

LEVINAS, LEVITICUS, & LANGUAGE LEARNING: A CASE STUDY EXPLORING ACSI
MARITIME TEACHER CHALLENGES OF PRACTICE DUE TO INCREASING
ESL ENROLLMENT

by

Susanne Jon Huizing

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

the Requirements for the Degree

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this case study was to explain the perceived challenges of practice due to increasing enrollment of English Language Learners (ELLs) for ACSI teachers in the Canadian Maritimes. The theory guiding this study was ethics as first philosophy by Levinas (1981). Levinas' theory aided in examining the ethical, relational, and linguistic challenges teachers experienced teaching ELLs. The central research question guiding this study was: what are the perceived challenges of practice K-12 ACSI Maritime school teachers face due to increasing ELL enrollment? Data was collected through pre-interview journals, semi-structured face-to-face interviews, and observations. Data analysis included transcriptions, documents, and field notes. Member checks were employed (Creswell, 2013), as was coding, which was analyzed using ATLAS.ti. Themes and outliers emerged and were examined (Yin, 2009). The research had implications for ACSI administrators and teachers who are challenged by increasing ELL enrollment.

Keywords: English Language Learner (ELL), Levinas, linguistic, ethical, relationships.

Dedication

I began my dissertation journey in the fall of 2012. Two years later, as I finally began my proposal manuscript, my husband would be diagnosed with early onset Parkinson's Disease. There were many moments in this quest that I questioned God's agenda, His faithfulness, and His call in my life as a Christian educator. However, it has been my husband's gentle leading and encouragement that makes me an obedient follower of Christ... even in this process. This work is dedicated to my husband, Albert Huizing IV, whose rock-solid faith continues to point me back to our amazing Lord, Jesus Christ. "I keep my eyes always on the Lord. With Him at my right hand, I will not be shaken." Psalm 16:8

Acknowledgments

I am humbled to be called a daughter of the Holy One. To know where the Lord found me and has redeemed me is still the greatest miracle in my eyes. It is by grace alone that I get to be called wife, Mom, teacher, and friend. I am also astonished that I am called to serve this great God as a Christian educator, and I thank Him every day for equipping me for the task. I am grateful to you, oh Lord, for all that I was, that am, and will ever be. Soli Deo Gloria.

It is while serving Him that I must thank my brothers and sisters at Grace Christian School. These fellow servants have taught me the importance of Godly relationships, prayer, and laughter. Each one of you have modeled Jesus in your classrooms, and I am a better teacher because of each of you. I must also acknowledge my boss at G.C.S., Mr. Jason Biech. I have never met a more intentional leader for mission driven education. I have no doubt that God placed me in PEI so that I could learn from you, be challenged by you, and be reminded of our high calling as teachers. Your shepherding will always be foundational to who I am as an educational leader. Thank you!

Jordan Ellis gets a huge shout out, as I know this journey would never have happened without his hard work in editing every comma, trite word choice, or APA error. Thank you for all your late night and last minute help. I am not sure who is happier that we are finished.

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List of Abbreviations

Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI)

Canadian Bureau of International Education (CBIE)

Communication Language Training (CLT)

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD)

English as Another Language (EAL)

English as a Second Language (ESL)

English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

English Language Learning (ELL)

English Language Learners (ELLs)

Institute of International Education (IIE)

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

International English Language Testing System (IELTS)

Linguistically Responsive Teacher Education (LRTE)

Kindergarten through Grade 12 Learners (K-12)

Non-English Language Learners (Non-ELLs)

Non-Native English Speaker (NNES)

Prince Edward Island (PEI)

Second Language Acquisition (SLA)

Sheltered Instruction Observational Protocol (SIOP)

Teachers of English Second Language (TESL)

Testing of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

Educational stakeholders are becoming aware of the increasing number of international students attending Canadian schools by observing the current census trends and exploring increasing enrollment of non-English speaking students. As the Association of Christian Schools International (ASCI) content area teachers encounter growing numbers of new learners with limited English language proficiency, new challenges may arise. Exploring these challenges is vital to teacher and student success (Wilcox, 2014). The purpose of this single instrumental case study was to explore the perceived challenges of practice of K-12 ASCI teachers in the Canadian Maritimes due to increasing English Language Learner (ELL) enrollment.

Chapter One includes Levinasian “*Ethics as First Philosophy*” and the connection between education and the theory of the “ethics of responsibility to the Other” (Levinas, 1989, p. 5). Swezey (2014) clarified that case study research may be explanatory “when the case study seeks to shed light on existing theories” (p. 175). This could enable educators to comprehend the ethical significance of relationships with incoming international students. The chapter will also explore the substantial increase of enrollment of non-English speakers in academia over the last 20 years and investigate the perceived challenges of practice for teachers worldwide. In this study, challenges were generally defined as lack of student confidence, poor social equity, diverse student motivation, bias, lack of training and support, and self-efficacy, as evidenced in the literature review. Associating perceived challenges of practice with the Levinasian framework may allow Christian educators a natural connection to the biblical mandate to acknowledge immigrants, newcomers, and Non-Native English Speakers (NNES) as neighbors. This biblical mandate was first seen in Leviticus 19:34: “The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them

as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the LORD your God” (New International Version [NIV]). Jesus reiterated this commission as he directed us to: “love others above self” and come alongside the “least of these,” as mentioned in Mathew 25. It is biblical connections like these that may equip ACSI educators with more than just humanistic pedagogy as successful teaching practices in such a diverse learning environment.

This chapter surveys information regarding the case study of ACSI teacher perceptions. The subsections in this chapter include the background, situation to self, problem statement, purpose statement, significance of the study, and research questions. This chapter concludes with the research plan, delimitations, and limitations of the case study.

Background

Language barriers are not a novelty for humanity. God ordained the differences in the language of men. He intentionally used heterogeneous language to become a stumbling block for mankind (Genesis 11:7); however, the power of the Holy Spirit, as observed in Acts 2, overcame these linguistic challenges. It is with this in mind that Christian educators should not assume that English language learning (ELL) is an insurmountable task.

While the increasing numbers of ELLs may be novel for ACSI schools in the Canadian Maritimes, Christian teachers understand the responsibility one has to not only educate students, but to also invest relationally into their lives. Van Brummelen (2009) associated the calling of Christian teachers with shepherding, “guiding their students in the way of wisdom” (p. 42). This is especially significant for international students from cultures with little Christian teaching entering Christian schools. Even more significant is Jesus’ reminder to his disciples to minister to the stranger and those in need in his parable of the sheep and the goats in Matthew 25.

Aligning ethics to educational philosophy brings new challenges to learning environments. Delpit's book *Other People's Children* (2006) cautioned educators to remember the delicate balance of the ethical responsibility to honor the native language and culture of the English learner while introducing the new language and culture as well. "Linguistic forms that students bring to school is intimately connected to loved ones, community, and personal identity. To suggest the linguistic form of a student is wrong, suggests there is something wrong with the student or his/her family" (Delpit, 2006, p. 167). With this supposition, second language teachers may need to be equipped with more than just phonics, grammar, and spelling.

Reflecting on Emmanuel Levinas' writings and philosophies reminds educators that learning is not just the increase and acquisition of content, but rather "a profound ethical event" (Todd, 2003, p. 11). Teachers realize the significant challenges of linguistic mastery (Dooley & Furtado, 2013) for ELLs, the importance of relationships (Case, 2015; Cummins, 2011), and the ethical treatment (LeClair, Doll, Osborn, & Jones, 2009) of these students in increasingly diverse learning environments.

It is with this in mind that examining the Levinasian theoretical framework challenges teachers to look beyond language and cultural differences and to cultivate authentic relationships that learn from one another. Levinas' lifelong work directs to the "ethics of responsibility to the Other" (Levinas, 1989, p. 77). Since 2001, academia has been actively connecting Levinas' work to educational philosophy. Beist (2003), Morrison (2003), Todd (2003), Zembylas (2005), and Zhao (2012), argued that Levinas' framework empowers teachers to view students as more than just content to be taught. These authors "signify a profound hope that teachers can recognize the ethical significance of their role" (Morrison, 2013, p. 5). Using Levinas' linguistic, relational, and ethical constructs as the framework for this bonded, single instrumental case study permitted me to explore

more than language acquisition for ELLs. It could allow the ability to explain the phenomenon more in depth for ACSI Maritime teachers. Students that come from other cultures with no or limited language skills must be seen as students in need of more than just language acquisition (Watkins & Biggs, 2009). These constructs may provide insight into the perceived challenges of practice for ACSI teachers in the Canadian Maritimes due to increasing English Language Learner (ELL) enrollment.

While ACSI does not have current data to confirm the actual growth in enrollment of non-native speakers, the Canadian Bureau of International Education (CBIE) provided a glimpse at the growing number of international students saturating current school systems throughout the last 10 years as depicted in Figure A1 (see Appendix A). Using Statistics Canada and student visa data from Services Canada, CBIE reported: “The number of international students in Canada has increased by 84% over the last decade, growing 22.8% from 2011 to 2013 and 11% from 2012 to 2013” (2013). CBIE and Statistics Canada do not differentiate between public school students and private school students, but use enrollment data from all schools in Canada. Thus, ACSI schools may be seeing an increase in enrollment of ELLs as well.

It should also be noted that with increased ELL enrollment comes a need for increased English as a second language (ESL) programming, teacher education, equity among stakeholders, and cultural and linguistic diversity (Cummins, 2000; de Jong & Harper, 2005, Gerin-LaJoie, 2012). It may be because of these added expectations that teachers perceive greater challenges of practice when meeting the needs of ELLs. Gerin-LaJoie (2012) asserted, “It is important to examine how Canadian school personnel make sense of racial, ethnic, and linguistic realities of the classroom while observing their work on a daily basis” (p. 208). ACSI educators should study the perceived challenges of practice due to increased ELL enrollment to evaluate the effectiveness of their ESL

programming and seize the opportunities to reach out to a population that is in need of the love of Christ.

The research may benefit ACSI schools as they begin to gather data that will show international student growth; this data could allow administrators and board members to analyze perceived challenges of practice for their teachers. The study may also identify strengths and weaknesses of ACSI ESL programming socially, ethically, and linguistically that may provide better programming in the future. Reflecting on the Levinasian philosophy may equip ACSI teachers to better balance Christ-like, mission-driven ESL programming while meeting the expectations of new ELLs.

Situation to Self

I have worked in many capacities in ACSI schools for the past 18 years. I have volunteered as the school librarian and janitor, was elected parent-teacher association president, sat on the school board, was employed as the administrative assistant, and served as interim administrator. I have also taught kindergarten through sixth grade language arts and high school English literature for many years. I am an ardent supporter of Christian education and ACSI and continue to intentionally seek positions in schools that align themselves with the ACSI mission, existing “to strengthen Christian schools and equip Christian educators worldwide as they prepare students academically and inspire them to become devoted followers of Jesus Christ” (Association of Christian Schools International [ACSI], n.d, para.1).

Over the years, I have experienced excellent examples of ACSI Christian education, including schools where intentional pedagogy “promoted a vision of the kingdom of God” (Van Brummelen, 2009, p. 12) and schools with a vision that embodies “schools that contribute to the

public good through effective teaching and learning and that are biblically sound, academically rigorous, socially engaged, and culturally relevant” (ACSI, n.d., para 1).

I currently serve as the international student director at an ASCI school in Prince Edward Island, Canada, where I have a close relationship with many ELLs. I recruit, direct, teach, tutor, act as the liaison between the ELLs and their Canadian host families, mentor mainstream teachers in meeting the needs of such a diverse population, create curriculum, and supply professional development to support teachers. This has allowed me to experience the many perspectives involved in educating ELLs.

At the 2015 ACSI teacher’s conference, administrators discussed the opportunity for increased enrollment and revenue. ESL teachers shared the ways in which they managed the challenges of adding students to existing programs, while mainstream teachers voiced concerns about a lack of training and information about new immigrant students that come into their schools. One parent-teacher volunteer even felt compelled to ask, “How many (international students) are too many?”

I realize that this is a population that brings challenges, ministry opportunities, and revenue to our ACSI schools. It is with this in mind that I witness many challenges for stakeholders adjusting to a diverse population. In the last four years, I have observed a 23% increase in international students in the school I currently work at. This growth has demanded many changes in our school to meet the expectations of all of our stakeholders; however, understanding these perceptions is quite another task.

It is my hope that by employing Creswell’s (2013) epistemological philosophy in this case study, I will seek “to understand the world in which I live” (p. 24) possibly through the observations and interviews of ACSI teachers experiencing this phenomenon. This philosophy allowed me to

discern fact from my own opinions in regard to ESL programming. Social constructivism was the paradigm used during this research to co-construct a reality between myself and the perceived challenges of practice that teachers may be facing in such a demanding learning environment.

The intrinsic value (Stake, 1995) of this case study may become apparent as the voices of the teacher educating the ELLs are explored as well. The February 24, 2016, digital edition of *World* magazine reported that more international students were “flocking to North American Christian schools than public schools” (Gobba, 2016, p. 1). While the statistics of ELL growth were consistent with Statistics Canada (2014), Gobba (2016) also mentioned the fundamental opportunities that abound as Christian schools interact with these learners. As Gobba (2016) stated,

Religion is less of a factor for Chinese parents than school location, ranking, reputation with international students, and cost. But for the schools, imparting the love of Christ is just as important as giving their growing numbers of international students a good education. (p. 2)

This ministry, as clarified by Keller (2012) in his book *Center Church*, allows ACSI educators to reflect on the mission of “loving those who do not know Jesus yet” (p. 322). Luke 14:12-14 challenges teachers of ELLs as newcomers, immigrants, or refugees to extend love and relationship to those who are in desperate need of a “good neighbor.” Keller (2012) urged all Christians to “let the Gospel shape the way we do life” (p. 330). This may include Christian schools educating non-Christians with a heart of love and respect that reflects the love of Jesus. Thus, the intent of the study is to explore, identify, and give voice to the perceived challenges of practice for tK-12 ACSI teachers in the Canadian Maritimes due to increasing ELL enrollment.

Problem Statement

The problem is the gap in knowledge on the impact of increased ELL enrollment on ACSI educators. Due to the lack of empirical research on ACSI schools in the Canadian Maritimes

experiencing the phenomenon, identification and explanation of perceived challenges of practice is needed. This gap hampers academic success for ELLs and improvement of teaching methods for the educators that teach them. Conversely, the effect of the increasing rate of ELLs in Canadian public schools over the last decade has led to much research and new methods of teaching in the public school sector (Cummins, 2000; Hansen-Thomas, 2008; Soto-Hinman, 2010). However, research on the phenomenon of increasing enrollment rates and the challenges of practice it presents to ACSI teachers has been minimal. ACSI teachers are faced with a lack of funding, pedagogical support, and stakeholder buy-in (Reichard, 2015) as they try to meet the ever-increasing demands of ESL programming. The English language-learning population is growing, as evidenced by the “constant increase of international students in ACSI campuses” (Wilcox, 2014, p. 38). As teachers are challenged by this growth, the necessity of this epistemological case study is apparent. This study allowed “the researchers to get as close as possible to the participants being studied” (Creswell, 2013, p. 20) and give voice to teachers who struggle with meeting the needs of their ELLs.

Using Levinas’ theory as a guide, this study explored the perceived challenges of practice as: linguistic, ethical, and relational for ACSI teachers educating a diverse group of ELLs in the Canadian Maritimes. By viewing students as the Other, “our relationship with the humanity of man” as Levinas (1989, p. 87) suggested, may create stakeholders that become ethically duty-bound to put each international student above themselves. Levinas (1961) pointed out that “language should not consist of suppressing the Other, but be an expressive function to maintain each other” (p. 73); this is meaningful in meeting the needs of ELLs in our schools.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this single instrumental case study was to describe, explain, and give voice to the perceived challenges of practice of K-12 ACSI teachers in the Canadian Maritimes due to

increasing ELL enrollment. Challenges of practice was generally defined as student confidence (Telbis, Helgeson, & Kingsbury, 2014), social equity (Case, 2015; de Souza, 2012), diverse student interaction (Cummins, 2011; Karanja, 2007), bias (Dooley & Furtado, 2013), teacher efficacy (Packer & Lynch, 2013), training, and support (Hansen-Thomas, 2008).

By examining the perceived challenges using the Levinasian theory of ethics as first philosophy, challenges are categorized as linguistic, relational, or ethical (Biesta, 2003; Levinas, 1961; Levinas, 1964; Todd, 2003). This equips ACSI teachers pedagogically as they reach out in love, and not just duty, while meeting the needs of the diverse learners that God brings to ACSI Maritime schools.

Significance of the Study

The case study used narrative inquiry to add to the body of knowledge practically which equips ACSI teachers and administrators with information on teacher perception of linguistic, relational, and ethical challenges due to increasing ELL enrollment. The use of real-life context and thick description (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007) in the study gives voice to the many challenges teachers have in an increasingly diverse population of students with limited English language skills. By examining the large body of knowledge based on public school teacher perceptions of challenges of practice due to increasing ELLs in mainstream classes (English, 2009; Greenfield, 2013; Liu, 2013; Packer & Lynch, 2013; Peacock, 2001; Warren, Harris, & Miller, 2014), practical connections were made between public and private school teachers' experiences of the same phenomenon. These connections allow for better practice and policy in ACSI schools in regard to ESL programing (Dill, 2014), international student sustainability (Frost, 2014), and mission-driven instruction (Wilcox, 2014).

The empirical significance of this study enlightened ACSI stakeholders since there is a small amount of current data for ACSI schools in regard to perceived challenges of practice for teachers with increased enrollment of ELLs. There is a need for data that illustrates the increase of ELLs in ACSI schools and the possible effects it has on schools experiencing this phenomenon. Utilizing a single case study allowed for the “typical circumstances and conditions” (Yin, 2009, p. 48) of ACSI teachers educating ELLs to be captured and examined.

The theoretical significance of using Levinas’ (1989) ethics as first philosophy allowed for a better “fit” for ACSI schools to meet their mission to “equip Christian educators worldwide as they prepare students academically and inspire them to become devoted followers of Jesus Christ” (ACSI, n.d., para 1). Levinas’ (1989) framework intentionally calls educators to remember: “language presupposes interlocutors and creates a plurality” (Levinas, 1989, p. 73) in learning environments. For ACSI instructors, this framework allows for relationship building that not only impacts language acquisition and academic success, but also models Jesus to students that may encounter Christianity for the very first time.

Research Questions

Developing intentional research questions was key in exposing both the emic and etic perspectives of this case study. Reflective research questions are an “integral part of understanding the unfolding lives and perspectives of others” (Agee, 2009, p. 431). Research questions in case study research begin with a central question that has a broad view of the research problem (Creswell, 2013). Thus, the central question for this case study was as follows: What are the perceived challenges of practice that K-12 ACSI Maritime schoolteachers face due to increasing ELL enrollment, using Levinas’ linguistic, ethical, and relational constructs of the Other? This

central question allowed me to focus on the purpose of the study as it begins to describe, explain, and give voice to of practice of ACSI Maritime teachers experiencing increasing ELL enrollment.

To guide the discovery of the perspectives of those involved in teaching ESL, sub-questions were used. Sub-questions aid the researcher in defining the phenomena (Agee, 2009). These sub-questions also “carve out territory to be explored” (Stake, 1995, p. 74) while connecting to familiar content. Sub-questions 1 and 2 accomplished this by asking the following questions:

- (1) What are teacher’s perceptions of effectiveness in teaching mixed language ability classes?
- (2) How do teachers perceive changes in teaching methods due to increasing enrollment of ELLs?

