state has more power to set its own goals for student achievement (Penke, 2011). In light of this, Penke (2011) highlights the reasons for ELD program stakeholders to be knowledgeable about choosing an effective language development program for their school; although it might be a positive that schools have a choice in different program options for their unique learning environments, there is limited research that critically examines the effects of these specific models and how to best implement them.

In addition to the requirements around having an ELD program in place, schools are responsible for helping students from all linguistic backgrounds gain the skills to effectively communicate in English, while learning the grade-specific content needed to meet state assessment expectations (Lloyd, 2014). To accomplish this, ELD programs typically try to align their instruction with both the state's academic content standards and

the language standards adopted by that state (Honigsfeld, 2009). MN uses the Minnesota Academic Standards (K-12) as the framework for teaching grade-level content in English Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, Science, Physical Education, and Art (MN Department of Education, n.d.). For guidelines on ELD standards, MN has adopted the English Language Standards Framework developed by a summative assessment company called WIDA. Although more general than the specific MN content standards, these ELD standards state that educators must explicitly teach ELLs the language necessary to communicate effectively and participate fully within their learning communities. Using six Standard Statements, English language teachers are charged with the responsibility of teaching ELLs the language to interact equitably with academic content in the areas of Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science, as well as language for social and instructional purposes (Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System, 2021). As teachers plan their instruction, the combination of these content and language standards offer guidance regarding grade-appropriate academic expectations and expected language performance based on language proficiency levels. However, they do not detail how to effectively teach content and language simultaneously, as each school or district chooses their own content and language curriculum (Honigsfeld, 2009).

Unfortunately, research shows the requirements of ELD programs play out differently in practice regarding the language development service minutes ELLs actually receive. Although states are required to provide some form of ELD programming to meet the needs of ELLs, the level of these services varies across states. In English-medium programs, these ELD minutes are often provided through Push-in, Pull-out, or

Co-teaching models (Baecher & Bell, 2017). Based on research aligned with state needs, there are suggested guidelines for how much ELD instruction an ELL should receive based on their English language proficiency level, which can range from 60 to 360 minutes a week (Penke, 2011). However, in a study based on teacher interviews conducted by Baecher & Bell (2017), it was reported that both the quality and amount of ELD service minutes actually provided to ELLs in practice is far less than what is prescribed on paper. The results of these interviews showed that on average, across the various English-medium models ELL students received only 50% of their entitled ELD minutes (p. 58). Some teachers reported missing ELD instruction with a group of students for an entire week on some occasions due to ever-fluctuating school schedules. In order of least to most frequently occurring, these reasons included: “(1) teacher absence, (2) classroom teacher holding the student in class to continue work, (3) professional development days, (4) student absence, (5) re-assignment to serve as a substitute teacher for the day, (6) screening new entrants or attending to ESL compliance work, or (7) state testing” (Baecher & Bell, 2017, p. 62). Aside from this study, a common disadvantage stated within all English-medium models is the overall lack of time for explicit language instruction, indicating a broken system in delivering effective instruction to ELLs, despite ELD requirements (Pearson, 2015). In this section, the overall requirements of ELD programs were described, along with an explanation of why the intended amount of ELD service minutes are often unmet. The following section describes more concrete goals of an effective ELD program based on research.



### **Goals of Effective ELD Program Models**

The purpose of this study is to present information on what research says about the goals of an effective ELD program, regardless of which model is chosen. As summarized by Simmons (2018), the essential goal of any ELD program is to close the academic gap between ELLs and their native English-speaking peers. With the goal of teaching content and language simultaneously, Perez & Holmes (2010) state that ensuring ELL students have equal access to content-area curriculum is the main endeavor of a language development program, but remains one of the biggest challenges for educators. Pearson (2015) notes that the essential goal of any English language program should be for ELLs to gain the necessary skills to be linguistic equals with their native English-speaking peers. From an asset-based perspective, ELD programs should also value multilingualism even more than English language proficiency (Garcia et al., 2018). Robinson (2012) agrees with the preceding sentiments, also noting that even once-successful models fail when they do not teach academic vocabulary and content simultaneously, further removing the background knowledge ELLs have in their native language while distancing them from gaining content language in English. The U.S. Department of Education (2017) explains that all ELD programs should be designed to help ELLs reach English proficiency while equally participating in the school's standard instructional program. Therefore, the ultimate goal of an effective ELD program is for ELLs to reach a language proficiency level that allows them to participate meaningfully within the mainstream classroom without any language support, thus graduating from receiving ELD services.

The most widely-used methods for delivering an English-medium ELD program in K-12 settings within the U.S. are Pull-out, Push-in, and Co-teaching models (Honigsfeld, 2009). Although specific schools, or even entire districts, often choose just one of these three models for their English-medium ELD program, schools have the option of using a mixture of models depending on student and staffing needs (Simmons, 2018). Regardless of the chosen model, Honigsfeld (2009) states the following routines should be present within an effective English-medium ELL program:

1. ELL and content teachers jointly organize and sequence the curriculum so that it aligns with the language in all content areas.
2. ELL and content teachers jointly review student learning materials and coordinate the equal possession of these for all instructors.
3. ELL and content teachers observe one another's classrooms for the purpose of understanding one another's teaching methods and to observe individual students in each instructional setting.
4. ELL and content teachers hold joint parent conferences to foster effective communication with families.
5. ELL and content teachers hold regular meetings to discuss individual students' progress.
6. ELL and content teachers of the same grade plan units of instruction together based on an integrated thematic approach to learning.

7. Cultural information is shared at regular meetings between ELL and content teachers for the purpose of clarifying students' behavior and sensitizing teachers to cultural differences.
8. Multicultural concepts are infused into the mainstream curriculum by teams of ELL and content teachers who work together (Honigsfeld, 2009, p. 171).

Heavily focused on collaboration between content and language educators, this list applies to any chosen ELD program model. Furthermore, in a study that compared different types of effective instruction for ELLs, Calderon, Slavin, & Sánchez (2011) found that rather than the chosen ELD model itself, the level of providing effective joint content and language instruction is what mattered most in the success of a model, making this the main goal. The purpose of this study was to outline the major goals of any ELD program model, in order to use the information as a comparison in the upcoming review of literature on English-medium models. The following three sections analyze the advantages and disadvantages of each English-medium ELD program model based on a synthesis of literature.

### **The Effects of Pull-out Models**

This section provides a synthesis of what research says about the advantages and disadvantages of a Pull-out instructional model on the language growth of ELL students. The Pull-out model was historically and remains the most used English-medium model in U.S. elementary schools (Penke, 2011). Pearson (2015) found the most common reason for this was the logistics of staffing; ELL teachers are often responsible for providing instruction to students across many grade levels, so pulling groups of students from

different classrooms at the same time makes it possible to maximize student service minutes with less teachers. Fu, Houser, & Huang (2007) agree, asserting that although research shows it is the least recommended ELD program, a Pull-out model remains the most popular because it is financially the least costly. According to Whiting (2019), another reason for an increased use of the Pull-out model is because mainstream classroom work is often seen as separate from explicit language instruction, so as a result they are physically separated. These reasons are unfortunately not student-centered, however, a Pull-out instructional model still offers some strong advantages in meeting the linguistic needs of ELLs (Penke, 2011). These advantages include increased opportunities for explicit language instruction, creating a safe environment for risk-taking, and stronger use of pre-teaching academic language to ELLs prior to content lessons.

Different from the explanation of other program models, Penke (2011) defines Pull-out as a program where the ELL student is removed from their mainstream classroom in order to receive “intense English instruction” (p. 9). Therefore, one advantage of this model is that it offers the opportunity for more explicit and direct language instruction. Similarly, Whiting (2019) observes that without Pull-out instruction, ELL's don't receive as much focused instruction in language areas where they are not yet proficient. When the ELL teacher brings their students to a classroom dedicated to direct language instruction, the language instruction is often stronger, more explicit, and uninterrupted, as compared to instruction within other models (Penke, 2011). Whiting (2019) also notes that the goals of content and language classes are often very different, so it can be contradictory to try and provide explicit language instruction to

ELL students in the midst of content classroom goals, further promoting a Pull-out model.

Baecher & Bell (2012) agree that Pull-out models provide the opportunity for more targeted language instruction, and also recognize the benefits of having a separate space dedicated to ELL-specific needs; in an ELL classroom, students often find a sense of safety and security, which results in greater risk-taking and language production. Penke (2011) also notes that pulling students for language instruction throughout the week benefits ELLs because it provides freedom from classroom distraction, resulting in increased attention to language growth. Many ELL classrooms are also decorated with items that represent the students' home cultures and languages, which might not be present throughout the rest of the school, including multilingual classroom labels and cultural realia (Whiting, 2019). Lastly, Kimani (2018) found that with strong collaboration between the content and language teacher, Pull-out instruction is beneficial in pre-teaching academic language, thus equipping students for the content taught when they return. Although these ideas paint a picture of explicit language instruction, there are several disadvantages to a Pull-out model.

Throughout research on the topic, the most commonly reported disadvantages of a Pull-out model are that it views ELLs through a deficit lens, students miss content instruction, and it results in scheduling conflicts. Although pulling students might provide more explicit language instruction to the student, it can also create a negative view of these students within their mainstream classroom. Simmons (2018) explains that one implication of a Pull-out model is it creates separation between ELLs and their non-ELL

peers. According to Penke (2011), when ELL students are pulled out of their mainstream classrooms for language instruction, they are viewed as liabilities to the learning environment rather than assets. Whiting (2019) agrees, stating that by pulling students from the mainstream teaching environment for their language instruction, ELLs are viewed through the lens of their deficit rather than seen with the rich linguistic background they can offer to their mainstream classroom environment.

Another commonly noted disadvantage to a Pull-out model is that it often lacks effective collaboration between content area and ELL teachers, leading to students missing content instruction. When content and language are separate and there is a lack of collaboration between these teachers, ELLs continue to receive as little as 60 minutes of language instruction in an entire week from their ELL teachers alone, as their mainstream teachers might lack the specific training to extend such language instruction throughout all content (Simmons, 2018). Additionally, Pearson (2015) found that schools started to shift away from a Pull-out model when experts noticed it caused ELLs to miss core academics when they were pulled out of the mainstream classroom for their English instruction. With content and language instruction isolated from each other, ELL students are “not making advancements in their academics, they are struggling to catch up” (Pearson, 2015, p. 14).

Although content and language teachers can collaborate to promote ways of teaching simultaneous instruction, a common characteristic of Pull-out models is for the ELL teacher to use an alternate curriculum that focuses on Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Although such forms of language instruction are necessary for ELL growth, if it

remains completely separate from content curriculum, many ELLs struggle to use it independently within their mainstream classrooms (Penke, 2011). Robinson (2012) states that “there are two problems with Pull-out programs: the learners’ reduced access to the full curriculum and the lack of curriculum articulation with grade-level and mainstream teachers” (p. 10). That is, ELL students in Pull-out programs are missing core instruction in their mainstream classrooms, and content and language teachers are not effectively collaborating on how to teach ELLs the academic language they need to fully engage with the curriculum. Both Whiting (2019) and Penke (2011) agree that the most successful language instruction teaches language and content simultaneously, in which case pulling ELL students from their content-area classrooms might not be the best option.