The purpose of sub-questions 1 and 2 were to identify perceived strengths and weaknesses of pedagogical practice of ACSI Maritime teachers facing possible challenges of increased ELL enrollment. Thus, these questions identified the challenges of practice delineated in the purpose statement of this research. Teachers of ELLs must utilize many effective instructional strategies to meet the needs of their students (Liu, 2013). These sub-questions began to identify these methods.

Agee (2009) also discussed connecting the theoretical framework to the sub-questions. Levinas’ (1989) construct considers the linguistic, relational, and ethical barriers found in education. These sub-questions explored the challenges of ACSI Maritime teachers within the constraints of the framework, understanding that “anchoring ethics and education” (Todd, 2003, p. 1) is essential to ESL success (Case, 2015; Cummins, 2006). The purpose of sub-questions 3, 4, and 5 was to explore these principles by asking the following questions:

- (3) How do teachers identify linguistic barriers when teaching ELLs?
- (4) How do teachers perceive the relational needs of ELLs?

(5) How do teachers perceive ethical challenges when interacting with an increasing number of ELLs?

A qualitative research design was employed for this single, instrumental case study. According to Creswell (2013), this is a single, instrumental case study, secured to a specific location, the Canadian Maritimes. This research identified and explained the single issue of perceived challenges of practice due to increased ELL enrollment in this region. Because perceived challenges of practice explored present circumstances in a K-12 ACSI teacher's school day, an epistemological case study allowed for the "investigation of holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events" (Yin, 2009, p. 4). Using social constructivism as the interpretive framework for the study created authenticity (Creswell, 2013) and gave voice to the perceptions of the challenges faced by these teachers. Plus, every effort is employed to "preserve multiple realities" (Stake, 1995, p. 4), as many educator perspectives are contemplated.

A variety of data was collected for better evidence with "converging lines of inquiry" (Yin, 2009, p. 115). "Conceptual bridges" (Stake, 1995, p. 5) were contemplated to analyze the uniqueness of the perceived challenges of practice for each ESL teacher. Data collected included pre-interview journals, face-to-face semi-structured interviews, and classroom observations.

Pre-interview journal questions asked participants to reflect on the challenges they encounter linguistically, relationally, and ethically in the past three years while educating ELLs. Face-to-face, semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers who have ELLs in their mainstream classes. These interviews included open-ended questions exploring perceived challenges and actual examples of linguistic, relational, and ethical challenges in their classrooms over the last five years. Post-interview classroom observations explored the difference between

perceived challenges of practice and actualized challenges of practice as evidenced in the classroom, as well.

This type of data collection allowed the researcher to collect, analyze, and interpret the data created by this phenomenon in the natural setting (Stake, 1995), allowing for a holistic personal snapshot of the educator with increasing ELLs. This single case study enabled ASCI teachers to, as Yin (2009) elucidated, describe and explain their perceived challenges of practice in an evolving school system with more diverse learners. The natural setting allowed for a non-evasive search for patterns in the real-life settings (Stake, 1995); thus, allowing ACSI stakeholders a glimpse of the effects of increasing ELL enrollment through the eyes of the educators.

Definitions

1. *English language learners* - An English language learner is a student that is learning English as a foreign language (De Jonge & Harper, 2005).
2. *English second language students/English foreign language students* - English second language and foreign language students are students whose first language is not English (Kottler & Kottler, 2002).
3. *Ethical challenges* - Ethical challenges are barriers due to cultural misunderstanding and prejudice that affect the beliefs and judgments of the teacher (Case, 2015; Delpit, 2006).
4. *International students* - International students are students that have obtained students visas to enroll in educational instruction (Canadian Bureau for International Education, 2016).
5. *Linguistic challenges* - Linguistic challenges are barriers of misunderstanding caused by limited language skills and language acquisition between the student and teacher (Allen, 2010).

6. *Non-native English speakers* - Non-native English speakers are students whose first language is not English (Kottler & Kottler, 2002).
7. *Relational challenges* - Relational challenges are barriers of misunderstanding in community affecting friendships, mentorship, and relationships between all stakeholders in the learning environment (Delpit, 2006; Kottler & Kottler, 2002).
8. *Second language acquisition/language acquisition* - Second language acquisition is the learning of another language that is not in the student's native tongue (DeLozier, 2014).
9. *The Other* - The Other is "one who is absolutely different from myself" (Levinas, 1961, p. 15).

Summary

Chapter One provided a synopsis of the single instrumental case study that explored the perceived challenges of practice for K-12 ACSI teachers in the Canadian Maritimes due to increasing ELL enrollment. The chapter explained the significant impact the growing English language learning population has upon school systems. The chapter explored a gap in the body of knowledge, as ACSI schools have not previously been studied with a focus on increased enrollment of international students or perceived challenges of practice facing teachers with ELLs. The relationship to self was described, as was the research design of the study. Chapter Two provides an outline of the relevant literature.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

The purpose of Chapter Two was to provide a theoretical framework for the study and review of relevant literature pertaining to K-12 Maritime ACSI teachers' perception of challenges of practice due to increasing enrollment of ELLs. The most current statistics and enrollment figures for international students in North America, Canada and the Maritimes were examined, as was Levinas' (1969) theory of the ethics as first philosophy and the linguistic, ethical, and relational obligations people have to one another in an increasingly diverse learning environment. In addition, the Old Testament and New Testament were reviewed for guidance. The most current perceived challenges facing public school colleagues due to increased ELL enrollment was also reviewed. Because of the limited research on ACSI schools in the context of increased ELL enrollment, Christian school stakeholders should begin to discern the importance of the efficacy of not only teacher training and support, but explore the natural correlation of loving neighbors and the ethics of international student education.

Theoretical Framework

The CBIE predicted that by 2022, the number of internationally mobile students will have reached 7.1 million (Canadian Bureau for International Education [CBIE], 2015). As government and school systems in Canada actively sought international students in epic proportions, it was apparent that the evolving school culture was challenging school systems linguistically, relationally, and ethically (Allen, 2010; Ippoliti, 2010; Thompson, 2010). It was due to recent challenges in education that contemporary educational researchers looked to French philosopher Levinas as a guide in identifying perceived challenges of practice for teachers of ELLs. Todd's (2003) connection between Levinas' (1989) theory on ethics and educational philosophy explained

that by “anchoring ethics and education to the tangibility of people’s lives that we may explore the possibility of living well together” (Todd, 2003, p. 1). This is necessary for successful ESL programing. Thompson (2010) contended “the responsibility for the support of ESL student’s rests on the shoulders of the institutions benefiting from their enrollment” (p. 3). Thus, I explored Levinas’ construct of the Other as the lens through which to evaluate perceived challenges of practice for this case study.

Connecting Levinas to Educational Philosophy

Levinas was a teacher, administrator, rabbi, and philosopher from 1947-1995. He was born to an affluent Jewish family in Lithuania in 1906. This was a family that appreciated good education and instructed Levinas to read the Bible in Hebrew. He spoke Russian at home and immersed himself in the reading of Russian classics, which aided his philosophical thinking. Levinas studied in many lands and learned from and about many cultures. He studied or taught in Kharkov, Strasbourg, Lithuania, Freiburg, and Paris. Levinas also lived through many turbulent times in history. He experienced the World War I and moved to the Ukraine, endured the Russian Revolution of 1917, and became a prisoner of war in World War II. It is through these many experiences that his heart is better understood; Levinas would challenge humanity by writing “a responsibility for my neighbor, for the other man, the stranger or sojourner...is the responsibility of a hostage which can be carried to the point of being substituted for the other person” (Levinas, 1989, p. 84).

Levinas’ (1989) writings have been ascribed to educational philosophy prolifically in the last 20 years as educational leaders explored alternative tenets to meet the demands of changing learning environments due to the increase of international students entering non-native school systems (Biesta, 2003; Egéa-Kuehne, 2008; Riessen, 2013; Todd, 2003). Christian educational

leaders also began considering Levinas' principles as they aligned many of the moral and ethical teachings of Christ (de Souza, 2012; Morrison, 2008) in their teaching ministries. Levinas' precepts fused the Old Testament teachings of Leviticus 19 to the contemporary maxims of social justice. Levinas reiterated the responsibility of man taking care of humanity, regardless of race, religion, or socio-economical confines in his ethics as first philosophy.

This Jewish philosopher was captured by the Germans in WWII and endured the hardships of a labor camp for officers; it is here that he began pondering his ethical philosophies, which would later be published as *Existence and Existents* (Levinas, 1978). His ideology instructed all men to strive for the right attitudes of regarding Others in the daily routines of the everyday. He argued that everyone has an obligation to be ethically moral, as fellow human beings, to each other. Having experienced World War II as a prisoner of war, Levinas realized that humanity should become cognizant of the importance of thinking and reacting in ways that put Others before self.

Levinas scrutinized and prophetically called for the celebration and necessity of diversity in education. He suggested that understanding the uniqueness of everyone allowed for reflection of meaning in our lives. Levinas (1989) stated, "The totality of truth is made out of the contributions of a multiplicity of people" (p. 195). This meaning ultimately comes from embracing and celebrating the alterity around us. As teachers interact with the continuously increasing rate of cultures, it is important that educational philosophy embraces the significance of the Other in our learning environments. Wise educators create learning environments that not only celebrate diversity but create relational and ethical experiences for all learners interacting with each other. This allows for more teachers to become responsive and responsible, as Levinas suggested in his major works. Wimmer (2008) clarified, "an ethical relationship with the Other may create a non-desingularizing equality" (p. 118).

Connecting Levinas to the Importance of Relationships in Education

The importance of relationships is noticed in ESL programs because students often feel vulnerable when learning a new language. Joldersma (2008) explained, “the possibility for learning from a teacher arises in a relationship that involves a kind of vulnerability” (p. 45). Levinas (1981) took this one step further by equating this vulnerability to enjoyment of relationships in education. Students that are engaged and enjoy what they are learning allow themselves to be vulnerable; this can only take place when relationships are solid. Levinas (1981) emphasized, “learning is the risky uncovering of oneself, in sincerity, the breaking up of inwardness, and the abandoning of a shelter, exposure to trauma...vulnerability” (p. 48).

Teachers of ELLs understand this vulnerability as students struggle with new language, cultures, and expectations. Teachers that take time to build relationships with NNES allow students to not only feel comfortable with new learning expectations, skills, and methods, but create a culture of security that allows ELLs to flourish in a new culture while learning a new language (de Jong & Harper, 2005; Gandara & Santibanez, 2016; Wimmer, 2008).

Levinas (1989) asked his readers to explore the intentionality of their relationships. Morrison (2003) clarified this stating: the theology of loving one’s neighbor is the “understanding of God ethically through our responsibility to others” (p. 6). Stakeholders in Christian schools with an increasing number of international students experience many benefits by enrolling these types of learners. For example, ACSI school’s international tuition fees are two to three times more than that of native students. Schools that receive these benefits should be prepared for added responsibilities to ensure the academic and cultural success of these students. This responsibility is actualized as individuals live in relationship with one another. Waltke (2007) concurred and

defined social justice and responsibility as “the righteous willing to disadvantage themselves for the advantage of the community” (p. 323).

In addition, Levinas (1989) taught about the impact of relationships on justice, ethics, faith and life. It was through these revelations that educators felt “responsibility and respect is deeply relevant in education” (Eg a-Kuehne, 2008, p. 1). Through the reviewed literature, it was evident that relationships play a critical role in international student success (Beykont, 2002; Gluszek & Dovido, 2010; Johnson & Chang, 2012; May, 2001; Miller, 2003). Relationship building “could be the seedbed for the construction of academic, linguistic, and cultural understanding” (Case, 2105, p. 362) for international students.

Educators that embrace the necessity of relationships with NNES begin to adopt a greater understanding of the myriad of needs their students face. Many ESL students suffer from loneliness and alienation (Edgoose, 2000; Ippolito, 2010). Teachers that are cognizant of the fact that language minorities are vulnerable as they learn new language skills and cultural expectations place greater responsibility on the importance of extending relationships within learning environments. With the current trends of increasing enrollment and the potential adjustments within school systems impacted by this trend, opportunities should be created to nourish positive and lasting relationships with NNES and English-speaking students.

If existing language skills create relational barriers and ESL programming eliminates those barriers, then schools have an ethical responsibility to enter into relationships with new English speakers. Ippolito (2010) contended: “language is a conduit: it is nothing less than the groundwork of ethics” (p. 9). Both public and private institutions have an ethical responsibility to become better informed about the challenges facing ELLs to provide the support they need to become

successful students. Creating a culture of respectful relationships adds to a positive global understanding of the ELLs these teachers serve.

Connecting Levinas to a Calling as Christian Educators

As ACSI educators face challenges of practice because of diverse learning environments, they should explore the influence of relationships that are critical for ELL success. This becomes more substantial in the light of Jesus' ministry. Christian educators may consider the parallels of Jesus' own calling for social justice in Matthew 25: 34-35:

Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me'. (English Standard Version [ESV])

Jesus' calling to be aware of the "least of these" is relevant when teaching international students. Christ instructed people to be just and merciful to all in Matthew 19:19. The reminder to love our neighbors as ourselves was a reoccurring theme in Jesus' ministry. Jesus identified a neighbor in Luke 10:25-37 as anyone who was in need. Jesus made a point not to discriminate by race, culture or religion. He pointed out a people that needed assistance and commanded his disciples to meet those needs. Keller's (1997) dissertation emphasized this point as he stated, "mercy to the full range of human needs is such an essential mark of being a Christian" (p. 35).

While English language acquisition may be the priority for parents of ELLs, the ACSI teacher recognizes that international students are afforded the opportunity of their first glimpse of Jesus in an ACSI school. The Christian teacher understands that more than just academic needs are met as non-Christian learners are learning new language skills. Perhaps Christian educators are challenged by the myriad of needs embodied by the English language learners in their midst.

However, these students give teachers the opportunity to be the hands and feet of Christ. While meeting the needs of this diverse group of students seems overwhelming at times, Leviticus 19:18 challenges teachers to “meet the needs of others with all the speed, eagerness, energy, and joy in which we would meet our own” (Keller, 1997, p. 35). Levinas commanded the same ethics as first philosophy does not ask for radical change in educational paradigms, but rather called for “a greater awareness of the issues at stake in education” (Eg ea-Kuehne, 2008, p. 2). Keller (2012) explicated this awareness and stated, “Jesus’ teaching promotes the centrality of the Gospel to minister to the church and engage with the secular culture” (p. 330). As more non-believing international students enroll in ACSI schools, educators will become aware of new opportunities to minister for the sake of the Gospel.

Connecting Levinas to the Ethics of International Student Education

Levinas (1989) warned about the ethical dilemmas intertwined in life in many of his works, as cultures and language engage each other through time. In his 1996 essay, *Meaning and Sense*, Levinas warned about the conjectures of the western world. This was a world that enjoyed the benefits of cultures but conversely looked to liberate all signs of diversity by “purifying thought and particularisms of language” (Peperzak, Critchley, & Bernasconi, 2008, p. 58). Levinas (1989) reminded humanity that no matter what challenges came from living in a diverse world, people have a responsibility to one another. Levinas (1989) stated, “Responsibility for the Other establishes an ethical relationship whose whole intensity consists in not presupposing the idea of community” (pp. 83-84).

As ACSI schools consider increasing international student populations and programming, they need to be prepared to minister in new ways to stakeholders that are non-Christians. ACSI author Van Brummelen (2009) contended, “our pedagogy affects whether or not to promote a

vision for the kingdom of God” (p. 12). ACSI teachers have a greater expectation for themselves and their learning environments as they realize the eternal impact of their relationships on their international students. These expectations create perceived challenges for students and teachers alike. Thompson (2010) warned, “tensions between the expectations of international students looking for support, and institutions hosting them who are hoping for self-sufficiency, make for a critical dilemma with underlying moral and ethical implications” (p. 49).

These were not the only tensions that are voiced. Native speaking stakeholders may not perceive the benefits of international student revenue in the same way as administration views it. On February 19, 2016, *The Guardian*, a local Prince Edward Island newspaper, ran an editorial from an anonymous source that declared “foreign students pay an unfair share for tuition costs” (Thibodeau, 2015, p. A6). The article outlined the increase of international enrollment at the University of Prince Edward Island where “20% of all students enrolled will be international learners” (p. A6), the disparity between local and international student tuition costs “local students pay \$12,000 per year, while international students will pay \$60,000” (p. A6), and the seemingly unfair ethical practices of “price gouging of wealthy international students” (p. A6).

These critical ethical dilemmas manifest easily in learning environments that are not intentional about their gospel-centered responsibility as international student hosts. Christian schools that forget their biblical calling to “love thy neighbor” lose sight of their focus on kingdom education. As the financial benefits of international tuition become more lucrative and a decrease in local Christian enrollment becomes apparent, it is clear to observe the evolution of ACSI schools transforming into institutions of international education. ACSI Maritime schools have seen tremendous increases in English language learning enrollment. Schools like Grace

Christian in Prince Edward Island, Canada, reported an 1100% increase in ELLs in just four years.

If language was “the reality in which learning takes place” (Ippolito, 2008, p. 109), then how great is the responsibility of the Christian educational institutions to break language barriers and comprehend the profound moral obligation they have to these NNES. Levinas (1981) posited, “there is a transcendence involved in a language relationship that is not only empirical speech, but responsibility” (p. 120). This responsibility becomes apparent as new language learners bring new stakeholder expectations into the learning environment. The expectations look very different from the typical norm of traditional education as new cultures are introduced into conventional models.

Observing the importance of the ethics of ESL programming was explored by Levin’s (2008) research; the “hot topic” of reasonable accommodations of minority groups in Quebec revealed there are ethical ramifications for schools with ELLs. Levin’s research exposed the precarious balance of benefiting from international students and meeting their various needs. Schools that do not see the moral obligation to be responsible hosts to international students felt the strain of “accommodating students with language difficulties” (Levin, 2008, p. 396). Many educators suggested that pedagogy and curriculum for language learners was nothing less than an ethical responsibility (Ippolito, 2010; Levin, 2008; Levinas, 1961). The ethics of education are seen tangibly as teachers perfect methods of pedagogy that evidence the ethical treatment of all students, regardless of language skills. As governing bodies purposefully recruit international students, new moral obligations come into view as new and diverse stakeholder expectations form, “the extent that education and society are changed by the presence of minority languages, new responsibilities must be taken up” (Ippolito, 2010, p. 116).

As the financial benefits of international tuition become more lucrative, it is common to see the evolution of ACSI schools transformed into international schools. As Thompson (2010) stated, “International schools have become common place and viewed as an essential source of revenue in Canada” (p. 49). Seeing international student revenue as a lucrative business venture strips away the very essence of the ethics of education. Levinas (1996) warned about a lack of ethics in education and society. He qualified this by accentuating a lack of absolute truth in society at large. “We live in a world without a guiding star, in which there is no longer any measurer to contain monstrosities” (Levinas, 1996, p. 120). However bleak this sounded, Levinas, ever the teacher, realized that hope for a world with no moral compass was found in “the possibility of just education” (Eg ea-Kuehne, 2008, p. 36). Moreland (2007) warned Christian academics to be cognizant of the moral and ethical decline in education as relative morality was substituted for the Truth of God. Moreland (2007) called for a “recovery of confidence in ethical and spiritual knowledge” (p. 114). This is what Levinas (1996) deemed as responsible, ethical education.