Lastly, another common complaint of using the Pull-out model is the scheduling conflicts it creates with mainstream classroom activities and goals. Although it is often seen as more convenient for scheduling purposes, when there are changes to the grade-level classroom schedule, then ELL instruction is usually canceled and not replaced (Pearson, 2015). In surveying ELL teachers, Penke (2011) found that although space for ELL Pull-out instruction is often established on a school-wide master schedule, the schedule is not adaptive. This means if a special activity the school views as more important than Pull-out services is scheduled during the time of instruction, such as an assembly or school event, that activity takes precedence. Due to conflicting mainstream and ELL instruction schedules, the Pull-out time is often unable to be rescheduled during that week. As a result, ELL students are continually missing their rightful opportunity for

direct language instruction, and they continue to fall behind their native English-speaking peers (Penke, 2011). Baecher & Bell (2017) provide similar results from the interviews they conducted, with ELL teachers commenting on lost instructional time due to interrupted Pull-out schedules during testing, special events, and other conflicting school-wide initiatives. These schedule conflicts put ELL teachers in an unfair position; they need to choose to either provide instruction which means pulling students away from classroom community-building times resulting in a negative outlook on the language class itself, or leaving their ELL students without any language instruction at their scheduled time (Lloyd, 2014).

This section explained some of the advantages and disadvantages of using a Pull-out model. Advantages include the opportunity for more explicit language instruction, creating a place of safety and risk-taking within an ELL classroom, and the chance to pre-teach academic language. The disadvantages include maintaining a deficit-based view of ELL students' language backgrounds, ELL students missing content instruction, and scheduling conflicts that result in lost ELD service minutes. The following section synthesizes research on the advantages and disadvantages of using a Push-in ELD model.

### **The Effects of Push-in Models**

This section synthesizes what research says about the advantages and disadvantages of using a Push-in instructional model to meet the linguistic needs of ELL students. Pearson (2015) explains that although a Pull-out model was the first method used in ELD programs, research inspired the move to a Push-in model which was thought



of as content-based instruction. Content-based instruction is the idea of teaching English to ELL students through academic content, much like teaching content and language simultaneously, as previously discussed. Whiting (2019) and McClure & Cahnmann-Taylor (2010) further explain that within the idea of content-based instruction, the terms Push-in and Co-teaching are frequently used interchangeably. However, the planning and execution of each are very different, which this section opens the discussion of. Some advantages to using a Push-in model include ELLs not missing content instruction, fewer lost service minutes, increased social inclusion and interaction, and ELL teacher awareness of content instruction needs. The disadvantages include less opportunities for explicit language instruction, lack of collaboration, uncertainty of the ELL teacher role, under-utilizing ELL teacher strengths, and a negative student view of the services.

According to Whiting (2019), one major advantage of a Push-in model is that because the ELL student remains in the mainstream classroom for their ELD services, they do not miss any content instruction or classroom assignments. Fu et al., (2007) explain that a Push-in model is often recommended to solve the problem of missed content instruction due to the disadvantages of a Pull-out model. Lloyd (2014) further explains it as a benefit because this model exposes students to the mainstream curriculum with their ELL teacher present to offer linguistic support as needed. Baecher & Bell (2017) also affirm that not missing valuable instruction is an advantage of the Push-in model, along with the potential for increased content engagement with the ELL teacher present. Additionally, when schedule changes occur within the content classroom, with a

Push-in model it does not have to result in lost ELD service minutes. The first Statement on WIDA's English Language Standards Framework necessitates teaching language for social and instructional purposes (Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System, 2021). Therefore, no matter which part of the content classroom's schedule the ELL teacher is present for, they have the opportunity to support the ELL students in social interactions with non-ELL peers that would not occur if using a Pull-out model.

This results in another advantage of using a Push-in model, which is increased social inclusion and social interaction for ELLs. Concerning multilingual learning and the affective filters of ELL students, Simmons (2018) describes that by not pulling students out of their grade-level classroom for language instruction, the ELL is seen as an equal member of the classroom by their peers, which may boost self-confidence and lead to increased language growth. This opportunity for social inclusion is also recognized by Whiting (2019) as a benefit of the Push-in model; when ELL students remain with their non-ELL peers, it offers increased social benefits because they have more opportunities for meaningful social interactions in English, with support from a trained language teacher. According to Lloyd (2014), this also delivers the message that ELLs are part of the rest of the class, "which helps integrate them into the student body rather than separating them from it" (p. 8). Spending more time within the grade level classroom also provides additional English language models to the ELLs from their peers, thus increasing opportunities for increased comprehensible input and output (Lloyd, 2014). Further supporting the preceding views, Baecher & Bell (2017) explain that allowing ELLs to remain in the classroom with their non-ELL peers helps to decrease their

marginalized status in the school. As a result, their affective filter is decreased, increasing their confidence in the English social interactions they participate in, which leads to the development of social language skills.

The final advantage of a Push-in model is that it provides ELL teachers with a greater opportunity to observe the needs of content grade-level instruction. Whiting (2019) reports that using a Push-in model provides ELL teachers with the daily opportunity to observe the mainstream classroom curriculum in actual practice. These observations can help ELL teachers better understand how grade-level content is taught to their students, in order to conceptualize the academic language needed for ELLs to fully engage with the curriculum. Lloyd (2014) agrees, also noting that because the ELL teacher and students are always present with the content curriculum, they have increased awareness of it which maximizes the opportunity for relevant language support. Although several advantages of a Push-in program have been described, there are numerous disadvantages observed within this model.

According to Simmons (2018), the most commonly reported disadvantage of a Push-in model is that it offers less explicit language instruction than other models. One reason informing this idea is that when an ELL teacher pushes into a mainstream lesson, they have to try and support it rather than supply their own targeted language lesson. It is also the least implemented English-medium model, making less data available on what Push-in instruction should look like (Simmons, 2018). Whiting (2019) agrees that it offers less direct instruction, but because other distractions are present within the mainstream classroom. As a result, ELL teachers minimize the level of their work to not

cause any classroom disruptions, resulting in more implicit instruction. Most concerning, pushing in without space to provide language instruction means that ELLs within that classroom do not always receive the recommended amount of ELD service minutes (Pearson, 2015). Pearson (2015) notes that another reason a Push-in model decreases the level of direct language instruction is because students are assigned to their mainstream classroom according to their grade-level rather than their language proficiency level. Consequently, when the ELL teacher pushes into the classroom to deliver ELD services, they tend to deliver instruction that is aimed at mid-proficiency levels rather than the specific language level of each ELL student within the class (Pearson, 2015).

Another disadvantage of using a Push-in model to support the linguistic needs of ELLs is that it often lacks collaboration, resulting in an ambiguous ELL teacher role. Simmons (2018) explains this is often due to a lack of communication between the mainstream and ELL teacher on what linguistic supports students will need within specific lessons, resulting in the ELL teacher appearing as an aid that is only present at specific times. From teacher interviews, Pearson (2015) found that both mainstream and ELL teachers view a Push-in model as the least desired model to work within. Many teachers did not know what a Push-in model should look like, resulting in a poor understanding of specific teacher roles within it. The data from these interviews also showed that when content and ELL teachers did not collaborate on the language needs within the curriculum to create a place for the ELL teacher during their scheduled Push-in times, the ELL teacher felt they were not viewed as a teacher within the room (Pearson, 2015). Through their teacher interviews, Baecher & Bell (2012) also revealed that many

ELL teachers expressed feeling like an aid when pushing into content area classrooms, rather than a teacher with language expertise. ELL teachers using the Push-in model described not having an effective plan for language instruction, either because the classroom teacher did not share lesson plans or because the teachers did not have a common prep time to collaborate within. Trying to provide language instruction without a plan in place can also lead to decreased feelings of autonomy for the ELL teacher (Whiting, 2019).

As a result, another disadvantage of using a Push-in model is that the role of an ELL teacher is often under-valued and under-utilized. Although not in every case, Whiting (2019) found that historically, a Push-in model is frequently used in schools where staffing for the ELL program is limited. By having an ELL teacher push into content classrooms for their role, the ELL teacher can be utilized to support the goals of the content classroom while simultaneously providing language instruction. When this occurs, language instruction becomes even more implicit, and the expertise and SLA knowledge of the ELL teacher are under-utilized. Similarly, Pearson (2015) also found that schools using a Push-in model sometimes proclaim that if the ELL teacher is pushing in, then they require less prep time for lessons. This idea further supports the misconception that ELL teachers can be used in other support roles throughout the school, which truly under-values their integral position. Whiting (2019) explains that this results in the dissatisfaction of ELL teachers in their own role, resulting in a loss of professional identity. Further, this loss of autonomy can lead to the ELL teacher feeling the need to give up control to the larger group, accept ambiguous responsibility, and take

on a secondary teaching role in an attempt to be the most effective they can within the given position (Whiting, 2019). Although many teachers acknowledged the ELL student benefits of using a Push-in model when surveyed, they also reported on the unsuccessful utilization of the model in meeting the linguistic needs of ELLs (Baecher & Bell, 2012).

A final disadvantage within a Push-in model is the negative view that ELL students have on this form of language instruction (Simmons, 2018). Often during Push-in instruction, the ELL teacher is seen as a support that joins the classroom to sit with the ELL students and provide assistance on grade-level content. Whiting (2019) explains that this situation can contribute to a deficit-based view of the abilities of ELL students. During Push-in instruction, their non-ELL peers only see that ELLs need assistance from an additional teacher, and might fail to see that their linguistic and cultural backgrounds should be valuable within the mainstream community. Additionally, if an ELL student is feeling self-conscious from the presence of an additional teacher specifically stationed to help them and not their peers, this could negatively impact their self-esteem and participation in language production (Simmons, 2018). Whiting (2019) adds that working in the mainstream classrooms with a tutor model can have a negative impact on ELLs language growth by increasing their affective filter due to their feelings of embarrassment within a deficit-focused model.

This section described some of the advantages and disadvantages of using a Push-in model as reported by research. The cited advantages include ELL students being present for all content instruction, increased service minutes in actual practice, social inclusion and interaction within the mainstream community, and ELL teacher awareness

of language needs within the content classroom. Some noted disadvantages are less explicit language instruction, a lack of collaboration leading to ambiguous ELL teacher roles, the under-utilization of ELL teacher assets, and the contribution to a deficit view of ELL students. The following section provides a synthesis of research around the advantages and disadvantages of Co-teaching, which is the final English-medium model.

### **The Effects of Co-teaching Models**

This section details the most commonly stated advantages and disadvantages of using the Co-teaching model, which is the last of the three English-medium models discussed in this study. Due to the location of the ELL teacher within this model, some of the advantages are similar to those of the Push-in model, such as increased language socialization and the benefits of simultaneous content and language instruction. Other advantages include elevated collaboration and teacher growth. The disadvantages of using this model include a misconception of what Co-teaching really is, a lack of collaborative training for those involved, poor maintenance of the Co-teaching ideal, and a lack of sufficient time for collaboration. Simmons (2018) explains that Co-teaching was originally a model seen exclusively within Special Education services. However, recently Co-teaching has become an interest within ELL instructional models in order to better merge content and language instruction. The general idea is that Co-teaching will automatically produce collaboration between these two instructional areas, resulting in increased ELL student achievement (McClure & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2010). But despite this positive ideal, Simmons (2018) also notes that research addressing the actual practices and outcomes of Co-teaching teams is scarce. Whiting (2019) and Penke (2011)

both agree that despite a lack of empirical data on the impact of Co-teaching, writing continues to extol the perceived benefits of the model. This section aims to synthesize the existing research in order to better understand the effects of the model in practice.

As noted, some advantages of Co-teaching are similar to those seen within the Push-in model, the first being increased language socialization for ELL students. Pearson (2015) adds that allowing ELL students to stay with their mainstream peers during language instruction benefits them by hearing fluent English from their peers. This model allows ELLs to work in cooperative groups with non-ELL peers with support and instruction from their ELL teacher. Another advantage of Co-teaching also seen within the Push-in model is simultaneous content and language instruction. However, unlike in a Push-in model, Co-teaching allows language instruction to be much more explicit and directly embedded in content instruction.

Simmons (2018) explains that in many co-taught classrooms, the ELL and non-ELL students receive joint content instruction, but it is infused with explicit language instruction. This occurs because, unlike in Push-in or Pull-out models, the content and ELL teacher work as equal instructors in one co-taught classroom. These teachers have the ability to plan and deliver all instruction together in a manner that helps the students develop language and content side-by-side. In a co-taught classroom, all students have the advantage of receiving content and language instruction simultaneously from two teachers, each with specific sets of instructional expertise (Simmons, 2018). In a study conducted by Kimani (2018), data showed that literacy growth within co-taught classes doubled as compared to non co-taught classes, clearly benefiting students within



Co-teaching models. Within this study, all teachers involved in Co-teaching surveyed high on areas of clear shared responsibility and positive relationships, and saw the model as a crucial element of effective ELL instruction. This teacher-driven data leads to the next advantage of elevated collaboration.

Research from McClure & Cahnmann-Taylor (2010) shows that a strong advantage of using the Co-teaching model is that it promotes more collaborative approaches than other segregative models like Pull-out. The Co-teaching model is often praised for its creation of a more inclusive educational environment that coordinates the expertise of content and ELL teachers (McClure & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2010). Simmons (2018) agrees, citing the benefits of Co-teaching as increased communication, collaboration, and instructional planning time between teachers, which contribute to ELL student achievement. Pearson (2015) also recognizes that collaboration between content and ELL teachers within co-taught classrooms also benefits the linguistic development of ELL students. One contributing factor is that by stationing two teachers in the same classroom for Co-teaching, whether it be all day or only for specific lessons, it allows for more time to practice different collaborative approaches. The ELL students in co-taught classrooms benefit from having two teachers that collaborate on their success of academic content, rather than trying to reach the same goal separately as seen in other models (Pearson, 2015). As a result of two teachers with different sets of expertise collaborating on the academic success of their shared students, the teachers involved also experience growth by learning new approaches to instruction.

As a result, the final advantage of Co-teaching indicated in this research is increased teacher professional growth. In their research, Baecher & Bell (2012) found that although fewer ELL teachers regularly participated in Co-teaching as compared to other models, they preferred it to the Push-in model. The main reason was because they felt more valued by content teachers within this model, as it allowed ELL teachers to take more ownership of the language instruction necessary for ELLs to be successful in content instruction. Simmons (2018) also notes that teacher growth is an advantage of Co-teaching because it offers opportunities for teachers to observe diverse instructional methods and skills. In co-taught classrooms, all teachers experience increased knowledge from observing a model of different instructional practices, leading to the implementation of new strategies learned from peer teachers. This leads to confidence in previously insecure areas of teaching, which ultimately benefits ELLs who will thrive from increased expertise of their content and language teachers. Furthermore, in their study of collaborative practices between content and language teachers, Fu et al. (2007) found that many participants of Co-teaching compared it to taking education courses while doing an internship at the same time; it was experienced as highly effective and rewarding.

However, one disadvantage of Co-teaching is a misconception of what the model is and how to effectively implement it. Kimani (2018) cites numerous benefits for ELLs who receive ELD instruction through a Co-teaching model, with the only negatives being a lack of common planning time and schedule conflicts. However, this data is from a very limited sample of only two ELL teachers, two mainstream teachers, and two school administrators. A limited amount of research existing on the benefits of Co-teaching

results in the misconception of what Co-teaching really is. Pearson (2015) explains that placing two teachers in one classroom does not automatically result in Co-teaching, and many teachers involved are unaware of what the model should look like in practice. Cook & Friend (1991) define successful Co-teaching as the mainstream and ELL teacher collaborating to share time, resources, and instructional knowledge to work toward the common goal of supporting all students. However, this looks different in every classroom and has many forms. Pearson (2015) explains that in the Co-teaching model, there are seven different approaches that a co-taught classroom can use, from having one lead teacher to actually team-teaching lessons. Although having a variety of options can help two very different teachers find a platform that works for both of their goals, without knowing exactly what each option looks like, Co-teaching can result in something very different than what was originally intended. Whiting (2019) agrees, noting that although Co-teaching is meant to be collaborative, due to all the other goals within the grade-level classroom, explicit language instruction is often not as powerful as intended in the model.

This information contributes to the next disadvantage of the model, which is an inaccurate Co-teaching ideal. Responses from interviews with teachers in co-taught classes describe a large gap between the ideal of supporting ELLs in a Co-teaching model and the reality of Push-in tutoring. Data from this study conducted by Whiting (2019) also reveals an overwhelmingly negative perception of Co-teaching from both sets of teachers, because the conditions they were working in did not match their original ideal of the model. Although they thought Co-teaching would lead to automatic collaboration, resulting in an increase of simultaneous content and language instruction for their ELLs,

the model often functioned similarly to a Push-in model that lacked planning and collaboration. Similarly, data from interviews conducted by Pearson (2015) shows that among both mainstream and ELL teachers working in Co-teaching models, only 41% preferred to be using the model due to how it was functioning. Furthermore, research by McClure & Cahnmann-Taylor (2010) reveals that although ELL teachers originally leaned towards Co-teaching due to the perceived benefits of the model, they found it often led to less direct ELD minutes for their ELL students. However, the negative ways that Co-teaching can function are usually not the direct fault of the teachers involved, but result from a lack of effective collaborative training prior to initiating the model.

Therefore, another disadvantage found within the Co-teaching model is that it often lacks the collaborative training needed for the teachers using it to be successful. In their book, *Principles for the Practice of Collaboration in Schools*, Cook and Friend (1991) define collaboration as “direct interaction between at least two coequal parties voluntarily engaged in shared decision making as they work toward a common goal” (p. 7). Villa, Thousand, Nevin, & Liston (2005) add that collaboration is the foundation of effective Co-teaching, and is a relationship between individuals that work toward a common goal with individual accountability, recognize and respect each other’s expertise, and demonstrate parity with each other in shared teaching tasks and responsibilities. Each piece involved in this definition is very complex and challenging, making it necessary for teachers to receive training and guidance on how to collaborate effectively. However, Baecher & Bell (2017) found that although collaboration is

necessary to create an effective co-taught classroom, it tends to be the exception rather than the norm in such classrooms.

Results from a questionnaire of 72 K-12 teachers involved in Co-teaching indicate that although they were expected to co-plan and co-teach to support the ELLs within their classrooms, attempts at collaboration were not successful in meeting this ideal, and were not accompanied by support from school administrators or educational coaches (Baecher & Bell, 2012). McClure & Cahnmann-Taylor (2010) attribute this to how research on Co-teaching largely neglects the intricate processes of collaboration, and the uniquely separate yet joint roles of each teacher involved, as explained in the complex definitions above. The authors explain that “co-teachers must enter into, literally and philosophically, specific discourse communities in which pedagogy and subject knowledge are often viewed differently” (p. 118), yet they are expected to do so effectively without the necessary training to be successful. Pearson (2015) agrees that the success of content and language teachers effectively sharing a space to deliver instruction that meets the needs of its diverse learners requires adequate training, both initial and on-going. As a result of many schools being unaware that such training is necessary or what the practice actually looks like, the Co-teaching model does not serve its well-intended purpose.

Another disadvantage of the Co-teaching model is that even when originally executed successfully, it is often poorly maintained and evaluated. Through their research, Baecher & Bell (2017) conclude that although a Co-teaching model might be initiated effectively at the beginning, if the practices involved are not maintained, it becomes less effective. In their study, several ELL teachers explained that although they

began their time in co-taught classrooms with specific roles related to language instruction, after some time they began tending to other classroom needs, and felt they provided very little explicit ELL instruction. Simmons (2018) agrees that although Co-teaching teams might start with a clear idea of their role within the learning community, the challenges that arise within the classroom where they are responsible for the learning of all students often leads to ambiguous responsibility among the two teachers. Furthermore, Whiting (2019) points out that a Co-teaching model requires complete buy-in from both teachers in order for it to serve the purpose of teaching language and content simultaneously. Although such forms of instruction might have been the original goal of the Co-teaching team, data shows that if both teachers are not willing to collaborate with parity, the work of the ELL teacher becomes less effective and they are unable to adequately meet the linguistic needs of the ELLs within the co-taught classroom.

A final disadvantage of the Co-teaching model is the lack of time allocated to continuously collaborate at an effective level. Although mainstream and ELL teachers are jointly responsible for maintaining the effectiveness of meeting the linguistic needs of their co-taught students, many schools fail to provide teachers with the time necessary to do so (Whiting, 2019). Fearon (2008) explains that Co-teaching requires a substantial investment of time and effort in order to maintain the effectiveness of teacher roles within the model. However, Russell & Von Esch (2018) recognize that many school leaders do not allocate enough time for professionals to collaborate in meaningful ways within the daily schedule. In teacher interviews conducted by Simmons (2018), a common theme

was the challenge of finding time within their designated schedule to allow the level of collaboration needed to maintain an effectively co-taught class. These teachers also revealed that the norm of Co-teaching is to be assigned to work with multiple classrooms, not just one, thus increasing the time needed for effective collaboration between all teachers involved. Therefore, if the necessary time for effective collaborative practices is not allocated on the teacher schedules created by school leaders, then the positive impacts of the Co-teaching model are lost.

This section served to describe some of the advantages and disadvantages of using a Co-teaching model to provide ELD services. Some of the advantages were consistent with those of the Push-in model, including increased language socialization and the benefits of simultaneous content and language instruction. The other advantages discussed were elevated collaboration and teacher growth. The disadvantages discussed include a misconception of what Co-teaching really is, a lack of collaborative training for both teachers involved, poor maintenance of the Co-teaching ideal, and a lack of sufficient time for collaboration. Each of the three English-medium models has advantages and disadvantages to effectively meeting the linguistic needs of the ELL students they exist to serve. Therefore, the following section explains the results of ELD program model effectiveness based on the rationale for this study, and suggests a hybrid model to utilize the unique advantages of each model.

### **Rationale for Study**

The purpose of this section is to provide a rationale for the study by incorporating ideas from the advantages and disadvantages of the three described models into one

section. This leads to the suggestion of a hybrid model that utilizes the advantages of each model, and an answer to the research question. The research question guiding this study is: *Which existing English-medium ELD program model (Pull-out, Push-in, Co-teaching) is most effective in meeting the linguistic needs of elementary ELL students, and how can these models be more successful?* As elementary students in English-medium settings become increasingly more linguistically diverse due to the growing ELL population, many teachers are struggling to teach them in culturally and linguistically responsive ways (Whiting, 2019). According to Honigsfeld (2009), the different ELD program model possibilities and their effects within a school is important to understand because with the number of ELLs in U.S. schools rising each year, all educators need to advocate for more effective ELD services. However, Baecher & Bell (2012) conclude that studies investigating the effectiveness of existing ELD program models in meeting the linguistic needs of ELL students have resulted in mixed findings.