Keller (2012) explained this another way, asking Christians working in a “radically non-Christian culture to be more prepared to work with Christian distinctiveness” (p. 330). This is essential to ACSI teachers working with the expanding number of non-Christian students and parents. This is education that goes beyond race and religion, recognizing the needs of all its’ stakeholders, and is dedicated to breaking the barriers of alienation. ACSI schools should equip educators to be aware that they are teaching ELLs more than just a language or a course.

Looking to Jesus as the master teacher, we get another glimpse of the relational and ethical connections Levinas imbued in his educational theories. Jesus’ teaching was marked by “tenderness, compassion, and empathy” (Zuck, 2002, p. 82). In the gospels, Jesus reached out

and met the many needs of His learners. While He was able to meet His teaching goals, he never forgot that His relationship with His students was of the utmost importance. Jesus was ever the encouraging teacher (Matt. 10: 26-31; John 14:27; Mark 5:36), the gentle teacher (Luke 22:24-30), and the loving teacher (John 13:1). It was evident that Jesus demonstrated His love for the Other as He taught and ministered daily. As Keller (1997) stated, “Jesus uses the work of mercy to show us the essence of the righteousness God requires in our relationships” (p. 38). These relationships must include all students that God brings into our classes. Christian teachers are called to model Christ in their classrooms, understanding the necessity of the “responsibility of my neighbor, for the Other man, for the stranger or sojourner, to which nothing in the rigorously ontological order binds me” (Levinas, p. 84). Alternately, Jesus challenged everyone to, “love your neighbor as yourself;” hence, the desire to meet the linguistic, ethical, and relational needs of our ELLs as Levinas (1989) suggested in the ethics as first philosophy.

The Levinasian theory revealed a very different perspective on the importance of ELL and non-ELL interactions. Biesta (2003) wrote: “Levinas’ theory involves an extensive exploration of the face-to-face relationship, and it opens into questions of social existence and justice” (p. 66). The theoretical framework aids in the categorization of the perceived challenges of practice linguistically, which identifies in the non-effective practices of bias and lack of training and support. Relational barriers reveal a lack of student confidence and diverse student interactions, while ethical barriers are evidenced in studies on teacher efficacy, social equity, and teacher perceptions.

These categories are reasonable for effective practices as well. Linguistic success can be connected to the sheltered instruction observational protocol (SIOP) (Hansen-Thomas, 2008). Favorable relational results have been measured utilizing ELL shadowing (Soto-Hinman, 2010).

Finally, linguistically responsive teacher education (LRTE) allows for reflective teachers to be aware of cultural connections of their diverse learners (Freedson-Gonzalez et al., 2008). Thus, Levinas' (1989) paradigm was significant in the quest for exploring the perceived challenges of practice for teachers instructing ELLs.

Exploring the effective and ineffective practices of ELL teachers reinforce the significance of the linguistic, relational, and ethical responsibility as delineated by Levinas (1989). His focus of concern was the ethical treatment of all people, thus "duty and responsibility" (Case, 2015, pp. 365-366) that aided in establishing language-learning criteria. His theory differentiated between what is being said versus how it is said and "allows us to approach our neighbor and annul language barriers" (Case, 2015, p. 366).

Linguistic, relational, and ethical challenges create barriers, confusion, isolation, and alienation. Genesis 11:1-9 describes that these difficulties were used by God to "confuse their language so they will not understand each other." However, one is also reminded that Christ's followers do not have to remain in a state of confusion through the power of the Holy Spirit. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, the confusion of Babel has been reversed in that "all of them had the power to speak about Jesus in every language" (Acts 2:1-13).

Related Literature

Escalating English Language Learner Populations

In 1990, Chow submitted his Masters of Education thesis to the University of Toronto. The title, *An Exodus Experience*, seemed like a prophetic proclamation detailing the challenges that could face educational stakeholders as international students made their way to Canada. Chow (1990) published data from a 1989 CBIE report that revealed "\$300 million dollars of revenue" (pp. 3-4) was spent by international students studying in the 1984-1985 school year. Chow (1990) also

reported a slight increase in international student enrollment from 1980-1984 but discovered a “41.4 % increase from 1984-1989” (Chow, 1990, p. 2). Chow (1990) also exposed statistics that ranked the United States as second and China as eighth in points of origin for international student enrollment in Canada.

Examining new data 30 years later revealed an increasingly diverse North American school system. Enormous numbers of students enter school with little or no English language knowledge. In 2012, the Institute of International Education (IIE) reported, “764,495 post-secondary ELLs contributed 22 billion dollars to the U.S. economy” (Telbis et al., 2014, p. 330). Schools in North America continue to see a rise in English Language Learners. U.S. statistics revealed “5.1 million students (10.5%) were ELLs in 2004” (Liu, 2013, p. 128). Statistics Canada (2014) also reported record enrollment increases of ELLs in each province. Some areas observe a student population with over 50% non-English speakers (Faez, 2012).

The United States and Canada continue to recognize the necessity of adaptation as the dynamic of learning environments continues to transform. Educators become more aware of the metamorphosis as past majority groups give way to new communities of learners that could eventually become the new majority. As the number of ELLs increase, it is significant that educational research studies the effects of these phenomena on every stakeholder in every school system.

Current statistics display this phenomenon. The Canadian Bureau for International Education (n.d) reported, “International student enrollment grew from 159,426 in 2003 to over 335,000 in 2015” (graphic 2). Statistics Canada in 2009 concurred with the latest census figures showing an “84% increase in international students which created over 81,000 jobs and generated over than \$445M in government revenue” (CBIE, 2016, graphic 2). The countries sending the most

international students in 2015 to Canada have changed from 1989. China sends 33% of the international student population, India 12%, and South Korea 5.8% (CBIE, 2016). The United States has dropped to sixth place, with only 3.7% of the international student population originating from the U.S. (CBIE, 2016).

Even the smallest province in Canada, Prince Edward Island (PEI), has experienced an increase of international students, a fact that has begun to impact schools. PEI encounters this increase in English Language Learners mainly from China. According to CBC News, “From the start of 2009 to September 2013, the P.E.I. Association for Newcomers to Canada registered 6,019 new immigrants, and more than half were from China” (2014, para. x. Many countries have experienced the trend in elevating enrollment as they are actively recruiting and customizing immigration policies to enhance student migration (Cobb, 2012). The Canadian government recently created a tactical plan in 2014 to entice “450, 000 international students by 2022” (Lu & Hou, 2015, p. 1). This active pursuit of students from other countries has created over “\$8B of revenue annually” (CBIE, 2016) for Canada. Similarly, the United States has actively recruited new students and has enjoyed a consistent increase in ELL enrollment. The American Institute of International Education reported, “International students and their families spend over 14 billion dollars a year in goods and service” (Telbis et al., 2014, p. 330). The U.S. Census Bureau predicted that by 2020 "more than half of the nation's children are expected to be part of a minority race or ethnic group” (U.S. Census Bureau National Projections, 2014).

Recruiting international learners can be a lucrative business. However, managing the challenges that develop in school systems as relational, ethical, and pedagogical concerns arise can be formidable. Chow (1990) warned, “despite the advantages international students bring while studying in Canada, little attention has been given to the challenges of the students and

stakeholders” (p. 22). This can be said of public and private schools alike. Since this phenomenon affects all school systems, generalizations can be made about the learning environments. However, most of the statistical findings only report data from public school systems, leaving out vital information about private and faith-based schools. With the changes in the dynamic of North American learning environments, it is no surprise that there have been appeals for education reform from many stakeholders (Case, 2015; Dooley & Furtado, 2013; English, 2009; Hansen-Thomas, 2008; Peacock, 2001; Roy-Campbell, 2013; Soto-Hinman, 2010) to support all educators in their role as teachers of ELLs. A gap in the literature cannot confirm or deny if a lack of funding, resources, or support for ACSI teachers may create challenges of practice for these programs, as the research has revealed for the public school counterparts.

Changes in the student population have precipitated educational research, exploring stakeholder’s perceptions in some aspects of instruction. Much time and effort has been spent scrutinizing these insights. The research of these methods of instruction included: (a) the social, linguistic and academic effects of ELLs on non-ELLs (Case, 2015; Cummins, 2011; Gerin-Lajoie, 2012; Goldstein, 2003), (b) effective and ineffective teaching practices and policies (DeLozier, 2014; Freedson-Gonzalez et al., 2008; Hansen-Thomas, 2008; Sidhu, Fook, & Kaur, 2010), (c) perceptions of student and teachers (de Souza, 2012; English, 2009; Greenfield, 2013), (d) self-efficacy of ELLs and teachers (Faez, 2012; LeClair et al., 2009; Packer & Lynch, 2013), (e) perceived challenges of ELLs (Peacock, 2001; Telbis et al., 2014), and (f) perceived challenges of educators (Roy-Campbell, 2013; Warren et al. 2014). This research has aided in revealing the challenges of teachers today with increased ELL enrollment in public schools worldwide.

The analysis of these components continue to reveal the significance of relationships for the success of all educational stakeholders in a heterogeneous learning environment. The “father” of Canadian ESL research, Cummins (2006) wrote, “human relationships are at the heart of schooling” (p. 40). Cummins life’s work is the ongoing study of why students chose to engage and be successful in language acquisition or not in the bilingual Canadian school system. The importance of these relationships is also evidenced in the theoretical philosophies of Levinas (1989), which “allows us to see the moral obligation to approach our neighbors and annul language barriers” (Case, 2015, p. 366), as discussed in the theoretical framework.

Exploring Effective Instructional Practices

While theoretically discussing all the integral components of teaching ELLs is a necessity, creating successful learning environments, socially, ethically, and instructionally is a large challenge for mainstream teachers with such a mixed and fluid group of learners. As research continues to connect academic success to positive strengthening of pre-service and in-service training, adding more responsibility to content area teachers and exploring effective instructional practice may aid ESL teachers. Taking into consideration the many pedagogical challenges facing educators today many favorable strategies can be observed that equip teachers to meet the needs of ELLs in mainstream classrooms. Understanding the multitude of components that affect mainstream teachers in North American today, it is easy to comprehend why teachers are challenged as they try to meet the many demands of teaching the diverse group of learners entering their classrooms.

Observing and understanding the sizable increase of international students and the impact on North American schools, educational researchers have begun to scrutinize policies and practices that affect stakeholder success. It is with this in mind that wise school systems have

begun contemplating the positive and negative effects of this new demographic on English as a Second Language (ESL) programs and English as Another Language (EAL) programs.

Exploring effective and ineffective instructional practices is straightforward for North American public schools with the colossal amount of educational research that has been conducted in the past 15 years in the public school sector. However, there is a noticeable gap in the literature for private and faith-based schools at this juncture.

Most studies of late investigated best practices that call for methods that increase student confidence (Telbis et al., 2014), create social equity (Case, 2015; de Souza, 2012;), allow for more interaction of students (Cummins, 2011; Karanja, 2007; Popadiuk, 2010), and generate self-examination of teacher efficacy (DeLozier, 2014; Greenfield, 2013; Peacock, 2001). These reflective best practices contend that successful English language acquisition is a complex blend of policy, pedagogy, practice, and persistent scholarship (Dooley & Furtado, 2013; English, 2009; Freedson-Gonzalez et al., 2008, Hansen-Thomas, 2008; Liu, 2013) that may create challenges for mainstream teachers.

A survey of the best practices for international student success currently employed in North American public schools may begin to clarify perceived challenges for teachers as school systems begin to execute these strategies in their learning environments. One practice that began in 2003 in California schools that were facing many Spanish-speaking English language learners is ELL shadowing. Shadowing requires an ESL teacher to shadow/follow an ELL throughout their entire school day. This strategy allows school systems to assess the efficacy of content area teachers teaching ELLs. This method designates administrators and teachers an ELL to shadow for the day. School personnel will then observe interactions of the NNES in their classes for five-minute increments.

ELL shadowing creator, Soto-Hinman (2010), asserted that the best practice of ELL shadowing allows educators to gather data that notes the following: active listening, language use, dialogue, and speaking opportunities every five minutes. According to Soto-Hinman (2010), “46.2% represents the amount of time teachers speak for the entire class time. This means that ELLs in these classes did not receive as many opportunities to use their language skills” (p. 5). Soto-Hinman (2010) contended that ELL shadowing allows for intentional data collection for educators to reflect and modify problems of practice if weaknesses are found in ELL’s instruction.

The reflective practice of ELL shadowing can reveal the number of minutes that ELLs actually speak English in the course of a school day, teacher-student interactions, and integration success or failure of students in the school community. Heitin (2011) claimed ELL shadowing generates a new awareness of the needs of ELLs; “A day in the life of an English-language learner experience often creates a sense of urgency about helping these students improve their academic language skills” (p. 38).

Reflective teachers working with ELLs may recognize the unique needs of their ELLs. Owen-Tittsworth researched the effects of ELL shadowing, revealing that ELL shadowing is a plausible practice because of its reflective nature. As stakeholders follow ELLs in their day and experience positive and negative learning experiences, staff can “develop instructional strategies that meet the diverse needs of each student” (Owen-Tittsworth, 2013, p. 30). ELL shadowing is currently a best practice being implemented in West Coast public school systems. At the time of this research, there was no data on the implementation of this best practice in ACSI schools.

Sheltered Instruction Observational Protocol (SIOP) is another best practice that moves away from the traditional grammar, usage, and mechanics (GUM) methodology of ESL

programming and focuses on communication and language functions. It demands cross-curricular cooperative learning as well as a judicious use of the ELLs first language for language and cultural connections. This theory also uses highly-reflective teacher journaling for intentional self-assessment of teacher pedagogy. According to Hansen-Thomas (2008), “Implementing interesting content, along with supports to scaffold student learning, increase investigation, and demonstrate content help provide the academic and social assistance ELLs need to be successful” (p. 167).

Pray and Monhardt (2009) clarified that through inquiry-based group work, “students are provided opportunities for rich interaction that will help ELL students develop their oral language and social language skills” (p. 34). However, SIOP challenges content area teachers to intentionally plan for lessons that are rich in opportunities for NNES to communicate in various ways. This exemplary method allows all students to interact as they build foundational vocabulary, create inquiry-based questions, and communicate during group assignments, while allowing teachers to “reflect upon the success of each lesson” (Pray & Monhardt, 2009, p. 38) for every learner. At this time there was no data on the implementation of this best practice in ACSI schools.

Alternatively, linguistically responsive teacher education (LRTE) allows pre-service mainstream teachers to be cognizant of the needs, adaptations, and accommodations that are required in all classrooms for English language learning success. LRTE calls for “essential teacher understanding of conversational language proficiency, L2 comprehensible input, the importance of native language connections, welcoming learning environment, and attention to linguistic form and function” (Freedson-Gonzalez et al., 2008, p. 363).

These expectations are high for educators who are teaching in classrooms that are culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD). Since many mainstream teachers have no ESL specialized training, this method calls for LRTE in order for teachers to feel prepared to teach ELLs. Lucas and Villegas (2013) researched the efficacy of teaching pre-service teachers the significance of reflections, journaling, and linguistic response. Educators are instructed in the orientation of linguistically-responsive teachers. These are teachers that examine their “sociolinguistic consciousness, opinions on the value of linguistic diversity, inclinations to advocate for ELLs, the demands of the CLD classroom, and the key steps for language learning success” (p. 101). This method is being practiced in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. At the time of the research, there was no data on the implementation of this best practice in ACSI schools.

Finally, Communication Language Training (CLT) is another best practice being explored in North American schools. This best practice was first utilized in the early 1960’s. This method allows communication skills to be honed as vocabulary, pronunciation, and cultural competencies are practiced. Yuanlin (2008), explained that CLT allows for “the organization of communication skills instead of the traditional principles of GUM (grammar, usage, and mechanics)” (p. 4). Proponents of CLT assert that all the competency skills of ESL are met as grammar, discourse, social nuances, and strategic thinking in social situations are employed in the class (Savignon, 2002; Yuanlin, 2008).

Communication Language Training puts ELLs in intentional social situations as part of instructional practice. This allows students to apply newly acquired language skills in the classroom setting. Ju (2013) illustrated the significance of this best practice by justifying the many “disciplines: sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, language philosophy, anthropology-

among which the most influential factor is sociolinguistics” (p. 1580), in which the CLT utilizes. This practical use of language skills builds successful oral skills. CLT places students in communicative environments “through active participation and interaction” (Fu, 2013, pp. 1582-1583). This best practice is still being used internationally. At the time of this research, there was no data on the implementation of this best practice in ACSI schools.

There are many effective best practices that have been researched over the last 15 years. The plethora of concepts and leading strategies may or may not add to the already challenging list of responsibilities of K-12 mainstream teachers. While it is common in education for best practices to change and evolve, it is necessary to look for effective practices in ESL programming to meet the needs of ELLs.

Exploring Ineffective Instructional Practices

Unfortunately, for every best practice in education, it is also evident that there are many ineffective practices, as well. De Souza (2012) stated, “regardless of the reason for studying in a foreign country, research shows international students’ experience more difficulty in academic success than their North American counterparts” (p. 72). Teachers that are aware that ELLs are have various barriers as part of their educational journey serve their NNES well. Allen (2010) argued, “teaching methods that are one dimensional in meeting the needs of their learners create more barriers” (p. 3). Methods that cater to only one facet of ELL could create frustration and angst. Methods that use immersion only, in which the student’s native language is not used in daily lessons, has not seen the same success rates as the dual-language model. The dual-language model “allows for the alternating of the native-language and English for clarification” (Allen, 2010, p. 9) as students learn new language skills.

However, since no standards are given for the clarification of what system of ESL programming is mandatory, ineffective practices may abound (Cummins, 2000; de Jong & Harper, 2005; Dooley & Furtado, 2013). Each province in Canada has different suggested outcomes for educational goals. These goals are not uniform or federally regulated as in the United States. Public schools in the Canadian Maritimes consist of three different provinces, which encompasses the school systems in Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick. These three provinces have three different suggested outcomes for their ELLs in public schools. Now add private schools to the system with varying objectives, standards, and supports and we may get a better understanding of why ESL educators may be challenged with how to best meet the educational goals of their ELLs.

Bias and Division

Historically, Lantolf and Labarca (1987) argued, “Sound methodology of foreign language learning must result in all the functional relationships operating between the learner and the linguistic system” (p. 17). Beykont’s (2002) study observed the connection between ESL program success and social interactions. Beykont (2002) discussed the social impact of cultures communing with each other in schools. “Language minority students are being stripped of their cultures, language, and funds of knowledge, yet do not gain access to mainstream school culture” (Beykont, 2002, p. xi). The importance of acceptance and unity for non-English speaking students in schools cannot be understated. However, there are some weaknesses in ESL programming according to the examined literature.

Bias and division are a constant pattern identified as an ineffective educational practice in contemporary research (Beykot, 2002; Levin, 2008; Miller, 2003; May, 2001). Understanding that relationships are a significant component of education, ways to create positive perceptions of all

learners, especially English Language Learners must be found. Miller (2003) expanded on the sociological connections between ESL language acquisitions and bias: “judgments about identity and discourse may also intersect with issues of race, gender and socioeconomic status” (p. 8) in our learning environments. Levin (2008) illustrated this as “second generation Canadians report they still feel discrimination in education and employment” (p. 395). Once bias enters classrooms, negative social implications of “language, education, and minority rights” (May, 2001) can affect academic success for international students.

A mainstream teacher may not fully understand the importance of the socio-cultural dynamic in a diverse community. In 1995, Delpit began poignantly exposing the controversy of the social impact on immigrant students in the book *Other People's Children*. Delpit stated, “White educators have the authority to establish what is considered ‘truth,’ thus the majority (powerful) are frequently least aware of its power, while those with the least power (the minorities) are most aware of who has the power” (pp. 25-26).