The results of the preceding research synthesis on the advantages and disadvantages of Pull-out, Push-in, and Co-teaching models indicate that no single model adequately meets the linguistic needs of ELL students in a way that closes their achievement gap. In an attempt to find the most effective model in meeting the academic needs of diverse learners, Calderon et al. (2011) and Fearon (2008) conclude that the quality of instruction is what matters most in educating English learners, not the selected program model. In a yearlong observation of collaboration between mainstream and ELL teachers across all three program models, Fearon (2008) discovered that the quality and extent of collaboration between teachers was more important than the program model



itself. Additionally, the results from teacher interviews conducted by Pearson (2015) indicate the opinion that any model has the potential to equally succeed or fail, depending on the effective delivery through collaboration within it. Therefore, rather than proving the effectiveness of one model over another, the results of this study help support the concept that any of the existing ELD program models can be successful under the right conditions.

Likewise, Robinson (2012) explains that research suggests each of the three English-medium models has its advantages and disadvantages, and one has not proven more effective than another. The results of this specific study also indicate that students receiving their ELD instruction through a single model, rather than a combination of different models, continue to underperform as compared to their non-ELL peers. Whiting (2019) also found that the “ELL teachers participating in each of the different program models saw each as having pedagogical and psychological advantages and disadvantages on both the teachers and students involved.” (p. 18). Therefore, it is not the program model itself that provides effective ELD instruction, but the use of advantageous constructs used within the model. Regardless of the chosen model, Honigsfeld (2009) states that the following routines should be present within an effective English-medium ELL program:

1. ELL and content teachers jointly organize and sequence the curriculum so that it aligns with the language in all content areas.
2. ELL and content teachers jointly review student learning materials and coordinate the equal possession of these for all instructors.

3. ELL and content teachers observe one another's classrooms for the purpose of understanding one another's teaching methods and to observe individual students in each instructional setting.
4. ELL and content teachers hold joint parent conferences to foster effective communication with families.
5. ELL and content teachers hold regular meetings to discuss individual students' progress.
6. ELL and content teachers of the same grade plan units of instruction together based on an integrated thematic approach to learning.
7. Cultural information is shared at regular meetings between ELL and content teachers for the purpose of clarifying students' behavior and sensitizing teachers to cultural differences.
8. Multicultural concepts are infused into the mainstream curriculum by teams of ELL and content teachers who work together (Honigsfeld, 2009, p. 171).

Rather than focusing on the type of model used, this list focuses on the collaborative practices among all educators that lead to increased ELL student achievement, both academic and linguistic. Concerning this information, the purpose of this section was to provide a rationale for the study based on the research question. The results of the literature review indicate that no single model effectively meets the linguistic needs of ELLs in a way that closes their achievement gap. Therefore, the following section suggests the implementation of a hybrid model that incorporates the

advantages found within each of the three English-medium models, as indicated in the review of literature.

### **Suggested Hybrid Model**

The purpose of this section is to provide a rationale for the suggestion of utilizing a hybrid model, rather than selecting a single English-medium model for ELD services. The U.S. Department of Education (2017) indicates that when an ELD program does not produce English language development leading to equal content participation among ELLs and their non-ELL peers within a reasonable period of time, the school must modify the program. Considering that research shows ELLs take five to seven years to develop grade-level academic language skills (Ross, 2014) and continue to underperform as compared to their non-ELL peers (Honigsfeld, 2009), we can conclude that ELLs are not reaching academic proficiency within a reasonable amount of time. According to Honigsfeld (2009), if research shows that one size does not fit all, then it is not considered best practice to select only one model for an ELD program.

Concerning the diverse set of learners within each school, Whiting (2019) also reveals that some teachers found the Push-in model to be more effective for ELLs at higher proficiency levels, while the Pull-out model was more effective for students with lower English proficiency levels. Therefore, the most effective model could be a hybrid model that utilizes the unique advantages each model has to offer. Through research conducted by Penke (2011), it was discovered that ELL teachers who took a more balanced approach to their model of ELD delivery experienced many benefits; when multiple models are used, this incorporates the advantages from each model into the

overall program. Likewise, Pearson (2015) found that the programs showing the highest levels of teacher preference involved a combination of models. Additionally, the results of an open-ended survey conducted by Baecher & Bell (2012) indicate that 14% of surveyed teachers independently recommended some form of a hybrid model to better support the diverse needs of their learners.

The awareness that no single model is effectively meeting the linguistic and academic needs of ELL students, along with knowledge of positive teacher perception of a hybrid model, led to the topic of the culminating project: [\*Guide to an Effective English-medium ELL Program Model: Using the Advantages of Each Model \(Pull-out, Push-in, Co-teaching\)\*](#). Being knowledgeable about the advantages of each model will allow ELL teachers to have sound options to effectively meet the linguistic needs of their students, while fostering effective content-language collaboration. In addition to opening the conversation of a more effective hybrid model, the research within this study indicates that each program lacks the advantages of teacher agency (Russell & Von Esch, 2018), effective collaboration (Haworth, McGee, & MacIntyre, 2015), and equitable professional development for mainstream and ELL teachers (Perez & Holmes, 2010). These themes are further discussed in Chapter Three as they relate to the topic of the project. The intended outcome of answering the research question and creating the given guide is for teachers using any of the three described models to utilize the advantages within them, as well as incorporate advantages found within other models to create the most effective hybrid model for the ELL needs within their specific context.

The purpose of this section was to incorporate the advantages of the Pull-out, Push-in, and Co-teaching models to promote the idea of a more effective hybrid model. The section began with restating the research question and its relevance to the research presented in this study. An answer to the research question was then presented, which is that no single model is effective in meeting the linguistic needs of ELLs in a way that closes their achievement gap. Finally, based on this information, a hybrid model was suggested that incorporates the advantages of each model in order to more effectively meet the linguistic needs of the ELL students it serves. The project was also briefly introduced as it contributes to the rationale for this study. The following section summarizes the information presented in this chapter and introduces the next chapter within this study, the Project Description.

### **Chapter Summary**

The purpose of this final section is to summarize what was learned throughout all preceding sections of the chapter, as well as conclude the chapter, leading into Chapter Three. The first section provided an overview of the chapter and introduced the research question of the study, which is: *Which existing English-medium ELD program model (Pull-out, Push-in, Co-teaching) is most effective in meeting the linguistic needs of elementary ELL students, and how can these models be more successful?* The following section offered a detailed description of the topic, with the ELL student population and the achievement gap they experience as the focus. The next section outlined the scope and limitations of the topic, further narrowing it to elementary ELL students participating in the English-medium ELD program models of Push-in, Pull-out, or Co-teaching.

Baecher & Bell (2012) summarize the definitions of the three models as follows: “In Push-in, the ELL teacher provides instruction in students’ content or grade-level classroom, whereas in Pull-out the ELL teacher provides instruction to small groups of students in another location. In Co-teaching models, the ELL and content teachers jointly provide instruction to ELLs” (p. 488). This opened the sections on ELD program requirements, specifically in MN, and the goals of an effective ELD program model. In the following three sections, research on the advantages and disadvantages of Pull-out, Push-in, and Co-teaching models was synthesized. The most notable advantages seen among these models include: increased opportunities for explicit language instruction, a safe environment for risk-taking, increased ELD instructional time, language socialization with non-ELL peers, professional growth from colleague observations, and accelerated simultaneous content-language instruction. This led to a section on the rationale for the study, which included an initial answer to the research question and the suggestion of a hybrid model that utilizes the advantages of each model. The title of the culminating project and how it relates to the research question was also stated.

The goal of this study is to fully answer the research question: *Which existing English-medium ELD program model (Pull-out, Push-in, Co-teaching) is most effective in meeting the linguistic needs of elementary ELL students, and how can these models be more successful?* The upcoming Chapter Three describes the project that is the result of this study: [Guide to an Effective English-medium ELL Program Model: Using the Advantages of Each Model \(Pull-out, Push-in, Co-teaching\)](#). In Chapter Three, the sections of the project are detailed in a project overview, including the advantages seen

within each individual model, while promoting the themes of teacher agency, collaboration, and professional development to create a successful ELD program model.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Project Description

#### Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the project that was created to support the following research question of this study: *Which existing English-medium ELD program model (Pull-out, Push-in, Co-teaching) is most effective in meeting the linguistic needs of elementary ELL students, and how can these models be more successful?* The intended outcome was to create the: [Guide to an Effective English-medium ELL Program Model: Using the Advantages of Each Model \(Pull-out, Push-in, Co-teaching\)](#). The given topic of this project serves to support the linguistic development of elementary-level ELL students receiving their ELD instruction through English-medium models. The guide also serves to better inform educators and school administrators on research-based best practices around how to make their existing ELD program model more effective and appropriate for the ELL students they serve. As a result, I hope to bridge gaps of understanding between the lenses of different educators in order to establish an ELD program model that is both collaborative and based on best practice.

Research shows that Push-in, Pull-out, and Co-teaching ELD program models each have their advantages and disadvantages in meeting the linguistic needs of ELLs, and currently there is no ideal single model (Whiting, 2019). Therefore, what is suggested is a hybrid model that utilizes the advantages of each individual model (Honigsfeld, 2009). Furthermore, regardless of the chosen model, what makes it most effective is the use of collaboration and professional development that promotes simultaneous



content-language instruction to help ELLs succeed (Fearon, 2008). According to Calderon et al. (2011), the elements of an effective ELD instructional model include: “school structures and leadership, explicit language and literacy instruction, cooperative learning, professional development, parent and family support teams, and monitoring implementation and outcomes” (p. 103). Although the scope and limitations of this project do not allow coverage of all these topics, the following are promoted within the constructs of any model: teacher agency, collaboration, and equitable professional development.

The upcoming section provides a more detailed overview of these themes within the project, and a rationale for the chosen method of delivery. The next section describes the audience and setting that the guide is intended for, including the reason they were selected. Next, the framework and theories chosen to support the creation of the project are outlined. The following section is a more detailed project description that lists each topic covered, as well as the format of each section. Finally, the timeline of the project’s implementation and the suggested length of each component are detailed. This chapter ends with a summary of what was described in each preceding section, leading to the introduction of Chapter 4, the conclusion to this study. This section introduced the purpose of the chapter, and provided a chapter overview. The following section provides an overview of the project, which is a [\*Guide to an Effective English-medium ELL Program Model\*](#).

### **Project Overview**

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the culminating project of this study, in response to the answer to the research question. The type of project

created as a result of this study is a guide in the form of a packet that is available in electronic format. The official title of the project is: [Guide to an Effective English-medium ELL Program Model: Using the Advantages of Each Model \(Pull-out, Push-in, Co-teaching\)](#). The purpose of this guide is to compile information and resources that promote the utilization of the advantages found within each of the three ELD program models. The guide is modeled after the *English Learner Toolkit for State and Local Education Agencies* (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). This toolkit is arranged by topics that promote the creation of an effective ELD program model within any school setting. Each section includes information on the topic, expected outcomes, suggestions for implementation, additional resources, and evaluative surveys on the utilization of each topic.

I chose to create a guide similar to this format for my project due to its ease of access and utilization within any setting, although mine will be aimed at those using English-medium Pull-out, Push-in, and Co-teaching models. Calderon et al. (2011) explain that one approach to improving outcomes for ELLs is to reform the entire school structure to better meet their diverse linguistic needs. Although that is a long term goal, the intention of this project is to reveal easily accessible ways of promoting the linguistic growth of ELL students within any ELD model. The purpose of each topic is to utilize the advantages found within each of the three program models to promote a more effective hybrid model. The specific topics and components of each section are outlined in the upcoming Project Description section. The purpose of this section was to provide a

general overview of the culminating project of this study. The following section describes the setting and audience the project is intended for.

### **Setting & Audience**

This section serves to emphasize the intended setting and audience that the project is designed for. The intended setting for the use of this project is specifically an English-medium elementary setting, as previously rationalized. Although other settings such as dual-language or bilingual education could benefit from some of the topics, there are other publications that are more specific to supporting their needs, which were not researched in the scope of this study. Elementary learning environments are also the suggested audience because the strategies given in the [\*Guide to an Effective English-medium ELL Program Model\*](#) are aimed at this developmental level. This is because I have personal experience in this setting, and it was previously identified that the three described models are most common within elementary settings. Finally, the intended setting should include at least one of the following models: Pull-out, Push-in, Co-teaching. The project utilizes the advantages of each of these models, so initial familiarity with them will provide ease in the utilization of this guide.

The intended audiences for using the guide are the ELL teachers, mainstream teachers, school administrators, and ELL students within these settings. ELL teachers using at least one of the described English-medium ELD program models will benefit from understanding the advantages of each model. Through the guide, ELL teachers can also gain an awareness that a hybrid model that incorporates all of these advantages can be used within their setting. Mainstream content teachers are an important part of the

collaboration that is necessary to fully utilize the advantages of each model, and they will grow as professionals from gaining more resources for content-language instruction.

Next, school administrators have an important role in helping to maintain and evaluate the effectiveness of their school's ELD program. Being knowledgeable of the strategies within this guide will promote teacher agency through effective admin-teacher collaboration. Finally, the ELL students receiving their ELD instruction through these various English-medium models will benefit from their teachers serving them with a variety of advantages found within other models. The linguistic and academic achievement of these students is the focus of a [\*Guide to an Effective English-medium ELL Program Model\*](#). The purpose of this section was to describe the setting and audiences intended for the scope of this project. The next section identifies the framework and theories selected to inform this guide.

### **Framework & Theories**

This section identifies the framework and theories used to design the guide created as the culminating project of this Capstone. The framework used to determine the structure of the project was Backward Design, as described by Wiggins & McTighe (2005) in *Understanding by Design*. Backward Design, sometimes referred to as backward planning, is a framework commonly used by educators in lesson and unit planning. The purpose of this framework is to begin the planning process by visualizing what the final intended outcome is. With that goal solidified, the author can identify the skills and knowledge needed in order to meet this goal, and plan the preceding lessons using this information (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). Likewise, I identified that the final

outcome of my project is to promote the advantages of each model in a more effective hybrid model. Therefore, using the framework of Backward Design, I was able to create the topics needed to accomplish this goal, as well as the necessary sections within each topic.

Although ELL students will benefit from this project, the audience that will be reading and learning from the guide is adults. Therefore, theories on andragogy as explained by Knowles (1984) in *The Adult Learner: A Neglected Species*, were used in the organization of the guide to increase the reception of these adult learners. Some main principles of the andragogy design theory are: 1) adults need to know why they need to learn something, 2) adults need to learn experientially, 3) adults approach learning as problem-solving, and 4) adults learn best when the topic is of immediate value (Knowles, 1984). Considering the first of these principles, in my guide I included an introduction page to each topic to provide the reader with a rationale for why the topic is important and how it can benefit their teaching practice and students. Next, because adults need to learn through experience, the guide includes many sections that encourage the reader to take action, such as through collaboration or implementing different strategies in their practice. Third, because adults approach learning as problem-solving, each of the six topics in the guide includes an evaluative survey so readers can determine what areas their school needs improvement on, as well as resources to help solve the identified problems. The final principle of andragogy states that adults learn best when the topic is of immediate value. Therefore, the guide was designed with scaffolded information and sections so that readers at all levels of SLA teaching experience can learn and apply

something from the guide immediately to their practice. In using the principles from Knowles' (1984) theory of andragogy, I hope for my project to be a self-guided learning experience for any adult who utilizes it.

Last, the framework of this guide is intended to be a form of professional development for English-medium elementary school educators who are seeking to improve the effects of their ELD program models. Therefore, I infused ideas of effective teacher professional development by Darling-Hammond, Hyster, & Gardner (2017) in the creation of each section within the guide. In their publication, Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) define effective professional development (PD) as “structured professional learning that results in changes in teacher practices and improvements in student learning outcomes” (p.7). In their methodology, seven widely shared features of effective PD are encouraged. The features I utilized in my guide are: incorporating active learning, supporting collaboration, using models of effective practice, and providing coaching and expert support. In my guide I accomplished this by including a Next Steps section for each topic, in which the ELL teacher is positioned as the content expert that models effective strategies and supports collaboration through coaching and active learning. The purpose of this section was to identify the framework and theories used to inform the structure of a [\*Guide to an Effective English-medium ELL Program Model\*](#). The following section provides a more detailed outline of what is included in the guide, including a description of the topics and sections found within it.

## **Project Description**

This section provides an outline that describes the topics found within the project and the components provided to implement them as advantages within any model.

### ***Outline of Topics***

Below is the outline and order of the topics of focus in the [\*Guide to an Effective English-medium ELL Program Model\*](#). Each topic is an advantage of either the Pull-out, Push-in, or Co-teaching model, as previously determined from research in the literature review:

- Introduction of Topics: Promoting Teacher Agency, Collaboration, and Equitable Professional Development;
- Topic 1: Increasing Opportunities for Explicit Language Instruction;
- Topic 2: Creating a Safe Environment for Risk-Taking;
- Topic 3: Decreasing Lost ELD Instructional Time;
- Topic 4: Increasing Language Socialization with non-ELL Peers;
- Topic 5: Frequent Colleague Observations for Professional Growth
- Topic 6: Accelerating Simultaneous Content and Language Instruction.

The first section within the guide is an introduction that serves to promote fostering the themes of teacher agency, effective collaboration, and equitable professional development for increased benefits within each topic. Topics 1-2 are advantages found within Pull-out models, Topics 3-4 are advantages of using the Push-in model, and Topics 5-6 are common advantages seen within the Co-teaching model.

### ***Topic Subsections***

To fully implement the advantages found within these models, each of the six topics includes the following subsections:

**Introduction.** This subsection includes a description of the topic, why it is an advantage, and an implementation overview. The introduction provides crucial information on the topic that must be understood before attempting the implementation of the advantage seen within each topic.

**Strategies.** This subsection describes simple ways to utilize the advantage in any setting by incorporating strategies on the topic. Each topic includes between three and six strategies that include background information on the strategy, concrete ideas for implementing it, and images to aid in reader understanding. These strategies are an important part of the guide because they allow all educators to actively participate in utilizing the advantages of all models within their setting.

**Resources.** This subsection lists free resources on the topic in the categories of Teacher Agency, Professional Development, and Collaboration. The purpose of the teacher agency resources is to empower ELL teachers to implement the advantage within their school by first gaining a deeper understanding of the practice. The PD section offers ways to access free training on the topic in order to increase shared knowledge of the advantage among all educators in the school. Finally, the purpose of the resources included in the collaboration section is to promote action among all stakeholders once they have gained sufficient knowledge on the topic. The resources subsection found in each topic is important because all elements included are free to access and involve very



little preparation.

**Survey.** This subsection provides an opportunity for the reader to rate their learning community on the utilization of the topic before and after implementation. For each topic, the survey lists eight statements related to the principles of the topic. For each statement, the reader or school implementation team should indicate a score between one and three to assign points based on the given scale for that topic. This survey is intended to be completed as an initial evaluation prior to implementing the advantage, and again at the end to monitor progress. The survey subsection is a helpful piece of this guide because it provides a list of what successful implementation of the advantage looks like, and should inspire the reader to foster positive changes in their ELD program.

**Timeline of Next Steps.** This subsection provides an outline of big-picture steps to utilize the advantage of the topic. All tasks within the topic, including the modeling and implementation of the given strategies, using the resources for teacher agency, PD, and collaboration, as well as conducting the survey, are organized in a 10-week plan for each topic. The given actions within this 10-week framework help the reader accomplish the utilization of the advantage within each topic by organizing what was learned on the topic into an action plan. Using this timeline, if a school wanted to fully implement the six advantages provided in the topics within the guide, this could be accomplished over the course of 60 weeks, which is roughly 15 months. Therefore, I suggest implementing the six topics within this guide over the course of two academic years. In each school year within the two-year plan, three topics could be fully implemented, and then further built on in following years. For the three topics, I also suggest choosing one advantage

from each of the three English-medium models in order to utilize a wide range of strategies and advantages during each year of implementation.

**Summary.** Finally, this subsection outlines what was learned about the topic throughout the section, and includes a reminder on how to take action. This subsection is useful because it visually represents information from the strategies, resources, survey, and next steps subsections as a quick reference for the reader.

The purpose of this section was to provide an outline of the six topics used to structure the guide. An explanation of the subsections found within each of the six topics and their purpose was also outlined, as well as a timeline of implementation. The following section provides a summary of all preceding sections in this chapter surrounding my project.

### **Chapter Summary**

The purpose of this chapter was to provide a description of the culminating project of this study, titled [\*Guide to an Effective English-medium ELL Program Model: Using the Advantages of Each Model \(Pull-out, Push-in, Co-teaching\)\*](#). The first section introduced the project and provided an overview of the sections within the chapter. The next section provided a project overview, explaining the form and purpose of the project. The following section explained the setting and audience intended to benefit as a result of utilizing the project, as well as a rationale for the chosen audience and setting. Next, the framework and theories used to design the project were revealed, such as Backward Design, theories of andragogy, and methods for effective professional development. The next section provided an outline that described the themes of the introduction, the six

topics promoted as advantages within the guide, and an explanation of the subsections found within each topic. This section also included a suggested timeline for implementing the project by the intended audience. The following and final chapter is a conclusion that reflects on the entire process of this Capstone, along with the creation of the culminating project.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Conclusion

#### Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a summary of what was learned throughout this study through a personal reflection on the Capstone process. An English Language Learner, or ELL, is understood as a student from “a non-English speaking background that has not yet developed sufficient proficiency to master an English-only curriculum and instruction in school” (Lloyd, 2014, p. 6). Other terms commonly used to describe this type of student are English as a Second Language (ESL), Limited English Proficient (LEP), English Learner (EL) (Lloyd, 2014), Emergent Bilingual, or Multilingual Learner (Garcia et al., 2018). This population is increasing faster than any other segment of students in U.S. schools (Baecher & Bell, 2017). As a result, all schools are required to provide ELL students with English Language Development (ELD) services that help remove any language barriers they face in engaging with grade-level mainstream curriculum in meaningful ways (U.S. Department of Education, 2017).

The majority of U.S. public schools are English-medium schools, which means that content instruction is typically conducted in all English, as opposed to bilingual or dual-language immersion models. Within English-medium schools, ELLs could receive their ELD services through a Pull-out, Push-in, or Co-teaching model, or a combination of these (De Oliveira, 2019). Each school district, and sometimes even individual schools, have a choice in which ELD model is selected to serve the language needs of their ELLs. However, regardless of the chosen ELD model, research consistently shows

that K-12 ELL students academically underperform as compared to their native English-speaking peers. This includes data from standardized content test results, grade-level assessments, and highschool graduation rates (U.S. Department of Education, 2017).

One reason for this underperformance is because content language is not always explicitly taught at an effective level in the instructional settings these students are a part of, including their mainstream content classroom and the type of ELD services they receive. In these settings, ELLs' content knowledge is measured in a language they are not yet proficient in, leading to inaccurate perceptions of their abilities (Honigsfeld, 2009). However, the language proficiency and academic achievement of ELLs are two separate constructs that should be measured separately; ELL students have a lot of academic background knowledge, even if they are not yet at a proficiency level that allows them to communicate that information in English (Lloyd, 2014). Additionally, mainstream teachers are often not trained in explicit language instruction within teacher licensing programs. As a result, ELLs might only receive such language instruction in their ELD classes, which could be only 60 minutes per week depending on state policies around serving ELLs. This data highlights the language and literacy gaps ELL students face in their daily academic settings that must be addressed if they are to reach the level of proficiency expected of them on standardized assessments (Calderon et al., 2011).