Effective mainstream teachers should be cognizant of the precarious hidden curriculum of bias and division that can so easily infiltrate our mixed classrooms. ESL students already feel disconnected by language barriers and cultural detachments (Karanja, 2007; LeClair et al., 2009; Popadiuk, 2010; Telbis et al., 2014); removal from classes for special services and extra hours of tutoring instead of extra-curricular activities may reveal why this is seen as ineffective practices in educational research.

Policy Reform and Funding

Policy reform and funding can also negatively affect ESL programs in many North American school systems (Dooley & Furtado, 2013; Sidhu et al., 2010). The incessant changes in

North American public school policy and federal funding, along with the ambiguous differentiation of Canadian provincial school policy, add to the increasing challenges of ESL teaching.

While policy mandates look effective on paper, the practicality of administering new policy and practice can be daunting. An example in education is the policy on administering ESL services in Canada. For emergent English language learners, most school systems suggest that three years is sufficient for acquiring oral language skills and five years for reading comprehension and a writing proficiency (Cummins, 2000; de Jong & Harper, 2005). The Canadian provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Ontario “provide school districts with target funding for five years of ESL services” (Dooley & Furtado, 2013, p. 22). However, the Maritimes only fund three years of services, which can be challenging for stakeholders. Many teachers not only struggle with these time frames but also know that there are many variables when working with ELLs. Mainstream instructors understand that their population of language learners consist of an assorted range of English language skills, abilities, and expectations that many policies do not take into consideration.

There is a lack of research for private and faith-based schools when it comes to policy as well. The Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI), the largest faith-based association of schools, is just developing curriculum and suggested scope and sequencing for their certified schools at this time. They have developed a K-6 ESL curriculum that began its inaugural year in the fall of 2014.

Lack of Teacher Training and Support

Lack of teacher training and support is also seen as an ineffective practice. In addition to the fluctuating educational policies, research reveals that teachers do not feel properly trained or supported in their endeavor to properly teach emergent language learners in their mainstream

classes (Cummins, 1997; de Jonge & Harper, 2005; Hansen-Thomas, 2008). Mainstream teachers struggle with balancing and meeting the needs of all learners. In such a varied learning environment, educating students with no or limited English skills in a class with native speakers is becoming the biggest educational challenge to date. Liu's (2013) research revealed the inadequacy of instructors teaching ESL by examining the phenomenon of "those who teach ESL feeling frustrated and unconfident because of their lack of professional knowledge" (p. 128). For this reason, educational research in the challenges of practice is beneficial for all, as it seeks to explore and give voice to the trials and triumphs of teaching such a diverse community.

Most pre-service teacher education programs only skim the surface of effective ESL teaching methods in mainstream classes. However, it is the certified Teachers of English as a Second Language (TESOL) that receive effective and specialized training (Faez, 2012; Greenfield, 2013; Liu, 2013). Some professional development training may add hours of training to content area teaching (Freedson-Gonzalez et al, 2008; Peacock, 2001; Roy-Campbell, 2013), but this is not enough to meet all the pedagogical demands.

Lack of training and support may become a perceived challenge for ELL teachers as current research has revealed. Sidhu et al. (2010) stated, "Adequate and proper training has to be provided to ensure that teachers are confident to teach the programs mandated and handle the needs of the program to make it successful for all" (p. 62). A recent study in the United States concurred, as Tran (2015) found correlational statistical significance of ESL certification and training with positive teacher perceptions. Until mainstream teachers can feel fully equipped to teach ELLs in every content area, lack of adequate and proper training will continue to be viewed as an ineffective practice and a perceived challenge of practice. Tran's (2015) mixed method study found statistical correlation between the feelings of teacher efficacy and their pre-

service education. “Data analysis from the survey, classroom observations, and interviews among the five cases indicated that specific courses and trainings around ESL methodologies in pre-service contexts greatly influenced teachers' efficacy” (Tran, 2015, p. 38). Failing to provide the proper training is an ineffective practice that hampers teachers and their ELLs.

Student Perceptions of ESL Programs

As the face of education continues to evolve with every new ELL that enters a classroom, mainstream teachers that are instructing NNES would do well to examine the perceptions of these students. Examining their perceptions about the success of ESL programming may be a way to lessen the growing challenges they face. Packer & Lynch (2013) concurred, “the Canadian culture is constantly being redefined with every wave of immigration” (p. 60).

The need for educators to look beyond educational traditions and cultural norms increases as the diverse population expands. “Educators must recognize that culture and language cannot be divided and seeing them interwoven leads us closer to a more informed understanding of the learner” (Johnson & Chang, 2012, p. 20). Thus, educational research continues to give voice to the many perspectives of international students in our public schools, as many case studies have revealed multiple variables that affect academic success (de Souza, 2012; Gerin-Lajoie, 2012; Goldstein, 2003; Karanja, 2007).

Due to the ethical concerns of studying students that are not of legal age, most studies surveyed post-secondary students (de Souza, 2012; Packer & Lynch, 2013; Popaduik, 2010; Telbis et al., 2014). This has begun to create a gap in the literature for K-12 investigation, especially in private school sectors. Also, many vulnerable groups cannot be examined due to language barriers with parents or guardians. “Younger and more vulnerable international students are rarely the focus of research inquiries” (Popaduik, 2010, p. 1524). However, the

research has begun to expose the difficulties international students face as they try to engage in a new language and culture. Students are challenged by fear, language barriers, stereotyping, unassimilation, and identity (Cummins, 2011; Harper, 1997; Packer & Lynch, 2013).

Research also revealed that many ELLs suffer from low self-esteem and do not succeed in language acquisition (LeClair et al., 2009). This is evidenced in lower levels of academic efficacy, standardized achievement, higher dropout rates, and lower reading proficiency levels (Case, 2015; Goldstein, 2003; LeClair et al., 2009; Soto-Hinman, 2010). According to the literature, it is important for teachers to understand the complexity of teaching their ELLs. Harper (1997) explained, “the general concern is not whether schools should be sites to encourage and support development of cultural identity and diversity, but rather what should be the grounds and conditions of that development” (p. 200).

Investigating Teacher Perceptions of ESL Programs

According to the review of the literature, understanding the perceptions of English language learners is significant to ESL program success. It is equally important to explore teacher perceptions of ESL programming. Educators recognize that they need to be intrinsically reflective (DeLozier, 2014; English, 2009; Freedson-Gonzalez et al., 2008; Hansen-Thomas, 2008; Soto-Hinman, 2010). Teachers perceive that as they contemplate pedagogy, relationships, support, and realistic expectations, their teaching practice will improve. Gandara and Santibanez (2016) proposed that highly qualified ESL teachers are begging for more approaches of effective reflective practices. Teachers are asking for “time to observe exemplary lessons, discussions, and practice under a watchful eye of a mentor” (Gandara & Santibanez, 2016, p. 36).

Teachers who have knowledge of a student’s culture and community enable the student to form important, strong relationships that create successful learning environments. Research

revealed that mainstream teachers are unable to define their roles and responsibility when it comes to ESL programming (Cummins, 2011; English, 2009). The national Center of Education reported that the majority of mainstream teachers do not feel prepared to teach ELLs” (Freedson-Gonzalez et al., 2008, p. 361). This can be unsettling for instructors as they face more and more ELLs.

According to English (2009), “a successful ESL program requires collaboration, communication and coordination between all instructors” (p. 487). However, this may be challenging to put into practice. Liu’s (2013) research revealed “54% of teachers in American public schools have ELLs in their class, but only 20% of them believed they were well prepared to teach them” (p. 130).

While investigating the importance of teacher attitudes towards ELLs, the motif of a negative attitude plays a notable role. A teacher’s experience with diverse cultures, prior contact with ELLs, and “concrete awareness of specific cultural groups” (Young & Young, 2001, p. 100) can signify English language acquisition success. Research emphasizes patterns of positive characteristics of effective EAL/ESL teaching. This list includes: bilingual teachers, knowledge of language teaching, respect of students and culture, strong relationship building skills, cultural knowledge, and strong pedagogical differentiation skills (de Jonge & Harper, 2005; Gandara & Santibanez, 2016; Loab, Solanda & Fox, 2014).

According to the research, teachers should be cognizant of the different needs, adaptations, and accommodations that are required in all classrooms for English language learning success. This may create perceived challenges for mainstream teachers that have no ESL or teachers of English second language (TESL) specialized-training (Freedson-Gonzalez et al., 2008). Research continues to suggest that pre-service and professional development must be a priority for all teachers as an effective practice.

The Levinasian theory gives a very different perspective on the importance of ELL and non-ELL interactions in this case study. In Biesta's (2003) article, *Learning from Levinas*, Biesta (2003) explained: "Levinas' theory involves an extensive exploration of the face-to-face relationship, and it opens up questions about social existence and justice" (p. 66). Levinas' (1989) framework may allow an examination of language barriers in terms of non-effective practices of bias and lack of training and support. Levinas' framework also connects to the relational barriers, which may be seen in student confidence and diverse student interaction. Ethical barriers may be evidenced in studies on teacher efficacy, social equity, and teacher perceptions.

These categories are reasonable for effective practices as well. Linguistic success can be connected to the sheltered instruction observational protocol (SIOP) (Hansen-Thomas, 2008). Favorable relational results have been measured utilizing ELL shadowing (Soto-Hinman, 2010). Finally, linguistically responsive teacher education (LRTE) allows for reflective teachers to be aware of cultural connections of their diverse learners (Freedson-Gonzalez et al., 2008). Thus, Levinas' paradigm is significant in the quest for exploring the perceived challenges of practice for teachers instructing ELLs.

Exploring the effective and ineffective practices of ELL teachers may identify the significance of the linguistic, relational, and ethical responsibility as delineated by Levinas (1989). His locus of concern was the ethical treatment of all people; thus, "duty and responsibility" (Case, 2015, pp. 365-366) that aids in establishing language-learning criteria. Levinas' (1989) theory differentiated between what is being said versus how it is said and "allows us to approach our neighbor and annul language barriers" (Case, 2015, p. 366).

Linguistic, relational, and ethical challenges create barriers, confusion, isolation, and alienation. Genesis 11:1-9 describes how difficulties were used by God to "confuse their language

so they will not understand each other.” However, Acts 2:1-13 described how people were not to remain in this state of confusion. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, the confusion of Babel has been reversed in that “all of them had the power to speak about Jesus in every language.” Using Levinas, Leviticus, and current research, ACSI teachers may be better equipped to overcome linguistic, relational, and ethical challenges they perceive with increasing ELL enrollment.

Summary

The literature review in Chapter Two revealed the significance of exploring the perceived challenges of practice for ACSI teachers who are experiencing an increase in ELLs in the Canadian Maritimes. This was attained through examining current statistical findings that revealed an increase in international student enrollment. A gap in the knowledge was revealed at ACSI schools in the Canadian Maritimes experiencing this phenomenon, as very little current research was found. Educational research in this area revealed challenges of practice with the similar phenomena experienced at public school counterparts worldwide as well as effective best practices. Adding the Levinasian framework of the Other allowed a connection to the social responsibility ACSI teachers have in demonstrating the vision and mission of ACSI schools. Relevant connections between the linguistic, relational, and ethical barriers posed by Levinas were discussed while examining effective and non-effective practices in ESL programming. The purpose of this study was to describe, explain, and give voice to the perceived challenges of practice for ACSI teachers in the Canadian Maritimes that have had little or no data to aid in this expression.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Overview

This chapter presented the research design, procedures, and analysis for this case study, which explored the perceived challenges of practice of K-12 ACSI teachers in the Canadian Maritimes that are facing increasing enrollment of ELLs. Details of the procedures, the role of the researcher, data collection, and data analysis are also included for further information regarding the methodology of the research. Chapter Three concludes with the trustworthiness of the study and the ethical considerations of the case study.

Design

This qualitative research utilized a single instrumental case study design to describe and explain (Yin, 2009) the perceived challenges of practice of ACSI teachers in the Canadian Maritimes due to increasing enrollment of ELLs. A single instrumental case study can be defined as “a study conducted to understand a specific issue” (Creswell, 2013, p. 98). The specific issue studied was the perceived challenges of practice of K-12 ACSI teachers in an increasing English language learning population in Canadian Maritime schools. Gall et al. (2007) defined case study research as “an in depth study of one or more phenomena in a real life context that reflects the perspectives of those involved” (p. 447). This approach was valid, as it brought voice to the challenges of practice of these educators that were explored while answering of the research questions.

By associating these perceived challenges of practice with the Levinasian framework, themes and patterns evolved from the thick description used in this holistic approach to studying this phenomenon. These perspectives or multiple realities (Stake, 1995) were explored through triangulated data collection: pre-interview journals, face-to-face semi-structured interviews, and

classroom observation. The data analysis from this type of triangulated data collection exposed, explained (Yin, 2009), and built bridges of conception (Stake, 1995) from the challenges of practice for ESL teachers and identified associations with the Levinas' framework. This data collection also allowed for increased internal validity as studied "conditions may lead to other conditions" (Yin, 2009, p. 40) and increased external validity, as Levinas' theory "defined domains that can be generalized" (Yin, 2009, p. 40) in future studies.

This research used a naturalistic setting, allowing for the highly personal research (Stake, 1995) of ACSI teachers experiencing a phenomenon bounded by a place (the Canadian Maritimes). As the data from this investigation explored and explained (Yin, 2009) the perceived challenges of practice for ACSI teachers bounded by increased enrollment of ELLs, I anticipated that interpreting the study's findings, utilizing Levinas' framework, explored the perceived linguistic, relational, and ethical challenges to overcome these evolving learning environments.

By using Merriam's (1998) qualitative case study characteristics as a guide, the exploration of a better understanding of the perceived challenges of practice filled the gap in the knowledge of ACSI Canadian Maritime teachers in an increasing ELL population. Using the particular event of the increased enrollment of ELLs in ACSI schools allowed for a "holistic view of the problem centered, small scale event" (Merriam, 1998, p. 29). Employing opportunities for thick description in the journals, interviews, and observation gave "rich description, elicit images, and analyze situations" (Merriam, 1998, p. 29) that ACSI teachers experienced with increasing numbers of ELLs. Finally, the study became heuristic and "illuminate(d) the reader's understanding of the phenomenon under the study" (Merriam, 1998, p. 30).

Research Questions

Central Question

What are the perceived challenges of practice that K-12 ACSI Maritime school teachers face due to increasing ELL enrollment, using Levinas' linguistic, ethical, and relational constructs of the Other?

Sub-questions

- (1) What are teacher's perceptions of effectiveness in teaching mixed language ability classes?
- (2) How do faculty perceive changes in teaching methods due to increasing enrollment of ELLs?
- (3) How do faculty identify linguistic barriers when teaching ELLs?
- (4) How do teachers perceive the relational needs of ELLs?
- (5) How do teachers perceive ethical challenges when interacting with an increasing number of ELLs?

Setting

The setting of the research was the Canadian Maritime ACSI schools. The schools had a combined K-12 enrollment of approximately 700 students for the 2016-2017 school year, as reported on each school's individual website. The research activities were completed in a three-month time period, from September 16, 2016 to December 21, 2016. These schools were part of the ACSI region that includes the Canadian Provinces of Prince Edward Island, coastal Nova Scotia, and coastal New Brunswick. Tourism, agriculture, and education are the main sources of income (Statistics Canada, 2014) for this area. These sites were chosen due to the national increase of ELL enrollment, the gap in the knowledge of ACSI ESL teacher training, the gap in the knowledge of ACSI mainstream ESL teacher training, and the lack of data on these schools.

By employing this holistic approach, an in-depth exploration of the phenomena of ACSI Canadian Maritime schools “examined the global nature” (Yin, 2009, p. 50) of the circumstances for ACSI schools in general. The ACSI schools were identified using pseudonyms.

Participants

There were approximately 158 full-time ACSI teachers in the Maritimes at the time of the study. I aimed for a sample of 12 teachers, including two teachers from each of the six different ACSI certified schools in the Canadian Maritimes. However, even though the study was endorsed by ACSI and highly recommended by Mark Kennedy, the ACSI Maritime representative at the 2017 ACSI Teacher Conference, three schools opted out of the study. One school was rethinking their ACSI affiliation and was in the process of becoming a private, international school in Fredericton, New Brunswick. One school had a limited number of ELLs, but did not have an ESL program. This school used an English-emersion program. It also did not make accommodations in content area classes for ELLs. Thus, it did not meet the sampling criteria. The third school was a small school with 88 students in kindergarten through grade 12 in Truro, Nova Scotia. The school had one ELL that was taking on-line courses only. This school reported that while they were hoping for more ELLs, they did not meet the sampling criteria at the time of the research.

The sample size was greatly reduced because half of the Maritime ACSI schools were no longer viable participants. At the time of the research, there were approximately 158 full time ACSI teachers in the Maritimes. The three remaining ACSI Canadian Maritimes schools would include only 57 full time teachers. Thus, the sample was comprised of six teachers. Participants from three of the six ACSI schools were selected purposively, as many considerations of participants were employed (Creswell, 2013). These considerations included the following:

number of years of ACSI employment, the number of mainstream classes teaching ELLs, number of ELLs at the school, and the ability to complete pre-interview journals. Once possible participants were identified, purposeful sampling was used to add credibility to the potentially large sample size (Creswell, 2013).

The target population needed to have been employed in their schools for at least three years to experience the increase in ELL enrollment. This purposeful sampling was “based on the assumption that the researcher wants to discover insight from those whom most can be learned” (Merriam, 1998, p. 61). Gall, Gall, and Borg (2010) explained; “the goal of purposeful sampling is to select cases that are information rich” (p. 178). Volunteer sampling or convenience sampling was employed to ensure that the participants’ were willing to partake in the research (Gall et al., 2010, p. 131). Participants were given pseudonyms to aid in anonymity.

Procedures

Obtaining the necessary approvals for the case study was key. The study was submitted to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Liberty University for approval. With coordination from ACSI, an emailed list of ACSI Maritime principals was contacted to attain permission for the study. Principals were asked for contact information of eligible ACSI teachers that taught ELLs. Recruitment emails were sent to prompt ACSI teacher participation in the study. This email included the explanation of the study and the Liberty University informed consent form. Teachers were asked to reply via email to help expedite the process.

Once the participants consented to the study using the required forms from Liberty University, data collection began. Data was collected through online pre-interview journals, which may have aided in the reflective tone of the study. Face-to-face, semi-structured participant interviews took place to answer the research questions. Finally, classroom observations were held

after the interviews to examine the perceived linguistic, relational, and ethical challenges in the actual classroom setting.

Instruments used in data collection for the study included: observation forms and guidelines, interview protocols and guidelines, pilot study criteria, recording devices, ATLAS.ti, and consent forms. The intent of using the procedure of reflection, interviewing, and observation combined with thick narrative analysis aided in the exploration of the challenges of practice for ACSI teachers in the Canadian Maritimes with increasing ELL enrollment. Additionally, using a variety of sources for data collection provided “corroborating evidence that sheds light on perspectives and themes” (Creswell, 2013, p. 251). These themes allowed the challenges of practice for ACSI Maritime teachers with increasing enrollment of ELLs to be explored.

Educational research on the significance of teacher reflection, perception, and self-efficacy is critical, as Farrell and Lim (2005) explained, “understanding teachers’ beliefs is essential to improving teaching practices and teacher education program” (p. 439). Thus, participants were asked to reflect on two pre-interview journal prompts via email. The first prompt asked teachers how they perceived their classes have changed linguistically, relationally, and ethically over the past three years with an increase of ELLs. The second prompt asked teachers to reflect on some of the perceived challenges they have linguistically, relationally, and ethically encountered in the past three years with an increase of ELLs.