In order for educators and school administrators to choose an ELD program model that meets the varied linguistic needs of its students, the effectiveness of each model must first be understood. However, there is a lack of current research on which

English-medium model has the most positive effects on meeting the linguistic needs of its students (Baecher & Bell, 2017). Due to these complex issues that lack sufficient research, educators around the U.S. continue to face challenges in how to best serve their growing body of ELL students, by navigating how to effectively teach content and language simultaneously within the given program models (Lloyd, 2014). As the number of ELL students in U.S. elementary schools is rising each year, all educators need to be aware of the effects of possible ELD models in order to advocate for the adoption of the appropriate model for their students (Honigsfeld, 2009).

To assist U.S. elementary educators in understanding this complex issue, the research question I crafted for this study is: *Which existing English-medium ELD program model (Pull-out, Push-in, Co-teaching) is most effective in meeting the linguistic needs of elementary ELL students, and how can these models be more successful?* The research I collected to answer this question led me to create the [Guide to an Effective English-medium ELL Program Model: Using the Advantages of Each Model \(Pull-out, Push-in, Co-teaching\)](#), which is further detailed throughout this chapter. This section served to restate the purpose of my research question and the culminating project of this study. The following section provides an overview of all sections within this chapter.

### **Chapter Overview**

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a conclusion to the study that incorporates information from the literature review and how it relates to the production of the resulting project as a whole. The first section is a reflection on the entire Capstone process based on my personal teaching experiences and the personal learning experiences

that took place throughout the research process. The next section connects information from Chapter Two's review of literature to the project itself. This includes an answer to the research question through the suggestion of a hybrid model that includes the advantages seen within each English-medium ELD model. Each topic seen within the project is then described as it relates to the information synthesized in the literature review. Following this, the benefits that the culminating project has to the field of education are described in relation to the intended audiences. The next section explains the implications to the project, such as policy and school implications and limitations. Following this, the next section recommends how to use the project, as well as my plan for communicating its creation to others. The final section provides a summary of the chapter and a conclusion to the study. This section provided an outline of the format of this chapter, beginning with the upcoming Capstone reflection.

### **Reflection on Capstone Process**

This section provides a reflection on my participation in the entire Capstone process. First, I will convey my personal experiences that pertain to the crafting of the research question and topics found within the project. Next, I will describe the major learning experiences that occurred throughout the research process, as well as one unexpected learning.

### ***Personal Experiences***

Through my personal teaching experiences in working with elementary ELL students, beginning as a mainstream classroom teacher and later moving to an ELL teacher role, I have seen the separation between content and language instruction that

these students experience every day in their academic learning environments. I also observed that there could be improvements made to the level of explicit language instruction ELLs received within their content instruction. However, I was unsure if the solution could be found in the selected ELD program itself, as implemented by ELL teachers, or if it necessitated a school-wide shift. As a result, my research question was shaped into: *Which existing English-medium ELD program model (Pull-out, Push-in, Co-teaching) is most effective in meeting the linguistic needs of elementary ELL students, and how can these models be more successful?*

When I was a mainstream Kindergarten teacher several years ago, I was not even aware of what explicit language instruction meant, or that I could adopt strategies and practices that would foster such instruction for ELLs in my content classroom. The school I taught at during that time implemented a Pull-out ELD model, which was observed by mainstream teachers to be language instruction that was very separate from content instruction. I felt frustrated that my ELLs were missing some content instruction, but also trusted that the ELL teachers were experts in their field and were providing my ELLs with necessary and beneficial services that aided in their communication and participation in my classroom. When I obtained an additional teaching license and began my journey as an ELL teacher, I continued to teach with the mindset that explicit language instruction occurred only in my Pull-out ELD classes, which some students only attended for 60 minutes a week. Aside from learning more about Push-in and Co-teaching ELD practices within my licensure program, I wondered if there were more effective models and practices for meeting the linguistic needs of ELLs through more



simultaneous instruction of content and language. A few years later, I began teaching elementary ELLs at a school that valued collaboration on content-language instruction between teachers in all roles. I continued using a Pull-out model, which now proved more successful through strong teacher collaboration. As a result, I questioned if it was actually the ELL-inclusive practices within a setting that contributed to a successful ELD model, rather than the selection of the model itself.

In the preliminary research I conducted to formulate my research question, I discovered the *English Learner Toolkit for State and Local Education Agencies*, published by the U.S. Department of Education (2017). This toolkit is a guide for ELL teachers, mainstream teachers, school administrators, school boards, and all other school agencies tasked with delivering effective ELD services to their ELL students. Based on federal guidelines from ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act), it offers 10 chapters on how to implement and evaluate the tools and resources needed in every school to sustain an effective ELD program. Regardless of which model is selected, the goal of an ELD program is for ELLs to reach a language proficiency level that allows them to participate meaningfully within the mainstream classroom without any language support, thus graduating from receiving ELD services (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). Through studying the information in it, as well as its structure, I found that the resounding themes in each chapter were teacher agency, equitable professional development, and collaboration. As these are not specific to any ELD model, my idea that perhaps the structures in place are what contribute to an effective ELD program, rather than the selected model itself, was reinforced. Correspondingly, the research synthesized in my

literature review led me to conclude that each English-medium ELD model has its advantages and disadvantages, and therefore, a hybrid model that uses the advantages of each should be utilized. As a result, the purpose of this study shifted away from identifying the most effective model, and toward discovering how to utilize the advantages within each model.

The answer to my research question, which is detailed in the following sections, influenced my choice to create the [\*Guide to an Effective English-medium ELL Program Model: Using the Advantages of Each Model \(Pull-out, Push-in, Co-teaching\)\*](#), which is inspired by the *English Learner Toolkit* (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). The purpose of this guide is to compile information and resources that promote the utilization of the advantages found within each of the three ELD program models. The themes of teacher agency, equitable professional development, and collaboration are also infused in all aspects of the six topics within the guide, which are explained below in their connection to the literature review. The purpose of this subsection was to reflect on my personal experiences throughout the Capstone process. The following subsection describes the personal learning experiences that occurred throughout the entire Capstone process.

### ***Learning Experiences***

My original plan was to discover which of the three English-medium ELD models I should utilize based on its effectiveness. In discovering the advantages and disadvantages of each model, my focus shifted to finding strategies and resources to help both ELL and mainstream teachers utilize the advantages of each within any setting. As a

result, I had the opportunity to participate in many learning experiences throughout the process. The most notable personal learning experiences that took place were discovering a lack of current quantitative research on the subject, confirmation of the instructional intuition that all teachers can gain through their experiences of working with ELLs, and one unexpected learning that resulted in a shift to my research focus.

First, in my initial research I was surprised at the lack of quantitative data I found on the effectiveness of each English-medium model in meeting the linguistic needs of ELLs. The majority of more current research I located on the topic was qualitative data based on teacher interviews and surveys of program effectiveness. Although the perception of an ELD model by the teachers using it to deliver instruction is important, it evaluates ELL student success based on how teachers observe it to be implemented in specific schools, rather than quantitative data on its success in supporting the linguistic needs of ELL students. Additionally, it was also very interesting to find that the introductions of the majority of references I located on the topic shared the same statistical information on ELL under-performance as compared to their non-ELL peers. This indicates that many authors are borrowing from each other, rather than conducting quantitative studies that produce new statistics. This was a learning experience for me on what vital research is still missing from the field of SLA instruction, as I originally anticipated finding concrete quantitative research in my searches that would lead to a definitive answer on which English-medium model is most successful.

Conversely, there exists an abundance of quantitative research on different ELD strategies to support the academic success of ELLs in English-medium settings. I was

pleasantly surprised by learning this through my research, as it rationalized many of the instructional strategies, scaffolds, and pedagogies that I already personally used and suggested to mainstream teachers to support ELLs. Like many teachers, I often pull from my reservoir of teaching knowledge and experiences when I encounter unique instructional opportunities with students, resulting in the utilization and creation of various strategies in that moment. Although I had not collected quantitative data on the use of such strategies, I had qualitatively observed, through the instructional intuition that comes with teaching experience, that these strategies supported the language development of my ELLs by providing effective scaffolds in content instruction. Some of these strategies, which are suggested throughout my project, were adopted from already common practices, while others were created by me to meet the specific linguistic needs I observed in my students. Regardless of the strategy, it was common to come across quantitative research that supported its usage throughout my various keyword searches. This learning experience was encouraging, because it sheds a positive light on the in-the-moment instructional decisions all teachers can effectively make as a result of understanding the existing needs of their students. These strategies are explained and suggested within each of the six topics in the project.

The final major learning experience I encountered was the most unexpected. As previously mentioned, from this study I anticipated determining which of the three English-medium models was the most effective so that I could then implement that model within my school setting. However, the synthesis of information from mixed research approaches indicates that it is still unclear if one model is more effective than another, as

there are so many variables within that decision, such as teacher experience, school environment, and the curriculum implemented. However, one thing that was clear throughout research is that each model has clear advantages and disadvantages. As a result, research suggests that a hybrid model should be used that incorporates the advantages of each model (Pearson, 2015). This learning had the biggest impact on my study, as it shifted my focus away from selecting a specific model, and toward incorporating the advantages of each model within any existing model. Additionally, I learned that several structures should be in place to benefit the success of any model, including teacher agency, equitable professional development, and collaboration, which are explained in the following sections. This information inspired my project titled, [\*Guide to an Effective English-medium ELL Program Model: Using the Advantages of Each Model \(Pull-out, Push-in, Co-teaching\)\*](#), to assist all educators in utilizing such advantages. In this section, I reflected on the Capstone process as it pertains to my personal experiences that shaped the research question, and the learning experiences that influenced the culminating project. The next section connects the topics seen within my project to the results of the previous literature review.

### **Project Connections to Literature**

This section serves to rationalize the purpose of the project I created based on an answer to the research question. The connection between each topic within the project and the results of the literature review is also made clear in this section. The research question that guided this study is: *Which existing English-medium ELD program model (Pull-out, Push-in, Co-teaching) is most effective in meeting the linguistic needs of*

*elementary ELL students, and how can these models be more successful?* The U.S. Department of Education (2017) indicates that when an ELL program does not produce English language development leading to equal content participation among ELLs and their non-ELL peers within a reasonable period of time, the school must modify the program. Considering that research shows ELLs take five to seven years to develop grade-level academic language skills (Ross, 2014) and continue to underperform as compared to their non-ELL peers (Honigsfeld, 2009), we can conclude that ELLs are not reaching academic proficiency within a reasonable amount of time. The results of the literature review answer the research question of this study by indicating that no single model is effective in meeting the linguistic needs of ELLs in a way that closes their achievement gap. Therefore, based on this information, a hybrid model is suggested that incorporates the advantages of each model in order to more effectively meet the linguistic needs of the ELL students it serves (Baecher & Bell, 2012).

The awareness I gained through the results of the literature review led to the title of the culminating project being a [\*Guide to an Effective English-medium ELL Program Model: Using the Advantages of Each Model \(Pull-out, Push-in, Co-teaching\)\*](#). The intended outcome of answering the identified research question and creating the given guide is for teachers using any of the three described models to utilize the advantages within them, as well as incorporate advantages found within other models to create the most effective hybrid model for the needs of their specific context. The guide begins with introductory pages that explain the benefits of incorporating teacher agency, equitable professional development, and collaboration based on suggestions from the literature

review. These three features are seen within the utilization of each of the six topics detailed in the guide. Each of these six topics is an advantage seen within one of the English-medium models, and includes subsections on: a description of the advantages, specific strategies for utilizing the advantage in any setting, a resource list, a survey on the existing level of implementing the advantage, and an action plan of next steps for fully utilizing the advantage with the given materials and information. The following sections are the names of the specific topics found within the guide. Each subsection includes a rationale for why the topic is featured in the guide, based on the results of the literature review.