Face-to-face, semi-structured interviews were also conducted. These interviews included open-ended interview questions that discussed perceived challenges of practice. The interview questions were guided by the research questions and sub-questions. These questions were defined as a conversation, but they were “conversations with a main purpose” (Merriam, 1998, p. 71); the intent was to explore the challenges of practice for ACSI Maritime teachers of ELLs with increased

enrollment. Interviews were scheduled for 30-60 minutes and were digitally recorded by two devices. They were conducted face-to-face. Transcription was completed within a one-week period of the completed interview. Member-checking took place via email, and the transcripts were member-checked by participants. Participants were asked for edits, accuracy, and approval. Participants replied with agreement of accuracy via email.

However, to ensure the validity and reliability of the interview questions, an interview guide was utilized to aid in the focus of the questioning and the order in which questions will be scaffolded (Gall et al., 2007, p. 251). Also to ensure validity and reliability, a pilot test of the interview took place in September 16, 2016; this allowed interview questions to be free from bias and ambiguity. The pilot interview “alerted the researcher to communication problems” (Gall et al., 2007, p. 253). These problems could have created threat to the study. The pilot study was conducted at the local Boston Pizza near the researcher’s home. The participant of the test pilot study was selected using the same purposeful sampling criteria as the study.

Post-interview observations took place to examine the discussed perceived challenges of practice in the realistic setting of the classroom. Observation is one of the key tools in collecting data, as it allowed the researcher to “use all five senses while noting the phenomenon in a real life setting” (Creswell, 2013, p. 166). For this study, I was a non-participant observer who recorded data through the use of field notes. Observational protocol was attained through the use of T-charts as suggested by Creswell (2013). The T-charts documented descriptive notes on the left side of the chart with reflective notes on the right.

Observation protocol was also achieved using four observation forms from the professional growth portfolio created by Liberty University alumni, Jason Biech. Consent to use these protocols was given in September 2017 by Biech after IRB approval was received. Four forms were used for

the observations. These forms were intentionally chosen because they examined the three Lervinas constructs of relational, ethical, and linguistic interactions of teachers and students (see Appendices B through E). Appendix A is a form called teacher as a person. A teacher as a person form was used to examine the relational aspect of the teacher (see Appendix A). The observation included the examination of caring, fair, respectful, enthusiastic, motivational, and reflective interactions with students. The Classroom Interactions Analysis was used to analyze the relational and ethical aspects of the participant, as it examined the number of times the class engaged in interactions (see Appendix D). The interactions were observed as teacher and students engaged with one another. This form showed the number of minutes the students and teachers interacted with ELLs.

The instructional skills checklist (see Appendix C) and the implementing instruction checklist (see Appendix E) were used to examine the linguistic, instructional practices employed by the participants. The instruction skills checklist was specifically used to identify the instructional skills of preparation, motivation, instruction sequencing, reinforcement, student engagement, and differentiation. This form was used while observing ELLs only in content area classes. The implementing instruction checklist was used to determine how the participants effectively implemented instruction for ELLs in content area classes. This included the observation of instructional strategies, content expectations, linguistic complexity, intentional questioning techniques, and student engagement. The observations took place during one full class session, which was determined by each individual ACSI school participating in the study.

Data was analyzed according to its themes as determined using ATLAS.ti. Patterns of key words in rich descriptive text were analyzed to give voice to the challenges of practice for the participants of the study. As previously stated, transcription took place one week after the interview to better remember comments and body language and to also allow for accurate member-checking.

Glatthorn and Joyner (2005) suggested “tentatively identifying and testing categories of responses with in the first hour of the interviews” (p. 195) to reduce the amount of raw data that may be collected. ATLAS.ti assisted in the identification, tallying and displaying of coded responses and themes. After the data was analyzed, a detailed explanation of the data was presented.

The Researcher's Role

My role as a case study researcher was a complex one. I did not just collect the data. This qualitative case study examined and gave voice to many perspectives that I as an international student coordinator might not agree. It was my intention that my passion for mission-driven education for international students did not create a bias that permeated the study. I also may have had a bias in regard to the weaknesses English as a second language (ESL) programs can have in ACSI schools. However, I understood that my role as researcher must be free from bias, as the study added valuable information to the existing body of knowledge (Yin, 2009). Creswell (2013) also warned researchers to “rely as much as possible on the participant perceptions” (p. 20). Thus, I conducted myself with the utmost level of integrity as I endeavored to capture the many perspectives presented in this research. As I utilized pre-interview journal prompts, semi-structured interviews, and post-interview observations in a natural setting, I achieved an intense description that needed to be analyzed and translated. To insure the integrity of the data, methods to trustworthiness and validity were incorporated into the study.

Jones’ (2013) video lecture challenged researchers to use many lenses when exploring a phenomenon, as does Stake’s (1995) description of the role of the researcher, allowing a clear understanding of the integral role I played exploring and giving voice to the ACSI teacher phenomenon. As a “teacher, advocate, evaluator, biographer, theorist, interpreter, constructivist, and relativist” (Stake, 1995, p. 111), I needed to go back to the participants and check for clarity

of ideas and perspectives. This allowed for the voice of the ACSI teacher to be better expressed.

Data Collection

Data collection did not commence before IRB approval had been attained. Data collection from multiple sources of evidence added credibility (Creswell, 2013) and convergence of evidence (Yin, 2009). The study had three sources of data: pre-interview on-line journals, semi-structured face-to-face interview, and classroom observations. The triangulation of the data collection allowed for the examination and exploration of the perceived challenges of practice for ACSI Maritime teachers with increasing ELL enrollment.

Pre-Interview On-line Journal Prompt

Data collection began with pre-interview journals online, which was available on-line via email, one week before the participant's face-to-face interview. This prompt aided the participants by reflecting on the challenges of practice they encountered in the past. Journal prompts "help capture the living story" (Creswell, 2013, p. 161) that ACSI teachers had encountered in the past. The prompt asked the participants to explain some of the challenges they had linguistically, relationally, and ethically encountered in the past three years while educating ELLs. This journal prompt began to get the participants thinking about the Levinasian constructs that were the focal point of the open-ended interview questions.

Semi-Structured Interviews

According to Yin (2009), one of the most important sources of information is the interview. By using semi-structured interviews, a perception of the participant's story may be captured. Using the seven steps of interviewing, as suggested by Creswell (2013), allowed for validity and reliability of the interview process through a systematic procedure of inquiry. This study used face-to-face, semi-structured interviews with teachers who have ELLs in their content

area classes at the teacher's ACSI Maritime school. Open-ended questions were used to discuss perceived challenges and examples of linguistic, relational, and ethical challenges over the last three years. These questions "follow a line of inquiry" (Yin, 2009, p. 106) based on the challenges of practice for these educators, with an intentional emphasis on the Levinasian constructs. These questions began with a broad view of possible challenges and narrowed down to the specific challenges linguistically, relationally, and ethically as posed by Levinas. Teachers responses were recorded on an iPad or iPhone 5s. The open-ended interview questions were as follows:

- (1) What are your most common challenges of practice linguistically as an ACSI teacher with increasing ELLs in your classes?
- (2) How do you assess for linguistic barriers in your mixed language skills classroom?
- (3) What accommodations and adaptations do you make for your ELLs to make language more accessible?
- (4) What are the most common challenges of practice you experience relationally as an ACSI teacher with increasing ELLs in your classes?
- (5) How do you interact with your ELLs outside of your classes?
- (6) What strategies do you use to foster relationships within your content area classes with students that have mixed language abilities?
- (7) What ethical challenges have you experienced with stakeholders in your school as ELLs increase?
- (8) How do you proactively deter ethical challenges in your content area classes?
- (9) How do linguistic, relational, or ethical barriers in your classroom prevent you from successful educational outcomes?
- (10) What are the strengths of your ESL program as the ELL population increases?

(11) What are the weaknesses of your ESL program as the ELL population increases?

The method of semi-structured interviews allowed for the collection of “verbal and nonverbal data” (Gall et al., 2010, p. 134). This was an important measure when discussing challenges of practice. The focus of the study examined the perceived challenges of practice linguistically, relationally, and ethically. The intentional wording of the interview questions was easily observed. Questions one, two, and three explored an unbiased line of inquiry about the perceived linguistic challenges by using “how and what” questions as suggested by Yin (2009). Questions four, five, and six explored the relational barriers that are not only tied to the theoretical framework (Levinas, 1981), but to the academic success of ELLs also (Joldersma, 2008). Questions seven and eight explored the perceived ethical challenges of these educators. The final three questions ascertained facts as well as opinions. These questions represented the emic and etic perspectives that were significant in revealing the perceived challenges of ACSI teachers with increasing ELL enrollment. Participants reflected on their own classroom (internal perspectives) and ESL programming (external perspectives). This line of intentional questioning added thick description that “re-create situations, add meaning, and intentions inherent to the situations” (Gall et al., 2007, p. 451) for ACSI Maritime teachers.

Post-interview Classroom Observations

After the semi-structured interviews took place, post-interview classroom observations, which explored the perceived linguistic, relational, and ethical challenges of practice, were conducted during scheduled times. These observations confirmed the perceived challenges of practice discovered in the interviews. These observations also allowed for real-life setting analysis to take place. Additionally, Creswell (2013) suggested that the researcher uses all five senses to experience the phenomenon. Field notes, transcription, and member-checking were

employed as tools for this data collection.

Observation forms were utilized to record possible challenges of practice. This type of direct observation allowed for the examination of the perceived challenges of practice and the actual challenges as evidenced by the real classroom observation. Gall et al. (2010) suggested that direct observation revealed more accurate data, because behaviors can be examined as the events of the day take place instead of in retrospect.

Intentional connections to the theoretical framework were seen as the data collected from the observational forms (see Appendices B, C, D, and E) examined the linguistic, relational, and ethical challenges found in the classroom, as described in the procedures. These forms coupled with the observations allowed me to explore the teacher as a person (see Appendix B), examine the relational and ethical nuances of the teacher, analyze the instructional skills of the teacher (see Appendices C and E), reveal accommodations, modifications, and strategies that the content area teacher employed when working with ELLs, examine the interactions and relationships evidenced with students and teachers in the classroom (see Appendix D), and reveal the ethical treatment of students by way of measuring teacher-student interaction.

Data Analysis

I analyzed the data from the collection methods as discussed. This created opportunities to narrate the bounded phenomenon of ACSI teachers in the Canadian Maritimes with increasing ELL enrollment and explain it more thoroughly using the Levinas (1989) constructs. The multiple sources in the data collection aided in exploring the desired thick description of the challenges of practice of ACSI Maritime teachers, intentionally connected the theory of ethics as first philosophy to the data, and gave credence to the findings and conclusion (Yin, 2009).

Ensuring the replication of the study was necessary for the validity and trustworthiness of

the study. To do so, each source of data was analyzed separately and in differing ways. The heart of the analysis was to “cite relevant evidence” (Yin, 2009, p. 122). This evidence was stored in the case study database by electronic, encrypted storage methods. Data was stored in Dropbox, Google Drive, and the Liberty University Dissertation Portal. Evidence was captured utilizing electronic pdf documentation as well.

Following each semi-structured interview, the researcher personally transcribed the recorded interviews within 24 hours of the interview. Within one week, the transcriptions were submitted to the participant to review for accuracy (Stake, 1995). This allowed for member-checking. Member checking was employed to alleviate researcher bias (Creswell, 2013). Participants responded to member-checks, either electronically or with a hard copy, and agreed to the accuracy of the transcripts.

Once member checking was completed, coded data and direct interpretation provided clear understanding of the explored phenomena, according to Stake (1995). Using multiple sources added complexity to the analysis. Thus, once the data collection was completed at each individual participating site, data analysis began using the ATLAS.ti student software to explore themes within the data. These themes were achieved by using the predetermined codes that were part of Levinas’ (1989) vernacular when explaining ethics as first philosophy. Chapter Four includes further discussion about the themes discovered through this study. The ATLAS.ti software website offered “state-of-the-art analysis for maximum efficiency, accuracy, and performance” (ATLAS.ti, n.d.) as a working definition of the software analysis. Using this type of technology gave credence to the data analysis, leaving little room for human error in coding and theme development. Yin (2009) suggested that theme development was a powerful practice in case study research. Theme identification allowed for conception bridges that Stake (1995)

suggested.

Additionally, content analysis (Gall et al., 2010) led to the themes which developed and exposed relevant associations within the Levinas (1989) constructs. Codes were analyzed and classified into general themes (Yin, 2009) using the student edition of ATLAS.ti. The software allowed for the creation of data tables that were recorded in the results of this study and the identification of themes within the phenomena. The databases were categorized to create the clarity of themes in the research. These “meaningful units contain information that is comprehensible even if read outside the context in which it is embedded” (Gall et al., 2007, p. 466). This resulted in rich description, notable connections to the theoretical framework, and intertwined interpretation analysis of the essence of the perceived challenges of practice for ACSI teachers with increasing ELLs and the Levinas (1989) constructs.

Observational data analysis included: “descriptive, reflective, detailed, and concrete” (Gall et al., 2007, pp. 280-281) field notes that utilized the forms found in Appendices B through E. Summarizing and reflecting on the field notes took place within 24 hours of the physical observation. Reading, re-reading, and memoing of the field notes took place to immerse the researcher into the details and story of each participant (Creswell, 2013), as did the coding process for the ATLAS.ti analysis.

Trustworthiness

Using multiple sources of evidence allowed a way of creating trustworthiness within a qualitative case study (Creswell, 2013; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2009). Trustworthiness could be seen through the credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability of the study (Creswell, 2013; Gall et al, 2010; Yin, 2009). I was concerned with the trustworthiness of the study. The quality of the data allowed those interpreting the research to find its worth. Trustworthiness

allowed the truth to be discovered in measurable and valid ways.

Credibility

Credibility is defined as “authentic, accurate, truthful, and coherent findings in a qualitative study” (Conrad & Serlin, 2006, p. 412). The credibility of the study was evidenced by the internal validity of the triangulated collection of multiple sources including document review, pre-interview journal prompts, semi-structured interviews, and post-interview observations. These various sources not only preserved the multiple realities (Stake, 1995) explored in the study but also created a secure environment. Internal validity was observed in the study by prolonged engagement with the study; this was encountered as the study employed constant comparative analysis while utilizing ATLAS.ti as a proactive means of, as Yin (2009) suggested, identifying evidence as the study progresses. As data was gathered, the researcher translated, input, and member-checked the data. This was another way credibility was added to the study. Credibility was maintained throughout the study as the proposed member-checking, peer review, and briefing took place. These methods adhered to the IRB mandates of informed consent, which also built trust within the study.

Dependability

Another principle of building trustworthiness in a qualitative study was observed in the dependability of the study; dependable, reliable data will yield the same results. Multiple sources of data and triangulation aided in this as did a tangible audit trail. A detailed audit trail was created and time-stamped in Google Docs, which also insured the dependability within the study. Finally, secure measures in data storage were taken into consideration, as an encrypted Dropbox and Google Drive established trustworthiness in data storage, as recommended by Yin

(2009). Creswell (2013) discussed the word verification when discussing dependability. The study utilized dependable methods which can be verified, thus making the study trustworthy.

Transferability

Transferability was attained by a rich descriptive narrative (Yin, 2009) which can be applicable to other groups. The intentional use of multiple sources of data collection from purposefully sampled participants created trustworthiness, as does the “minimizing of misrepresentation and misunderstandings” (Conrad & Serlin, 2006, p. 412). This was achieved by the use of sampling protocols, detailed recorded steps, standard observational forms, and IRB protocols.

Confirmability

Conformability is defined as “data that can be confirmed by someone other than the researcher” (Conrad & Serlin, 2006, p. 417). I utilized member-checks and triangulation and identified atypical and typical data using ATLAS.ti, and I was cognizant of rival conclusions and kept clear data records for an audit trail. These measures ensured a neutral and unbiased view of the study that allowed for verification from others outside the study.

Ethical Considerations

Due to the significance of the study and the sensitive nature of participant perceptions, ethical considerations were taken into consideration. Confidentiality was increased with the use of pseudonyms throughout the study. The security of data was also significant, as email correspondence was password protected and encrypted in Dropbox and Google Drives. This created secure data. Informed consent was also received and kept secure (Creswell, 2013).

Summary

Chapter Three provided the methodology of this single instrumental case study. These procedures allowed the study to be more reliable and trustworthy. The setting, participants, and data collection revealed a purposeful design that described and explained (Yin, 2009) the perceived challenges of practice of ACSI teachers in the Canadian Maritimes experiencing increased ELL enrollment, using the linguistic, relational, and ethical constructs of Levinas' (1989) ethics as first philosophy.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

Chapter Four reported the data of the perceived challenges of practice from the perspective of the participants. The research findings are presented in three categories. These categories were delineated by the Levinas' ethics as first philosophy (Levinas, 1989) and quantifies as the linguistic, ethical, and relational constructs. It was initially hypothesized that Levinas' theory aided in the explaining of the ethical, relational, and linguistic challenges teachers may experience while teaching ELLs. Thus, the central research question guiding this case study was, what are the perceived challenges of practice K-12 ACSI Maritime school teachers face due to increasing ELL enrollment? A rich and thick description emerged from the pre-interview journal reflections, semi-structured interviews, and observation notes of the participants that reported perceived challenges linguistically, ethically, and relationally.

Chapter Four presented the findings from each research question and explained the rationale behind the coding process using ATLAS.ti for pattern matching and predominant theme exposure throughout the narrative of the participants. Data that included outliers was discussed in addition to connections to the theoretical argument to Levinas' constructs. The chapter concluded with a summary of the findings.

Participants

Each participant was purposefully sampled from ACSI Maritime schools in Canada. Participants met the sampling criteria of three or more years of employment in their ACSI school, teaching ELLs in their mainstream classes, having had the ability to complete the pre-interview journal prompts, and the ability to member-check the transcripts of their interview. Pseudonyms were used to ensure the confidentiality of the participants. While six ACSI schools

were asked to participate in the study in October 2016, only three schools were viable candidates. It was reported that one school did not have any ELLs, one school did not have full-time teachers that were employed more than three years, and one school did not wish to participate, even though they met the criteria. This change is explained in great length in Chapter three under the heading of Participants. The three remaining schools yielded six participants for the case study, and all the participants were generous with their time and insight..

Mr. Smith-Alpha Christian Academy

Mr. Smith participated at Alpha Christian Academy (ACA) on September 24, 2016. An iPhone 5s recording was used in addition to transcribed interviews and field notes. Mr. Smith has been in Christian education for 24 years and is currently working on his master's degree in education. He was a pleasant gentleman and very outgoing. He looked about 40 years old. Mr. Smith was exceptionally proud of his school in regard to the ELL growth, as evidenced by many quotes like: "there has been a positive change over the years" and "our staff has come a long way in a short time." He noticed an increase in ELLs in his content area classes over the last four years. His main content area is history, where he teaches grades seven through 12. Many of his classes have several levels of ELLs. Mr. Smith has worked diligently to add successful strategies to aid his ELLs. He explained this in his interview saying, "Depending on the ELLs' language level, I use word boxes, pre-vocabulary, translators, give notes ahead of time, supply instructions written in native language, intentional pair shares or groupings with higher level ESL students, and the use of their technology to take pictures of instructions." This was confirmed in his observation. He holds a TOESL certificate, is a part of the ESL after-school tutoring program, and has enjoyed working with the ESL summer program at his school for the last two years. In regard to the summer program, Mr. Smith explained, "I am accessible before and after school, as well as, take

part in the ESL Summer program. I enjoy learning about culture and want to know more about my students.”

Mrs. Doe-Alpha Christian Academy

Mrs. Doe also participated at Alpha Christian Academy on Sept. 27, 2016. An iPhone 5s recording was used in addition to transcribed field notes. Mrs. Doe has been teaching elementary science classes at ACA for three years; she is also the lead grades five and six teacher. She looks to be in her late 30s. She noted that she has three daughters in the school she works at. She has seen the increase in ESL students and has four levels of ESL students this year in her content area classes. Her classes have been “capped” with ELLs for the last two years, as they have met the maximum number of ELLs per class. Mrs. Doe has worked diligently to collaborate with the ESL department in her school to meet the needs of her ELLs stating: “accessibility to the ESL department experts to answer questions and support is one less thing I need to worry about.” Mrs. Doe is also the Fund Development Coordinator for the school and meets with various stakeholders when fulfilling this role; this would include parents of ELLs, newcomer parents, and school board members. She noted in her interview that she hears concerns from the stakeholders; “some parents are questioning their intentions for choosing ACA as a Christ-centered education environment with so many students that have no concept of who Jesus is. This makes some parents...uncomfortable.”

Ms. Brown-Beta Christian Academy

Beta Christian Academy had three participants interview October 20, 2016. Mrs. Brown met with me, and I used iPhone 5s recording in addition to transcribed field notes. Mrs. Brown was interviewed during a break-out session of the 2016 ACSI Maritime Teachers’ Convention. She is a passionate Christian educator that has worked 10 years in the field of education. She has spent

two years in the public school sector and eight years in the ACSI Christian school in which she is currently employed. She teaches grade seven math and grades seven through 12 Science. She seemed to be a very comfortable, confident, and outgoing 40-year-old woman. She was keen to share many self-reflective thoughts, such as: “I now understand that (the content area) science is a whole different language unto itself. A student may have basic conversation skills, but have no connection to the language that I use in science.” This was confirmed in her observation. “I create barriers myself because I use what I think is a common vocabulary, which may not be so common to my ESL students.” She has seen an increase of ELLs in her content area classes over the last several years and is committed to adding more learning strategies for her ELLs.

Mrs. Green-Beta Christian Academy

Mrs. Green, also from Beta Christian Academy, was interviewed on Oct. 20, 2016, during break-out session of the 2016 ACSI Maritime Teachers’ Convention. An iPhone 5s recording was used in addition to transcribed field notes. She is a passionate Christian educator that has worked 20 years in the field of education at the ACSI Christian school she is employed at currently. She teaches grades five and six in addition to math and science. Mrs. Green was about 40 years old and was more quiet and cautious in her responses than the other participants. She has seen an increase of ELLs in her content area classes over the last several years and realizes the importance of modeling to these learners in math and science saying: “I always allow extra time, extra explanation, word banks, multiple choice, and chances to redo work when I see they (ELLs) misunderstood the assignment.” Mrs. Green was observed on 11/2/2016 and was very caring and compassionate as she worked one-on-one with a struggling ELL in her math class. It was noticed that she sacrificed her preparatory period to aid this student.

Ms. Hart-Beta Christian Academy

Ms. Hart from Beta Academy was also interviewed on October 20 during break-out session of the 2016 ACSI Maritime Teachers' Convention. An iPhone 5s recording was used in addition to transcribed field notes. She is a passionate Christian educator that has worked three years in the field of education at the ACSI Christian school at which she is currently employed. She is the ESL specialist at her school and acts as support for content area teachers. Her role as support allows her to stay in content area classes with students, in addition to taking students from their classes for more one-on-one support. She was hired due to the increase of ELLs in content area classes over the last three years at her school. Ms. Hart was the youngest participant at 22 years old. She was energetic and was a natural encourager of her students. Her desire for success for her learners was apparent as she explained: "I spend a lot of lunchtime observing and interacting with my students. We learn a lot about each other as we incorporate food and fun at lunchtime. Plus, I support them afterschool during their sports. I am rooting for them. I want them to know I want them to succeed." Ms. Hart was excited about the changes for teachers and students alike as she discussed the challenges of practice for her growing school.

Mrs. Jones-Gamma Christian Academy

Gamma Christian Academy was the final site for research. Mrs. Jones was interviewed using an iPhone 5s in addition to transcribed field notes. This school has 110 students in preschool through grade 12. It has two English language camps, one in the winter and one in the summer, that educate ELLs from China and Korea. Mrs. Jones was interviewed on December 7, 2016. She has worked 10 years in the field of education at the ACSI Christian school where she is currently employed in New Brunswick. She has taught kindergarten and high school electives, but since the increase of ELLs in her school, she has now become the ESL director and sole support

staff of content area classes. She seemed to be the oldest participant of the study, possibly in her late 50's. She works in content area classes and with students one-on-one. This was confirmed in her observation. Mrs. Jones also writes the curriculum for the ELLs in the school, collaborates with teachers in writing accommodations, and aids with the homestay process. She is devoted to the success of her ELLs, but seemed the most cognizant of all the participants of the challenges these learners bring as she explained, "I am working harder to make sure students understand expectations, directions and lessons. Yet, I also see students polarize with relationships and the challenges of meeting all the expectations that come with foreign students."

Results

The purpose of this section was to explain the results of the case study, which gave voice to the perceived challenges of practice for ACSI teachers in the Canadian Maritimes experiencing an increase in ELLs. This included an in-depth examination of the pilot study interview, identification of the codes, pre-journal interview analysis, interview analysis, and observation analysis. Figures as well as theme development that was generated by ATLAS.ti is also included. An explanation of connections to the theoretical framework is included. This section concludes with a summary of the chapter.

Pilot Study Interview with Mrs. Smith

Upon receiving IRB approval from Liberty University, letters of permission were emailed to the Maritime Christian schools and permission was granted by principal to begin the pilot study and interviews at Grace Christian School immediately. Recruitment emails were sent to the pre-screened teacher on September 16, 2016, as suggested by the principal, and Mrs. Smith was chosen as the pilot study teacher. The pilot study was conducted to clarify the pre-interview reflection questions and the open-ended interview questions.

The pilot study was conducted on September 21, 2016 at Boston Pizza in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. The intent of the pilot was to “refine the interview questions and procedures” (Creswell, 2013, p. 165). The interview was recorded on an iPhone5 and transcribed by me. Mrs. Smith met the criteria of a participant in the study, as she had three years’ experience in an ACSI Maritime Christian school, had seen an increase of ELLs in her grades one and two classes content area classes, and had the capabilities to complete the pre-interview journals. She was 38 years old at the time of the study.

During the last three years, Mrs. Smith has worked with over 15 different ELLs; in her class this year, she has four levels of ESL. These students are supported by an ESL teacher every day for 50 minutes when they leave for ESL class during mainstream language arts. However, she continues to meet the needs of these learners in her math, social studies, Bible, reading, and music classes. She has worked hard collaborating with the ESL department in recent years to aid her ELLs. However, a conflict of interest may be interpreted, as I was Mrs. Smith’s first year teaching mentor; thus, Mrs. Smith was used as the pilot study participant.

The pilot revealed the necessity of clarifying some of the questions in the study. For instance, Mrs. Smith was able to answer the pre-interview journal prompts; however, she felt that “clarification of the numbers of years in question in prompt number one would clarify the question better.” Pre-journal prompt question one was then changed to: “Reflect on how your content area classes have changed linguistically, relationally, and ethically over the past three years with an increase of ELLs. Give an example if you can.” This change reflected the pilot test response.

Mrs. Smith hesitated when answering four questions that needed clarification before she could answer them. She felt “having the definitions of linguistic, relational, and ethical in the

interview questions would be helpful,” as well as “clarifying who the stakeholders were in question 5a.” These comments were noted and her recommendations were used in the case study.

Identification of Codes

As an author, Levinas’ (1989) word choice when describing his relational and ethical constructs gave a clear format for choosing the codes that would be utilized by ATLAS.ti. Perpzak et al. (2008) explained, “Levinas gave new descriptions of being, interest, sensibility, language, ethics” (p.xi). These new descriptions were seen over and over in Levinas’ translated texts: *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*, *Existence or Existents*, *Meaning and Sense*, *The Transcendence of Words*, and *Totality and Infinity*. Using Levinas as a guide for the narrative codes allowed for a strict coherence to the theoretical themes that emerged.

Thus, relational codes were created from Levinas’ (1989) own works: “polarization, segregation opportunities to engage, comfortable culturally, time & availability, and the need for encouragement” as seen in the works mentioned above. Levinas contended that “the act of social-relations is fulfilled by the expression of self and the act of hearing” (Hand, 1994, p.144). These words, along with their synonyms from Dictionary.com, were entered into ATLAS.ti as the codes for relational, perceived challenges. These codes allowed for the essence of the relational- perceived challenges of practice to be conveyed by the participant.

A similar procedure was used for the ethical codes. Levinas (1996) discussed in his philosophical writing, *Meaning & Sense* “morality does not belong to a culture” (p. 57). Levinas (1964) reiterated the abolishment of expectations and for “humans to gaze at each other as humans disengaged from all culture” (p. 58). Ethical themes emerged as the codes: teacher expectations, local parent expectations, ELL expectations, cultural ignorance, fair and equal

accommodations, and the need for resources were used in the data analysis.

The final delineation of the linguistic codes came about using Levinas and his 1949 essay, *Les Temps Modernes*. This essay was translated in 1981 by Fata Morgana. It was titled, *The Transcendence of Words*. Levinas (1949) wrote, “The act of expression and the things expressed are never correlative, as noesis and noema (the act of give and take), but goes beyond anything that can be measured in terms of thought content” (Hand, 1994, p. 145) Levinas (1949) went on to explain the importance of words, “The presence of the Other teaches us something, this is why the word, as a form of education. The use of the word wrenches experiences out of its aesthetic self-sufficiency” (Hand, 1994, p. 148). This allowed for the examination of the importance of linguistics within the theoretical framework. The pre-existing codes from Levinas consisted of unable to understand, clarifying, language needs, and language challenges.

Other codes were added to examine the essence of the linguistic-perceived challenge from the best practices discussed by public school educators, as evidenced in Chapter Two. These codes were time for collaboration, heighten anxiety, unwillingness to participate, unable to comprehend, differentiation, and accommodations. These codes were used to analyze the data from the pre-interview journals and member-checked interview transcripts.

Pre-Interview Journal Analysis

The results were broken into two parts for ATLAS.ti analysis. ATLAS.ti was the preferred method of computer data analysis for several reasons. First, I was familiar with the software; it was introduced at Liberty University during an intensive course and I was intrigued enough to learn the software before the data analysis portion of the process. Plus, ATLAS.ti was, as Bloomberg and Volpe (2008) explained, “useful in mechanically organizing data and performing pattern matching” (p. 95). ATLAS.ti made deconstructing all the data into the

intentional categories of the Levinas' (1989) framework more manageable since the codes were already prescribed by the Levinas' theory. Finally, since I have dyslexia, ATLAS.ti made reading and rereading the text less arduous, as codes and patterns were highlighted and easier to find within the transcripts.

The first set of data I examined was the pre-interview journals that were submitted by all the participants upon email receipt. It should be noted that all the participants emailed their journals as indicated by the case study instructions before the interview except for Mrs. Jones. Mrs. Jones did, however, have a hard copy of her journal before the interview took place. The analysis of this journal was completed before Mrs. Jones' interview. This researcher examined and coded the pre-interview journal prompts. This included scanning Mrs. Jones' document, setting and defining codes, plus choosing the documents to be analyzed.

The pre-interview, journal documents were added into ATLAS.ti using the code titles, identifying, code color, and the criteria of the codes (see Table 1). These documents were the actual reflections submitted by the participants via email. There were no amendments or edits made to the original, journal reflections that were submitted.

Table 1 displays the ATLAS.ti code categories which used the code words described above in the code identification. It also displayed the coding color used in the software and the code criteria. The code criteria were taken from the literature review in Chapter Two which allowed the "matching of prior defined specific variables" (Yin, 2009, p. 137). Ethical challenges were defined as barriers created due to cultural misunderstanding and prejudice that affect the beliefs and judgments of the teacher (Case, 2015; Delpit, 2006). Linguistic challenges were defined as barriers of misunderstanding caused by limited language skills and language acquisition between the student and teacher (Allen, 2010). Relational challenges were defined as barriers of

misunderstanding in that community effecting friendships, mentorship, and relationships between all stakeholders in the learning environment (Delpit, 2006; Kottler & Kottler, 2002). This criterion was intentionally chosen to connect to the Levinas constructs of relational, ethical, and linguistic theoretical framework.

Table 1

Initial ATLAS.ti Codes Delineated into the Levinas Constructs of Relational, Ethical, and Linguistic Challenges

| ATLAS.ti Themes | ATLAS.ti Color | Criteria |
|-----------------------|----------------|--|
| Relational Challenges | Light Gray | Perceived barriers of misunderstanding in community affecting friendships, mentorship, and relationships between all stakeholders in the learning environment. |
| Ethical Challenges | Gray | Perceived barriers due to cultural misunderstanding and prejudice that affect the beliefs and judgments of the teacher. |
| Linguistic Challenges | Dark Gray | Perceived barriers of misunderstanding caused by limited language skills and language acquisition between the student and teacher. |

Theme Development

As the intentional coding began to add “insight to the phenomenon” (Creswell, 2013, p.189), distinct themes began to merge and aid in the explanation of the phenomenon of perceived challenges of practice with ELLs. ATLAS.ti separated the data by participants’ pre-interview journal responses by codes into the themes of ethical, relational, and linguistic

challenges. This was evidenced as participants reflected on relational, ethical, and linguistic challenges in the pre-interview journals as seen in Figure 1.

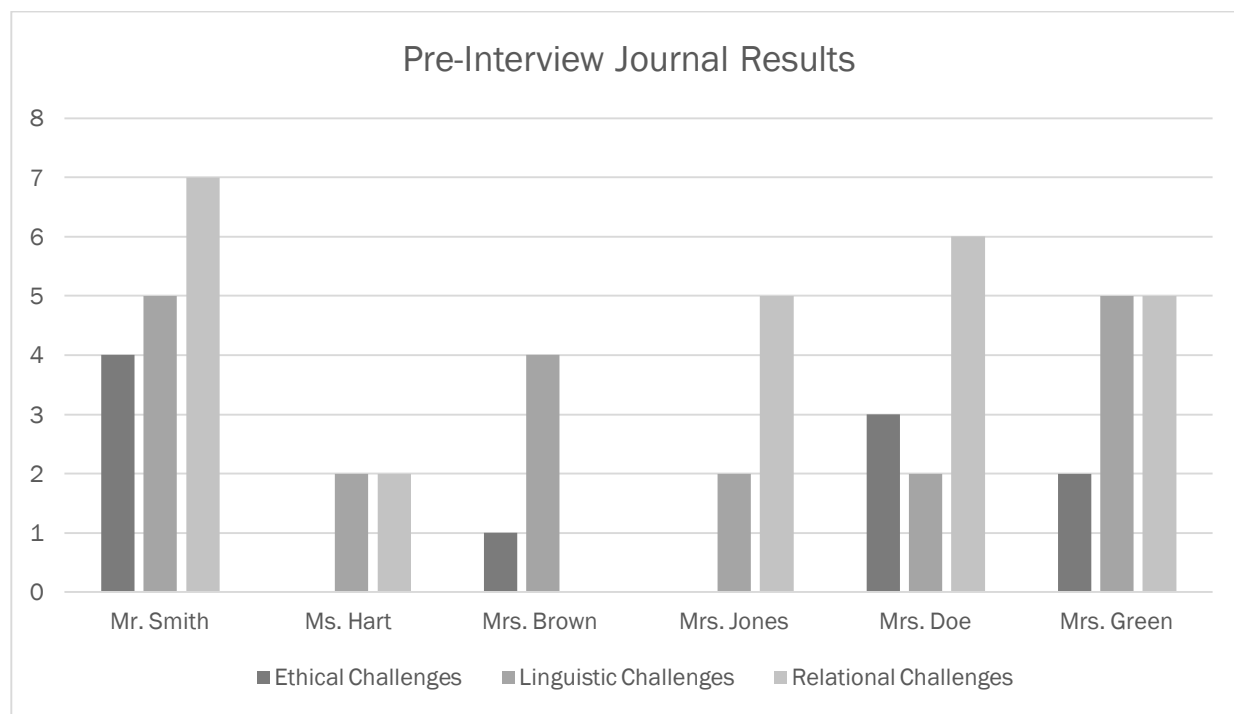


Figure 1. Pre-Interview Journal Comparison of Themes

Figure 1 indicates the number of times each participant reflected on the three themes in their pre-interview journal responses. It can be observed that when the participants were asked to reflect on the challenges in the context of Levinas' constructs, all teachers were able to add input. Mrs. Green said, "There have been a few difficulties I have noticed during the last few years. Students don't always come with translated report cards, so we are unable to fully understand at what level they should be working. It is difficult to communicate." This was confirmed in her observation.

Mr. Smith added, "The greatest challenge that I have faced with the increase of ELLs is linguistically - adopting curriculum to reflect modification and accommodation at four different

ELL levels.” Ms. Hart explained, “There have been some changes to our school as more and more international students come along. Sometimes it is difficult to remember to keep checking in with kids or to know exactly how you should accommodate (them).” Mrs. Brown stated, “Science is the class in which I observe the most challenges linguistically, relationally, and ethically.” Mrs. Jones wrote, “I think that all three of these principles are joined together as a challenge because of my own expectations.”

Figure 1 communicates how participants began to give voice to their perceptions of the challenges of practice with great insight into their individual experiences. The pre-interview journals allowed the participants to be reflective of the strengths and weaknesses of their individual pedagogy. Mrs. Doe expressed her challenges by journaling, “The above-mentioned changes have significantly challenged me to reflect on my teaching practices and to ask myself how I can best meet the needs of every learner inside my classroom.” Figure 1 evidences that the theoretical framework and the intentional connection of the three themes of ethical, relational, and linguistic challenges were a viable solution to giving voice to the perceived challenges of practice for ACSI Maritime teachers with increasing ELLs.

Observation Analysis

After the semi-structured interviews, the participants agreed to classroom observations. The observations examined the participants for 20-40 minutes in their content area classes teaching ELLs during instructional time using the observation “snapshot” forms found in Appendix B through E. The rationale for the use of the observation forms was included in Chapter Three. Rich, descriptive field notes were taken during the observation cycle. Using the researcher as a “non-participant observer” (Creswell, 2013, p. 167), revealed the challenges that were discussed in the pre-interview journals and interview in the learning environments with the ELLs. Documented

observations of the perceived challenges were included in the narrative of the interview analysis, as the researcher documented when a discussed perceived challenge of practice was observed.

These observations emphasized the challenges of practice expressed during the interview process, which allowed the researcher to confirm perceived challenges and best practices that were discussed in the interview stage. The observation cycle was instrumental to the research, as it verified that the perceived challenges of practice were evident within the classroom. By observing the phenomenon in the field, the researcher gained a greater sense of the perceived relational, ethical, and linguistic challenges that were encountered by the participants. As teachers identified their perceived challenges through journal reflections and interview discussions, the observations gave more evidence that ACSI teachers were challenged by the phenomenon of increasing ELLs. The observations are further examined in the interview analysis and in the analysis of the themes.