### ***Teacher Agency***

The literature states that ELD program models and scheduling decisions are often made by school administrators or individuals in roles that do not deliver ELD instruction to students. Based on their lived experiences, ELL teachers and mainstream Co-teachers are oftentimes better equipped than their school administrators to develop a vision for ELD instructional practices within their specific school. Equipping teachers with the ability to provide valuable insight and direction to the instructional decisions made within their schools is referred to as teacher agency (Russell & Von Esch, 2018). This literature informed my decision for each of the six topics to include resources that serve to empower ELL teachers to lead in their schools through teacher agency.

### ***Equitable Professional Development***

Research indicates that in order to deliver instruction that simultaneously teaches content and language to meet the unique needs of ELLs, shared knowledge of English

language development instructional practices is necessary among all teachers (Baecher & Bell, 2017). However, due to the scope of their training programs, many mainstream teachers, and even school administrators, have received little or no specialized training in this area (Penke, 2011). Therefore, each school is responsible for providing equitable professional development (PD) that provides shared knowledge on ELL instructional practices to all teachers, both content and language (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). When all teachers are equitably trained in meeting the linguistic needs of their shared ELL students, they feel equipped to take on the responsibility of the academic success of all students. If content teachers are also trained in instructional practices that increase ELL student achievement, then ELD services are not isolated to only 60-360 minutes a week, and neglected while ELL students are mainstreamed for at least 1,800 minutes a week (Penke, 2011). This literature informed my decision for each of the six topics within my project to include resources that foster shared knowledge on effective language development practices that should be used by all teachers to close the ELL achievement gap.

### ***Collaboration***

Research indicates that effective collaboration between content and language teachers is one strategy for improving any English-medium ELD model. The goal of collaboration between mainstream and ELL teachers is to increase the simultaneous instruction of content and language, which increases ELL student achievement (Lloyd, 2014). Effective collaboration includes the intentions and application of a common planning time for both teachers, information for mainstream teachers on incorporating



effective ELD strategies, and agreements on roles and responsibilities (Whiting, 2019). Such collaborative approaches engage two sets of teachers with very different skills in working together to better understand their colleague's perspectives on meeting the diverse needs of their shared students (McClure & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2010). As a result, research shows that effective collaboration leads to not only higher ELL student achievement, but also teacher growth; all teachers benefit through collaboration because they increase their professional growth by learning new strategies across disciplines that they are able to implement in their own practice immediately (Fu et al., 2007). This literature informed my decision for each of the six topics within my project to include resources that promote effective collaboration through action between ELL teachers, mainstream teachers, and school administrators.

***Topic 1: Increasing Opportunities for Explicit Language Instruction***

Explicit language instruction means teaching the form and function of language in a way that promotes both comprehensible input and output (Beck et al., 2013). Increased opportunities for explicit language instruction is seen as an advantage within the English-medium Pull-out model because when language instruction occurs in a class specifically designed to teach English target language, ELD practices tend to be more direct and explicit (Penke, 2011). However, no matter which ELD model is used, explicit language instruction should be utilized because it increases language growth by teaching in a way that fosters language awareness (Baecher & Bell, 2012).

Therefore, exploring strategies to utilize opportunities for explicit language instruction within any model is an advantage to ELL development and growth. Based on

this information provided through the literature review, Topic 1 of my guide includes the following strategies to promote increased opportunities for explicit language instruction by all teachers: 1) oral language models, 2) sentence stems, 3) linguistic accommodations and scaffolds, 4) non-linguistic visuals, 5) total physical response (TPR), and 6) explicit vocabulary instruction. Based on literature, research, descriptions, examples, and resources are provided within Topic 1 to promote these strategies to increase access for all teachers.

### ***Topic 2: Creating a Safe Environment for Risk-Taking***

Creating a safe environment for risk-taking refers to removing barriers that cause ELL anxiety, while creating systems that promote student belonging (Haneda & Wells, 2012). The opportunity to create a safe environment for increased linguistic risk-taking is seen as an advantage within the Pull-out model. This is because ELLs often see their multilingualism and culture as an asset within the ELL classroom, which is dedicated to their specific needs, interests, and cultures (Baecher & Bell, 2012). However, this advantage should not be isolated within one setting, as many ELL students experience fear when making mistakes, especially when faced with tasks that are culturally new to them.

As a result of insecurity within their mainstream settings, the opportunity for risk-taking is reduced, and many ELLs become used to taking a passive role in their learning by quietly listening rather than confidently participating (Nakagawa et al., 2020). Research shows that students who feel a sense of belonging tend to be happier, more enthusiastic, and more confident in their learning experiences (Kao, 2017). Based on this

information from the research, Topic 2 of my guide includes the following strategies to increase the sociolinguistic consciousness of all teachers: 1) normalize home language usage, 2) culturally-relevant speaking opportunities, 3) reduce anxiety, 4) foster belonging, and 5) educate on linguistic and cultural diversity. Within Topic 2, research, descriptions, examples, and resources are provided for each of these strategies to increase the level that ELL students see themselves throughout the school, which fosters a sense of safety and belonging to promote risk-taking.

### ***Topic 3: Decreasing Lost ELD Instructional Time***

Based on federal recommendations, each state has guidelines for how much time an ELL student should receive ELD instruction based on their English language proficiency level, which can range from 60 to 360 minutes a week (Penke, 2011). However, research including ELL teacher interviews indicates that, on average, ELL students receive only 50% of their entitled ELD minutes across the various English-medium program models, which is most often the result of schedule changes throughout the school community. The most common reasons for short-term schedule changes in schools include: mainstream classroom events, school assemblies, safety drills, field trips, state standardized testing, scheduled classroom assessments, celebrations, and student absence (Baecher & Bell, 2017). In Pull-out models, another reason for lost ELD instructional minutes, which accumulates over time, is found in hallway transitions from the mainstream classroom to the ELL classroom, which could result in more than five minutes of lost instructional time per each 30-minute class period (Whiting, 2019).

However, a decrease in lost instruction ELD minutes is an advantage seen within the Push-in model because the ELL teacher is present for as-needed language support no matter what mainstream activity ELL students are participating in, and despite any schedule changes (Simmons, 2018). Research on effective ELD programs indicates that all time spent with ELL students should be leveraged by fostering language growth for social and instructional purposes (Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System, 2021). Based on this literature, Topic 3 of the guide includes the following strategies to maximize ELD instructional time despite any schedule changes: 1) academic language hallway transitions, 2) teaching social and instructional language, 3) using language objectives, and 4) creating social stories. Within Topic 3, research, descriptions, examples, and resources are provided for each of these strategies in order to decrease lost ELD instructional time by viewing all parts of the school day as language learning opportunities.

#### ***Topic 4: Increasing Language Socialization with non-ELL Peers***

Linguistically responsive teachers ensure that ELLs can actively participate in meaningful interactions with their non-ELL peers in order to increase their level of language socialization. The opportunity to explicitly interact with non-ELL peers for social and academic purposes motivates ELLs to increase their level of language input and output through negotiation of meaning (Lucas & Villegas, 2011). Research on student language socialization shows that ELLs have the lowest frequency of English interaction in mainstream classrooms, with the highest rates occurring in ELD Pull-out groups (Johnston, 2013). However, in a Pull-out model ELLs are only explicitly

interacting with other ELL peers at similar language proficiency levels.

Therefore, the opportunity to increase ELL language socialization with their non-ELL peers is seen as an advantage of using a Push-in model. When ELLs remain in their mainstream classroom for explicit language instruction, they are seen as equal members of the classroom by their peers, which lowers their affective filters and leads to increased language growth (Simmons, 2018). Additionally, the reviewed literature shows that when ELLs are strategically grouped with their non-ELL peers, they have more opportunities for meaningful social interactions in English, along with language scaffolds from their ELL teacher (Whiting, 2019). Therefore, Topic 4 of the guide offers the following strategies to support SLA theories of socially constructed learning: 1) interactive supports, 2) interest-based peer mentoring, 3) grouping to promote negotiation of meaning, and 4) the Response Protocol. Within Topic 4, research, descriptions, examples, and resources are provided for each of these strategies in order to increase opportunities for explicit language socialization between ELLs and their non-ELL peers.

#### ***Topic 5: Frequent Colleague Observations for Professional Growth***

Research shows that the majority of K-12 teacher PD opportunities are extracted, which means that participants are informed by outside experts. Although these presenters are typically experts on a specific subject, extracted sessions should not be the only form of PD in schools, as the expert is likely unfamiliar with the specific school culture, teacher strengths, and student needs within the school. Conversely, embedded PD enables teachers to learn from one another within their own school contexts through opportunities such as coaching, mentoring, modeling, and peer observations. The benefit of embedded

PD is that it empowers experts in the school by providing them with the teacher agency to collaborate and model strategies regularly in order to increase professional growth. Also differing from one-time extracted sessions, embedded PD offers sustained time to develop and implement new skills, followed by continued feedback from an expert who is readily available within the school (Hamilton, 2013). Frequent colleague observations as a form of embedded PD is often seen as an advantage within the Co-teaching model. This is because in co-teaching, teachers who are experts in two different instructional fields (language and content) are able to observe each others' instructional practices on a daily basis.

Research shows that observing other teachers, along with receiving feedback on instructional methods, increases teacher professional growth because it allows for the learning and immediate application of new skills (Simmons, 2018). Although frequent colleague observations are seen as an advantage within Co-teaching, if a school does not use this model there are still many ways to implement the advantage, resulting in new teacher skills that lead to positive changes in classroom practices (Hamilton, 2013). Based on this literature, the following strategies are suggested within Topic 5 of the guide to foster opportunities for sustained and embedded teacher growth: 1) coaching by ELL teachers, 2) peer-to-peer informal observations, and 3) a video observation exchange. Within Topic 5, research, descriptions, examples, and resources are provided for each of these strategies in order to promote meaningful, embedded PD that is sustained and ongoing.

### ***Topic 6: Accelerating Simultaneous Content & Language Instruction***

In mainstream classrooms, ELLs experience a separation between content and language instruction, which leads to a specific achievement gap. Although content and language instruction are often separated from one another in mainstream instruction, research shows the highest language and academic growth in ELLs when they are taught these learning components simultaneously (Honigsfeld, 2009). The simultaneous instruction of content and language is often seen as an advantage within the Co-teaching model, as mainstream and ELL co-teachers have the ability to plan and deliver all instruction together in a manner that helps the students develop language and content side-by-side. In a co-taught classroom, all students have the advantage of receiving content and language instruction simultaneously from two teachers, each with specific sets of instructional expertise (Simmons, 2018). Research shows that literacy growth within co-taught classes is doubled as compared to non co-taught classes, clearly benefiting ELLs who learn within co-teaching models (Kimani, 2018).