Interview Analysis

The first step in analyzing the results of the perceived challenges of practice semi-structured face-to-face interviews was to read, analyze, and decode the member-checked transcripts. Memoing was employed on the field notes and observation sheets. By using Levinas' (1989) framework, I looked for details with a more specific purpose. Yin (2009) explained, "A theoretical orientation guides the case study analysis" (p. 130). By separating the data in into Lavinias' (1989) three categories, I "focused attention on certain data and discounted others" (Yin, 2009, p. 130). It became less challenging to separate the data for coding the interview transcripts using ATLAS.ti. This process included the code titles, identifying code color, and each corresponding theme.

Within this process, I coded the transcripts, as described in the code analysis in Chapter Three, and then ATLAS.ti calculated the occurrences that each code appeared within each

interview transcript. The coding process consisted of attaching each member-checked transcript to ATLAS.ti, then reading and re-reading the transcripts to identify the correct codes to the prescribed words, as discussed in code analysis. Clear delineation of the themes began to emerge as interviews were broken down into the three constructs. Figures 2, 3, and 4 depict the three themes of relational, ethical, and linguistic challenges that were identified by each data source (pre-interview journals and interview transcripts) and display the percentage of times that codes were denoted in the analysis by participants. The exposed themes found within Levinas' (1989) constructs became relevant as the "prior defined specific variables" (Yin, 2009, p. 137) became apparent.

Relational Challenges Analysis

The participants were able to discuss perceived challenges of practice in the three constructs posed by Levinas. These themes were evident as ATLAS.ti categorized the codes into themes from Levinas' (1989) works. The researcher explored the connection of the interview responses to the predetermined relational codes: polarization, segregation, opportunities to engage, comfortable with cultures, time & availability, and need for encouragement. Synonyms were also part of the analysis. These consisted of alone, separation, participate, included, and embrace. The antonyms of "leave out" and "omit" were also included as part of the relational codes.

Participants expressed relational challenges in their interviews. Mr. Smith was concerned that "all students feel comfortable culturally with each other. To have students genuinely want to reach out to each other or to engage each other in conversation." This was confirmed in his observation on 11/11/2016. Mrs. Brown was very excited about answering this question. There was no hesitation as she stated, "Our school understands that this is not just about the academics

and we are a very multicultural school. Our smaller class sizes allow us to be relational with all our students.” This was confirmed in her observation on 11/2/2016. Mrs. Doe expressed concern saying,

It becomes problematic when the ELLs are sticking together on the playground, but I am not sure what happens beyond the classroom. As a teacher, I am still figuring out how to push my students at the right time, but also to try to put myself in their shoes.

Mrs. Green smiled and laughed as she reflected and remembered circumstances that reflected this, “Our kids think it is cool to embrace something new. Our school is a very diverse environment where students feel very comfortable with each other, so ESL kids make connections easily.” Ms. Hart stated, “I allow for conversations...we are talking to build self-esteem and relationships.”

Figure 2 shows that most participants spent about 15% of their interview discussing relational challenges. However, Mrs. Jones expressed far greater perceived challenges in the category with over 20% of her responses connected to relational challenges. Mrs. Jones plays a stronger role in the relationships of her ELLs, so this might have contributed to the higher number of relational codes. Mrs. Jones is the ESL one-on-one aid, ESL coordinator as well as the content area aid for the ACSI school she works in. She also writes the curriculum for the ELLs in the school, collaborates with teachers in writing accommodations, and aids with the homestay process. It is evident that the many roles Mrs. Jones has with the ELLs affects the relational aspect of her perceived challenges of practice (see Figure 2). As she stated in her interview, “I know these kids as the director of the program. I know their homestays, I know their parents, I know them. I know a bit more about them.”

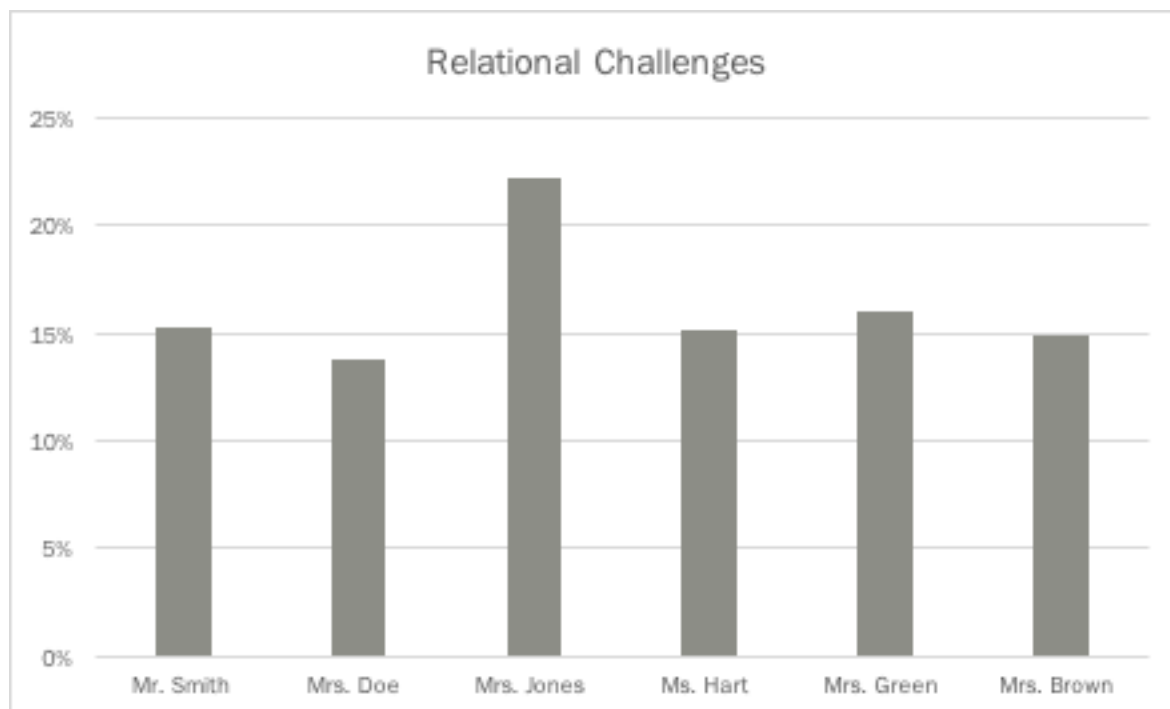


Figure 2. Relational Challenge Analysis

Ethical Challenge Analysis

As the deconstructing of data continued, ethical challenges of practice were also explored by the participants. Using the same coding process as described in the interview analysis, the transcripts were examined for codes using the words teacher expectations, student expectations, stakeholder expectations, ELL expectations, cultural ignorance, fair and equal, accommodations, and the needs of others. Codes that emerged from synonyms of Levinas' (1989) works included assumptions, bias, prejudice, stereotypes, intolerance, and discrimination. This coding led to the distinct identification of the theme of ethical-perceived challenges of practice.

Mr. Smith had a lot of input on this perceived challenge commenting, "Unfortunately, I would say there are about 30%-40% parents opposed to the international student growth in our school. I have heard and I quote: " 'we are letting so many internationals in the school that they are stealing all the top awards away from the native students.' " Mrs. Brown explained, "I think the

biggest challenge is having so many cultural differences that we may not even realize.” Mrs. Doe also realized ethical challenges: “Some parents are questioning their intentions for choosing our school as a Christ-centered education with so many students that have no concept of who Jesus is. This makes some parents...uncomfortable.” Mrs. Green spoke about the challenge of cultural differences saying, “I think the biggest challenge is to not understand the culture as I try to communicate. I try to respect their culture.” Mrs. Jones pondered the question:

Ummm, I would not say this is a problem here, because it is not different with any other new students. They are not treated differently because they are from somewhere else...they are just new. It takes a while for both sides to get comfortable.

Ms. Hart was more confident in her answer and stated,

Students will tell me about rude or derogatory comments...which our administrator helps with and makes students aware of the disrespect. I also think we are aware of cliques more than ever and are careful to guide classes away from excluding students.

Figure 3 includes the comparison of perceived ethical challenges by participant. The ethical challenges analysis revealed a large gap between the responses of the participants. ATLAS.ti revealed that Mrs. Jones spent only 12% of her interview explaining her perceived ethical challenges. Mr. Smith and Mrs. Doe were well over 20% in their ethical challenge responses. It should be noted that Mrs. Doe is the fund developer for her school; a role that meets with many more stakeholders. She commented on more stakeholder expectations than any other participant. It can be also noted that Mr. Smith was the participant with the most years employed at his ACSI school. He reported to be at his school for over 22 years. Thus, he was the participant that had experienced the most change with ELLs than other participants.

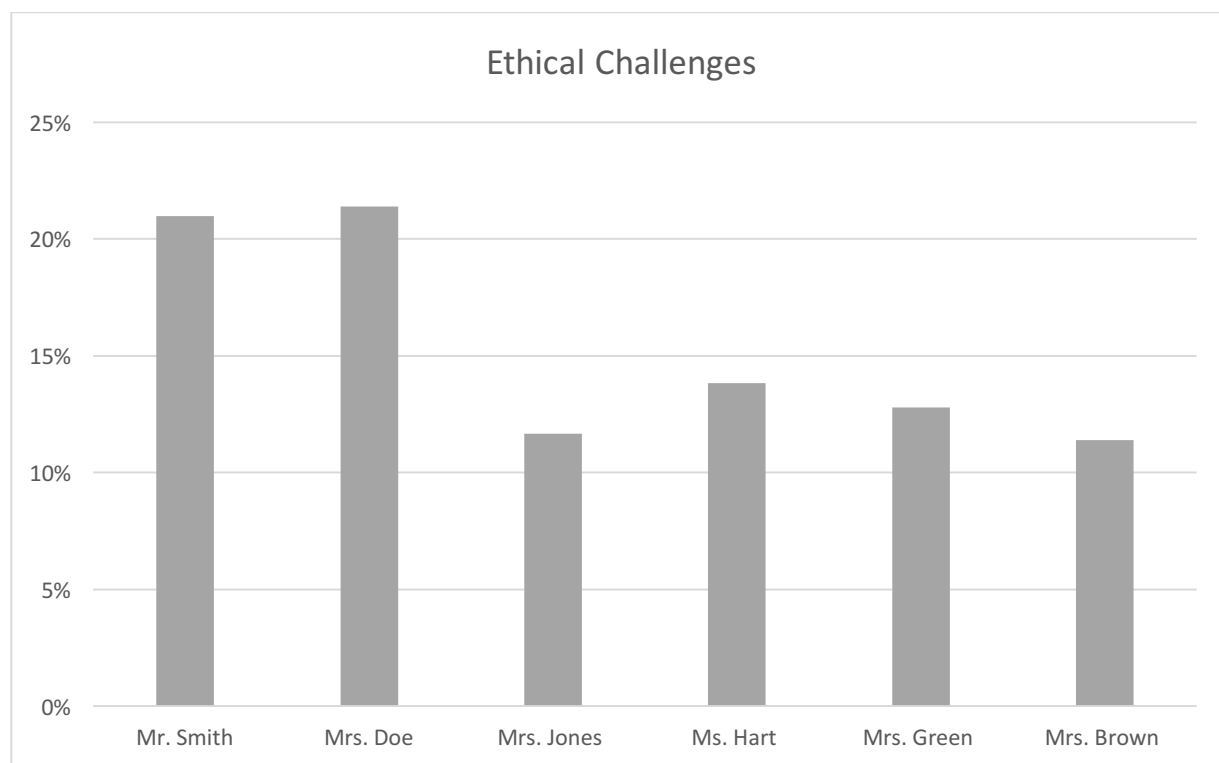


Figure 3. Ethical Challenge Analysis

Linguistic Challenge Analysis

The final theme analysis addressed the linguistic themes that emerged from the predetermined codes that came from the Levinas (1989) theoretical framework. Codes were identified using the words unable to comprehend/understand, clarifying, and language needs/challenges. Synonyms were also used in the coding process. These included understand, grasp, fathom, decipher, interpret, and translate. The use of these codes easily allowed the theme of linguistic challenges to be identified.

Participants supplied much information when reflecting on perceived linguistic challenges. Mr. Smith explained, “To effectively distinguish between the many levels of ELLs. To have an understanding of the levels of learners in my class and accommodate them in clarifying

content, quizzes and projects.” Mrs. Brown explained that there were many linguistic challenges in her content area.

I now understand that (the content area of) science is a whole different language unto itself. A student may have basic conversation skills, but have no connection to the language that I use in science. I create barriers myself because I use what I think is a common vocabulary, which may not be so common to my ESL students.

Mrs. Doe said, “With the increased number of Chinese students, more students are tempted to speak Mandarin.” This was confirmed in her observation. Mrs. Green replied, “I realize that the language of math is fine, most learners struggle in science. I make sure that I do not teach ‘just in my language,’ but I need to clarify instructions more and clarify in many different ways as I check for understanding.” This was confirmed in her observation. Mrs. Jones added, “We have a huge entry point of students in grade 9 and 10 entering our school for English language training. We need to support and get our students ready for classes in grade 11 and 12.” Ms. Hart explained, “Teachers understanding the needs of the students and just how limited their language skills are. Some teachers may not understand that some students may listen and nod and really not understand anything being said.”

Linguistic challenges were discussed at great length during the interview process as indicated by Figure 4. At least 20% of the interview responses were about these types of challenges. Mrs. Green scored the lowest in the analysis with 20% of her interview involved the discussion of linguistic challenges. However, it was noted that Mrs. Green is a math and science teacher and commented during her interview that math and science is like its own language. Mrs. Jones used 33% of her interview to discuss linguistic challenges in her growing ELL population.

Four participants were identified as using 25% of their interview to discuss their linguistic perceived challenges of practice with increasing ELLs.

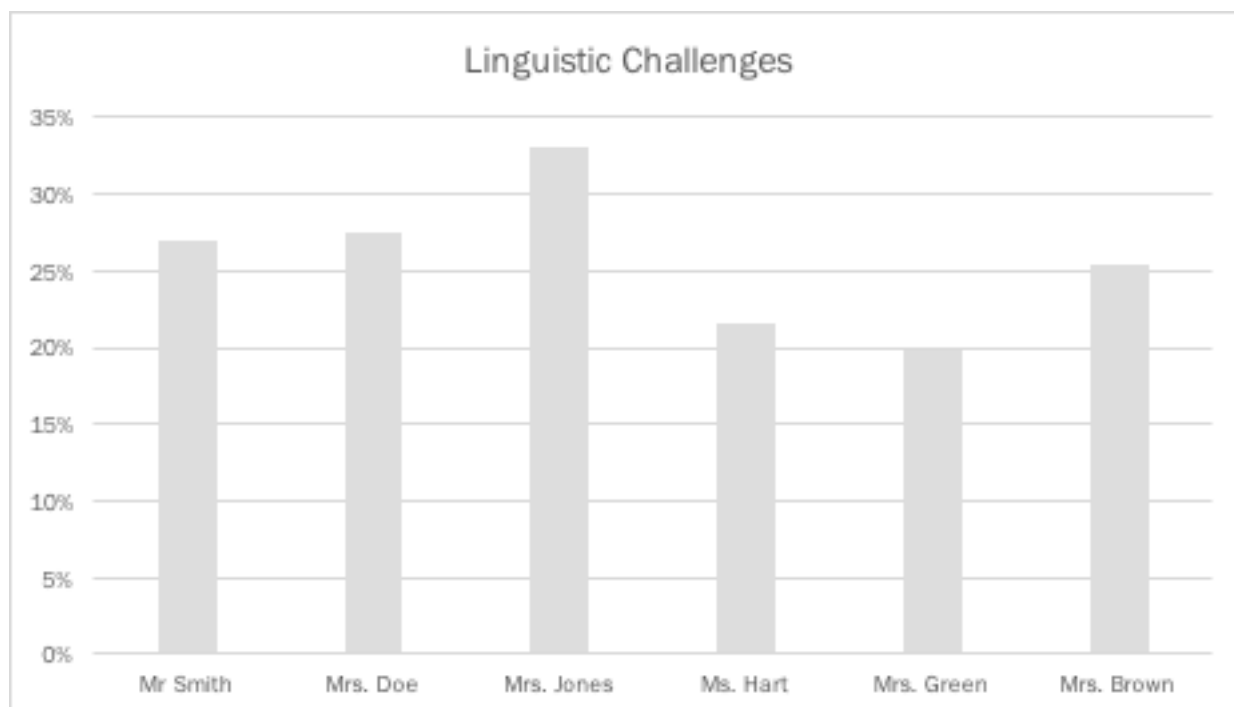


Figure 4. Linguistic Challenge Analysis

Best Practice Analysis

Next, I analyzed the data for best practices as discussed in Chapter Two. These best practices were identified by the research of public school systems with an increasing ELL population over the last 10 years. Table 2 shows the previous code titles, identifying code color, and the criteria of the codes. Plus, the addition of the best practice category. These definitions were assigned prior to the data collection allowing for continued relevant theme development. Codes were created from the words: collaboration, anxiety, differentiation, and accommodations. It should be noted that I identified specific discussions about accommodations and the type of accommodations the teachers used as part of the analysis.

Table 2

Amended Code Listing

| ATLAS.ti Code | ATLAS.ti Color | Criteria |
|-----------------------|----------------|---|
| Relational Challenges | Light Gray | Perceived barriers of misunderstanding in community affecting friendships, mentorship, and relationships between all stakeholders in the learning environment. |
| Ethical Challenges | Gray | Perceived barriers due to cultural misunderstanding and prejudice that affect the beliefs and judgments of the teacher. |
| Linguistic Challenges | Dark Gray | Perceived barriers of misunderstanding caused by limited language skills and language acquisition between the student and teacher. |
| Noted Best Practices | Light Blue | Most studies of late investigated best practices that call for methods that increase student confidence (Telbis et al., 2014), create social equity (Case, 2015; de Souza, 2012), allow for more interaction of students (Cummins, 2011; Karanja, 2007; Popadiuk, 2010), and increase self-examination of teacher efficacy (DeLozier, 2014; Greenfield, 2013; Peacock, 2001). |

The words increase of student confidence, social equity, interaction of students, and self-examination (reflection) of teacher efficacy were also entered as codes. These best practices were discussed in Chapter Two. It was noted that while participants discussed perceived

challenges of practice, they also reflected on best practices and solutions to the perceived challenges, as evidenced by Figure 5.

Figure 5 displays how many best practice responses ACSI teachers discussed while expressing their perceived challenges of practice. Mr. Smith discussed many best practices, such as,

I use word boxes, pre-vocabulary, translators, give notes ahead of time, instructions written in native language, intentional pair shares or groupings with higher level ESL students. I will also alter expectations on projects or give shorter assignments when I know translations must be done first.

He also explained that he was more self-aware and reflective because of the growing ELL population in his school.

I am more aware of all the different learners in my classroom. This has been a positive change over the years, as I become aware of how the students struggle to understand. I feel great empathy...it must be exhausting (for the students).

Mrs. Brown discussed,

I model a lot now I use a lot of visuals. I see each student and train myself to prepare more to meet their needs. I have purposeful intentional seating in my classes. These challenges do not prevent me from being successful. They make us work harder. They make us collaborate more.

Mrs. Doe observed,

International 21st century education has propelled ACA to change and be more collaborative. I also allow for more time on assignments, check for understanding and clarify assignments. In the areas of history and science, I model as much as possible with

visuals. In math my students attempt word-problems. I use pre-vocabulary for final projects in science and history. Intentional grouping is also important.

Mrs. Green said,

There are a lot of intentional strategies that I use. I try to make study notes available ahead of time. I collaborate more and more with the ESL specialist. I realize that numbers are numbers, but spend more time explaining and clarifying instructions. I also know not to use cursive writing and that printing clearly is important to these learners. I really do use more printouts and model lessons more.