However, these specific advantages seen within a co-teaching model can be utilized effectively by mainstream and ELL teachers alike in any setting. Based on this research, Topic 6 of the guide offers the following strategies used to encourage ELLs to leverage their full linguistic repertoires (Pacheco & Miller, 2016): 1) Genre-based Pedagogy, 2) translanguaging as a norm, and 3) equitable assessment accommodations. Within Topic 6, research, descriptions, examples, and resources are provided for each of these strategies in order to equip all teachers, both ELL and mainstream, with tools to implement the simultaneous instruction of content and language. The purpose of this

section was to provide a rationale for the six topics found within the [\*Guide to an Effective English-medium ELL Program Model\*](#), which was created based on the results of the literature review. The following section provides information on how the field of education can benefit from this Capstone project.

### **Benefits to the Field of Education**

This section provides statements of how the project benefits the field of education by contributing to the practices of each group listed below.

#### ***Benefits to ELL Teachers***

The [\*Guide to an Effective English-medium ELL Program Model\*](#) is a Capstone project based on research on SLA theories and best practices. It is intended to benefit the work of all ELL teachers by adding to their existing practices, and influencing their decision to utilize the advantages found within each of the three English-medium ELD models. Because the results of my literature review indicate that more research is needed to identify the effectiveness of these existing models, in the meantime all ELL teachers can still utilize the advantages of each model, as outlined in this guide. As ELL teachers likely already use many strategies offered in this guide, they can also use the given resources to promote increased teacher agency, equitable PD, and collaboration within their setting. ELL teachers can also use it as a framework for promoting these ideas to their school administrators.

#### ***Benefits to Mainstream Teachers***

This guide is intended to benefit the work of mainstream teachers by providing them with tools that empower them to meet the unique academic needs within their



diverse classrooms. As mainstream teachers might not be familiar with the ELD strategies given in the guide, each topic includes an introduction that provides a description of the advantage, a plan for implementing it, and a list of easily-accessible learning resources. Therefore, mainstream teachers could benefit from this guide by using it as an independent learning resource to strengthen their instructional practices for ELLs. However, as the guide also promotes collaboration, the intention is for ELL teachers to use it jointly with mainstream teachers, administrators, and the wider school community to fully implement the six advantages outlined within it. Through this, mainstream teachers will also benefit by having the tools they need to help their ELLs be successful in the mainstream classroom through participation in a supportive school community.

### ***Benefits to School Administrators***

Although many of the strategies within this guide are instructional practices for use by teachers, this project is also intended to benefit school administrators by fostering their awareness of the school structures that should be in place for ELLs to be successful within any setting. Through a collaborative relationship with the ELL teachers in their school, administrators can be the school's voice in promoting the advantages within the guide to create a whole-school community that strives to meet the unique needs of its ELL students through knowledge and action. Additionally, each topic includes a survey that school administrators can use to evaluate the current practices within their school that either promote or deny equitable learning opportunities for ELLs.

### ***Benefits to ELL Students***

The ultimate goal of the [\*Guide to an Effective English-medium ELL Program\*](#)

*Model* is to benefit ELLs by assisting in closing the achievement gap they face. The research in my literature review indicates that if ELL teachers, mainstream teachers, and school administrators all gain the knowledge and utilize the tools necessary to meet the unique academic needs of these multilingual learners, this achievement gap can decrease, resulting in an equitable education for ELLs. Additionally, the strategies within the guide position ELLs as assets within their school communities, with linguistic and cultural backgrounds that should be celebrated. The purpose of this section was to provide statements on the benefits my Capstone project has to the intended audiences within the field of education. The following section explains the implications the project has for these groups, and the limitations they could experience.

### **Implications for Project**

This section serves to list the implications this project has for policies and schools. This information is important to note as it outlines any challenges educators might face in incorporating the advantages of the project in their instruction, as well as adaptations that should be considered within different contexts.

#### ***Policy Implications***

Regardless of specific state policies, according to federal guidelines all schools that serve ELLs must provide an ELD program that is academically sound and shows progress of ELL language growth. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) allows each state the power to set their own goals for student achievement, and choose the ELD program and specific model they see fit to meet the needs of their students (Pearson, 2015). However, research also shows that although English-medium models are the least

effective program as compared to bilingual and dual-immersion programs, they are the most commonly chosen (Penke, 2011). This creates an implication, because although it might be a positive that schools have a choice in different program options for their unique learning environments, there is limited research that critically examines the effects of specific English-medium models and how to best implement them. Although the guide created through this Capstone process does not help with these policy decisions around the type of ELD program to select, it does provide a framework for how to use the advantages found within the three most commonly used English-medium models.

### ***School Implications***

In addition to the requirements around having an ELD program in place, schools are responsible for helping students from all linguistic backgrounds gain the skills to effectively communicate in English while learning the grade-specific content needed to meet state assessment expectations (Lloyd, 2014). To accomplish this, ELD programs typically try to align their instruction with both the state's academic content standards and the language standards adopted by that state. However, neither of these sets of standards detail how to effectively teach content and language simultaneously (Honigsfeld, 2009). These sets of standards are typically not tied directly to the same curriculum either, which individual districts have autonomy in choosing. This creates an implication for incorporating the use of this project within all schools, as the guide is not tied to any specific standards or curriculum. Additionally, all schools that serve ELLs are required to choose and report the ELD model they implement on their Language Instruction Educational Plan (LIEP), while this guide suggests the use of a hybrid model that is not

yet nationally recognized (U.S. Department of Education, 2017).

### ***Limitations***

As the project was influenced by my own qualitative data from personal teaching experiences, it should be viewed through the lens of a Pull-out model within elementary schools that utilize WIDA's English Language Development Standards Framework. Although it can be adapted to use within any English-medium setting and grade level, readers might feel it is limited to the specified developmental level and setting. Another limitation is that the guide is a big-picture idea with several components and 25 ELD strategies surrounding six different topics; each component includes an explanation, example, and resources, but lacks sufficient background information that would allow a mainstream teacher to independently utilize it. As a result, the responsibility of implementing many of the strategies falls on the expertise and experience of ELL teachers, due to the specialized training they have likely acquired in their licensure program.

A final limitation users might experience is in how to successfully implement the six advantages as detailed in the guide within the strict confines of the ELD model designated on their district's LIEP. Although a hybrid model is suggested that uses the advantages of all three English-medium models, a concrete plan for what all the pieces look like in practice has not been established yet. Therefore, the study is limited to the suggestion of strategies, but lacks qualitative and quantitative data on their successful implementation within any setting. The purpose of this section was to explain the implications and limitations users of this project might experience. The following section

recommends how different groups of users can utilize this Capstone project, my plan for communicating its existence to these groups, and an invitation for future research on the topic.

### **Recommendations for Project Use**

This section explains how I intend to use the [\*Guide to an Effective English-medium ELL Program Model\*](#), my recommendation for others to utilize it, a statement of how I will communicate the availability of this project to others who could benefit from it, as well as an invitation for future research and collaboration.

### ***Personal Usage***

Through the creation of this Capstone project, I have gained valuable knowledge to incorporate in my instructional practices when teaching ELLs, collaborating with other educators, and coaching mainstream teachers on language scaffolding. As a result, I plan to print the guide as a physical resource to add to the materials I use in my weekly lesson planning and collaboration meetings within my teaching practice. Aside from incorporating the individual strategies into my own teaching, my goal is to collaborate with my own school administrators and mainstream teachers to fully implement the advantages detailed within the guide, as suggested in the ‘Next Steps’ section for each topic. Throughout this implementation process, I think it would also be beneficial to utilize methods to collect both qualitative and quantitative data on the success of the guide’s implementation. This information can then be used to improve the guide, as well as inform future research and projects.

### ***Usage by Others***

Within all English-medium schools that utilize Pull-out, Push-in, or Co-teaching ELD models, my recommendation is for the school's ELL teachers to first become familiar with the research and framework of the guide in order to promote their own teacher agency through increased awareness and knowledge. After ELL teachers are comfortable with the framework and the modeling of all strategies within the guide, they should present it to their school administrators to gain support of either its partial or complete implementation within the school community. Next, the ELL teacher and school administrators should present the information to the mainstream teachers who will benefit from the guide, and collaboratively create a plan to implement it within their school. My intent is for the guide to be used to foster collaborative practices that include all educators who serve ELL students. However, if ELL teachers experience significant barriers to this within their specific setting, I recommend implementing the guide only within the ELL department to begin with, and then including mainstream teachers who willingly commit to participating in usage of the guide.

### ***Communication of Project***

This Capstone paper, along with the culminating project, is published on Hamline University's Digital Commons, as linked here through the [School of Education](#). In addition, to influence my own school community I have shared a digital copy of the [\*Guide to an Effective English-medium ELL Program Model: Using the Advantages of Each Model\*](#), with the ELL department where I teach, the primary mainstream teachers I collaborate with, and my school administrators. To make the wider education community

aware of it, I have published it on my personal Google site where I share recommendations for ELL instructional practices. For ease of accessibility and so that anyone who encounters this Capstone paper is also aware of the culminating project, I have linked the title of the project to my Google site as it appears throughout this entire study.

### ***Further Research***

Based on the previously listed limitations of this project and my recommendations for usage, all users are invited to assess the effectiveness of the project, and also add to research on the topic. Teachers, including myself, should attempt to fully implement the six advantages using the ‘Next Steps’ sections at the end of each topic. Although research suggests a hybrid model due to the limitations of existing models, there is very limited qualitative and quantitative data on the actual effectiveness of a hybrid model, so any added feedback is helpful to the field. Additionally, teachers and administrators that utilize the [\*Guide to an Effective English-medium ELL Program Model\*](#) can add to the project and research by navigating a framework for what a hybrid model that utilizes the six advantages within the guide looks like in actual practice. The purpose of this section was to explain how I intend to use my project, a recommendation for others to utilize it within their school settings, a plan for communicating the existence of the guide to potential users, and areas of necessary future research. In the final section, the major learnings from this chapter are summarized, leading to the conclusion of this Capstone.

### **Chapter Summary**

This section serves to summarize the preceding sections of the chapter. In the

introduction, the specific achievement gap ELLs face, along with potential reasons, was restated from the literature review. The research question that was created to help close this achievement gap is: *Which existing English-medium ELD program model (Pull-out, Push-in, Co-teaching) is most effective in meeting the linguistic needs of elementary ELL students, and how can these models be more successful?* The results of the literature review answer this question by indicating that no single model is effective in meeting the linguistic needs of ELLs in a way that closes their achievement gap. Therefore, based on this information, a hybrid model is suggested that incorporates the advantages of each model in order to more effectively meet the linguistic needs of the ELL students it serves (Baecher & Bell, 2012). As a result, I created the [Guide to an Effective English-medium ELL Program Model: Using the Advantages of Each Model \(Pull-out, Push-in, Co-teaching\)](#), which incorporates the utilization of these advantages in any model.

In this chapter, I reflected on the personal experiences that influenced my research question and the culminating project, as well as the learning events that took place throughout the entire Capstone process. Following this, I connected the project to literature by rationalizing the inclusion of each of the six topics found within my guide, as relevant to the results of the literature review. This included the infusion of teacher agency, equitable PD, and collaboration within each of these topic advantages. The next section provided statements on the benefits my project has to different groups within the field of education, including ELL teachers, mainstream teachers, school administrators, and the ELL students we serve. Following this, I listed the possible implications of the project in relation to federal and state policies, and school choice, as well as the



limitations of the project in these areas. Finally, I recommended steps for others to use the project, explained my intentions to incorporate it in my own instruction, detailed my plan for communicating the completion of the project to the field, and invited others to participate in future research on the topic.

***Concluding Statement***

Considering the specific achievement gap that ELL students face due to their unique academic and linguistic needs not being equitably met in existing English-medium settings, my hope is for all educators that serve ELLs to be empowered by the research presented in this Capstone, and the project it resulted in.

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