Mrs. Jones explained that the smaller classes sizes allowed for many best practices at her school.

We modify assignments, we give notes early, our students don't take notes but are given pre-printed notes ahead of time to look for new vocabulary. They have access to extra support during classes when needed and afterschool, to review if they need help with clarification. Students will work on the same literature packs with an easier reading version of the same work that other students are working on and we will make the accommodation for each individual student based on their needs.

Ms. Hart added a number of best practices:

I have seen a real increase in pre-vocabulary, a greater use of visuals, more PowerPoints and handouts. We are using more types of teaching strategies than just speaking or lecturing. I use more modeling and examples in my lessons. Plus, I am always reviewing. I use end-of-day review, building and reviewing. I make modifications on tests and quizzes so students can be successful. We do read out-louds visuals with questions to check for understanding.

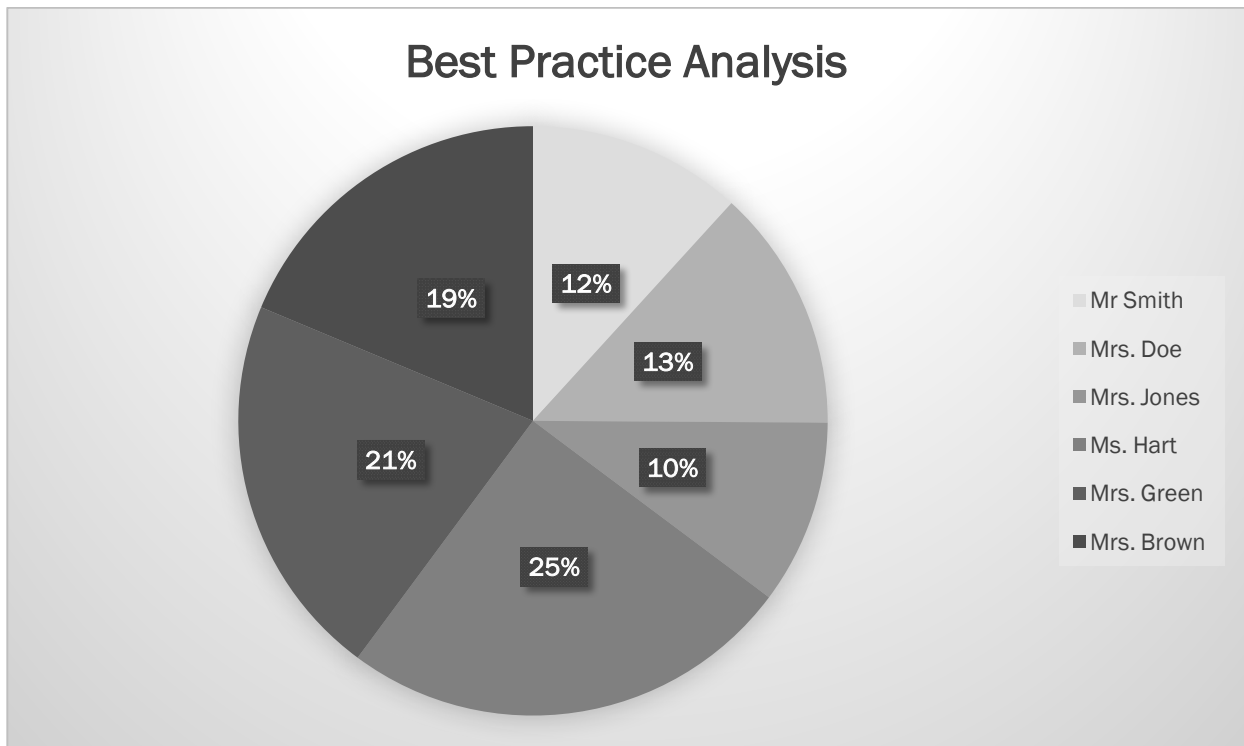


Figure 5. Best Practice Analysis

Best Practice Analysis by Themes

The data not only revealed perceived challenges of practice, but clear connections to identified best practices. I decided to deconstruct the data into best practices delineated into Levinas' (1989) themes. The data process analysis included the code titles, code colors, and criteria of the codes, as seen in Table 3, which explored the possible pattern matches of Levinas' (1989) constructs of relational, ethical, and linguistic challenges.

Table 3

Best Practice Code Listings with Themes

| ATLAS.ti Themes | ATLAS.ti Color | Criteria |
|--------------------------|----------------|--|
| Relational Challenges | Light Gray | Perceived barriers of misunderstanding in community affecting friendships, mentorship, and relationships between all stakeholders in the learning environment. |
| Ethical Challenges | Gray | Perceived barriers due to cultural misunderstanding and prejudice that affect the beliefs and judgments of the teacher. |
| Linguistic Challenges | Dark Gray | Perceived barriers of misunderstanding caused by limited language skills and language acquisition between the student and teacher. |
| Relational Best Practice | Purple | This smart code was designed to explore the correlation between perceived relational challenges of practice and noted best practice comments |
| Ethical Best Practice | Green | This smart code was designed to explore the correlation between perceived ethical challenges of practice and noted best practice comments. |
| Linguistic Best Practice | Turquoise | This smart code was designed to explore the correlation between perceived linguistic challenges of practice and noted best practice comments. |

This assisted in the explanation of best practices being employed by teachers while discussing perceived challenges of practice for ACSI Maritime teachers with increasing ELLs. Creswell (2009) argued, “comparing empirical based patterns (from ATLAS.ti) with the predicted patterns (the Levinas constructs) was a desirable technique” (p.136). It was a technique that yielded positive results for this case study, as further analysis revealed the data could be separated into Levinas’ (1989) constructs as depicted in Figures 6, 7, and 8 for best practices in addition to the challenges discussed by the participants.

Relational Best Practices

Figure 6 revealed that four out of the six participants were able to discuss relational best practices in 15% of their interviews or journal prompt reflections. Mrs. Green and Mrs. Hart had 20% of their responses reflect on best, relational practices. This can be seen as Mrs. Green elaborated on math and science best practices she employed in her classes. “I make sure that I do not teach “just in my language” but I need to clarify instructions more and clarify in many different ways as I check for understanding.” She also discussed the strength of her ESL program as one that has, “Better support, communication and collaboration with our ESL specialist.”

Ms. Hart also clarified many best practices, “Checking for understanding for me is not just a grade. I ask, clarify, model, point, and have students use other students for translation. We all work hard to make sure real understanding is taking place.” She also discussed the intentional, best practices she sees schoolwide; “There is an increase in pre-vocabulary, a greater use of visuals, and more power points and hand-outs. We are using more types of teaching strategies than just speaking or lectures.” She finished her interview with a few more best practices, “I use more modeling and examples in my lessons. I make modifications on tests and quizzes so students can be successful.”



Figure 6. Relational Noted Best Practices

Ethical Best Practices

Figure 7 revealed that four out of the six participants discussed ethical, best practices 14% of the time in their interviews or journal, prompt reflections. Mr. Smith and Ms. Hart revealed 22% of their responses as ethical, best practices. Mr. Smith discussed at great length the importance of expectations and meeting the needs of every stakeholder. He attributes positive changes in his teaching pedagogy to, “Intentional grouping, current events and cultural news that fosters good discussions; Positive feedback and discussion, diversity in learners, great professional development, cultural exposure, and mission-driven opportunities” (Smith, personal communication, September, 24 2016).

Ms. Hart also discussed ethical, best practices in her October, 2016 interview stating, “I don’t allow the “hierarchy of students; the belief that no student is better than another. I am very aware of who hangs out with who, and I make sure there is no hateful or negative comments”

(Hart, personal communication, October 20, 2016). She also points out the importance of unity as a best practice, “We are all committed to working together and collaborating. We all work hard to do our best to improve as we get more students, but not every teacher is communicating well, and I see the effects of this on the ELLs and the international community” (Hart, personal communication, October 20, 2016).



Figure 7. Ethical Noted Best Practices.

Linguistic Best Practices

Figure 8 revealed linguistic best practices. Teacher responses varied. Mr. Smith identified 12% linguistic best practice codes and Mrs. Brown identified at 20% linguistic best practice codes. However, it was exposed that all ACSI teachers were able to discuss best practices while reflecting on perceived challenges of practice. This allowed me to understand the positive teaching methods that were being employed while teachers still struggled to meet the needs of their ELLs.

This was revealed by comments found in the interview transcripts and pre-interview journals. For example, in his pre-interview journal Mr. Smith reflected,

The greatest challenge that I have faced linguistically is adopting curriculum to reflect modification and accommodation at four different ELL levels. However, this allows me to help lower level ELL with supports such as word boxes for quizzes and tests, oral examinations or shorten written expectations. I also have learned to utilize email in preparing students for class by allowing them access to notes and assignments before the class. I have also developed Pre-vocabulary lists which students can translate and define and then translate definitions back to English.

All of these best practices were revealed by public school teacher research found in Chapter Two.

Mrs. Green reflected on her best practices in her pre-interview journal,

I use printed notes and print on the board when needed. I always allow extra time, extra explanation, word banks, multiple choice and chances to redo work when I see they misunderstood the assignment. I ask for feedback verbally to see if the student understands. I always try to check for understanding.

Miss Hart was more detailed in her best practice methods:

I have been fine tuning the accommodations I need to make for ELLs as the year goes on. I make sure that I not only explain things orally, but I have them written down and check with him frequently to make sure he is understanding what is going on. They are also the only students in the class who are allowed a word bank on test and does less questions than other students. On projects they are marked on the content and not the length and is required to hand in a draft to go over conventions. The accommodations on projects and

tests do make me wonder if it is fair for to the other kids because they are required to do less, but sometimes fair is not equal.



Figure 8. Linguistic Noted Best Practices.

Positive Comment Outlier

Many challenges of practices were identified in the interview analysis as well as noted best practices that were aligned with public, school research. It was also noticed that the participants used many positive comments during the interviews. When a challenge was identified, participants were happy to describe teaching strategies that enhanced ESL programming and yielded ELL success. This category was also added into coding analysis since they did not meet the prior coding criteria. Table 4 includes the added code titles, identifying code color, and the definitions or criteria of the codes.

Table 4

Positive Comment Pattern Matching Code

| ATLAS.ti Theme | ATLAS.ti Color | Criteria |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Positive Comments | Pink | Positive comments that were shared instead of perceived challenges. Words identified as positive include: successful, celebrate, enjoy, committed, support, communication, individualized programs, and student engagement. |

The codes were identified as positive word choice that I easily identified. These codes included successful, celebrate, enjoy, committed, support, best attitude, communication, individualized programs, and student engagement. The analysis yielded, as seen in Figure 9, that all teachers had positive comments as well as challenges when reflecting about ELLs in their content area classes. Even though perceived challenges of practice was the focus of the study, data exposed that 4%-13% of the participant's responses were positive comments in their pre-journal reflections and interviews.

Mr. Smith was cheerful during his entire interview. "I enjoy learning about culture and want to know more about my students," he shared. He added at the end of the interview that "the challenges of practice do not deter my pedagogy, but rather I think I am more successful." Mrs. Brown explained, "Communication with other teachers and striving to improve more and more is a strength. There is more support now... thanks to Drew (the ESL specialist)." She added, "I notice things about my students and enjoy learning about them." Mrs. Doe said, "I am a huge fan of my students and this year these barriers do not deter me; I work hard to have the best attitude, if I was not aware of these challenges then I would not be as intentional I am with these learners." Mrs.

Green discussed, “These challenges do not create barriers, but make me work harder and collaborate more and I try to prepare more.” She also explained another positive aspect, “better support, communication and collaboration with our ESL specialist.” Mrs. Jones reported, “Our staff is very good at checking for understanding, and they are very good at communicating the support the student’s needs.” Ms. Hart replied, “I think we work hard so that we don’t allow challenges to prevent barriers.”

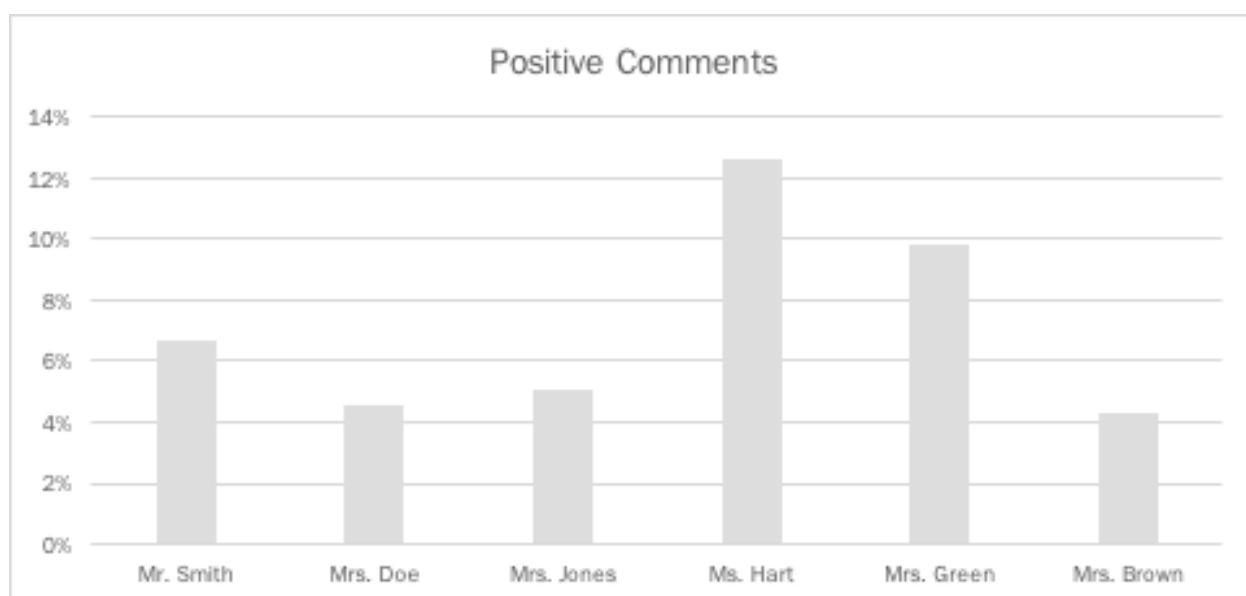


Figure 9. Positive Comment Analysis.

Comparative Analysis

The final analysis with ATLAS.ti combined all the data to explore the percentages of responses per interviews and pre-interview journals that could be categorized by the Levinas (1989) constructs using that same codes and ATLAS.ti pattern matching. Figure 10 revealed a comprehensive view of the data. The empirical data or the narrative confirmed that the Levinas (1989) theory of ethics as first philosophy is a viable theory in explaining the perceived challenges

of practice faced by ACSI Maritime teachers due to increasing ELL enrollment. This was seen as the themes of the case study emerged through the analysis of the central question guiding the study. This analysis allowed me to explain each participant's various perceived challenges of practice due to the increase of ELLs in their content area classes as well as best practices based on themes and positive comments. This was so effective that I identified the greatest challenges of the participants and the least challenging themes, as seen below in Figure 10.

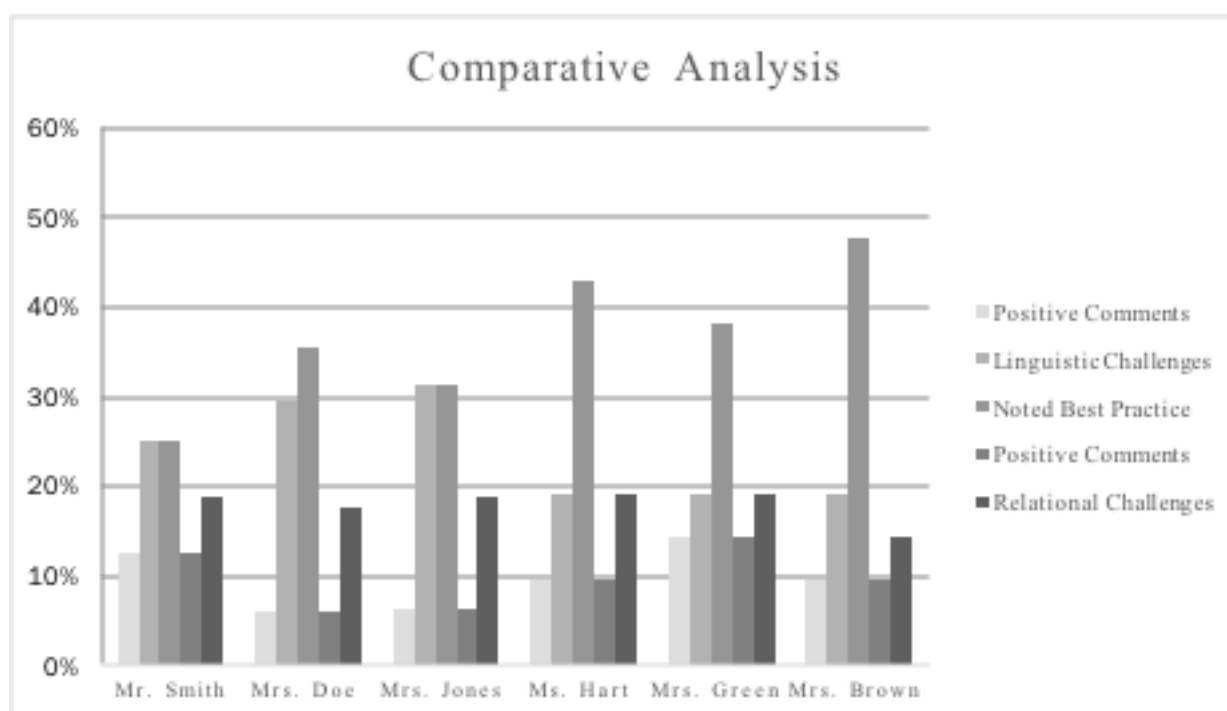


Figure 10. Comparative Analysis

The research revealed that Mr. Smith's greatest perceived challenge with his ELLs was linguistic (25%); the data also examined the best practices discussed were linguistic (25%). Mrs. Doe's data revealed perceived challenges linguistically (29%) but she discussed many best practices used in her classroom (35%). Mrs. Jones' comparison analysis revealed 31% linguistic challenges,

but also discussed 31% best practices. While Ms. Hart was very reflective about linguistic best practices responding 43% of the time. As was Mrs. Brown who reflected 48% on linguistic best practices. It can be noted that Mrs. Jones and Mrs. Doe had the lowest amount of positive comments identified, with 6%. The many ways to interpret this data is explained in Chapter Five.

Research Question Responses

Using case study research allowed the perceived challenges of practice of Canadian Maritime ACSI teachers to be voiced. Yin (2009) explained, “case study research allows the investigator to retain holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events” (p. 4). This was evidenced in the responses of the research questions and the analysis of the data. Once again, the use of Levinas’ (1989) framework in the creation of the research questions allowed teachers to intentionally discuss the themes that emerged from the data analysis.

Central question answered. When answering the central question, “what are the perceived challenges of practice that K-12 ACSI Maritime school teachers face due to increasing ELL enrollment, using Levinas’ linguistic, ethical, and relational constructs of the Other,” every participant was able to discuss or reflect on real-life instances that affected their teaching practice, relationships with stakeholders, and ideas of ethical behaviors in their learning environments. The responses to this question were delineated in the theme development. The empirical data indicated that teachers did indeed experience challenges of practice relationally, ethically, and linguistically, as displayed in Figure 10.

This data captured the essence of the phenomenon as teachers wrote, reflected, and described their experiences with a growing ELL population. Mr. Smith reflected in his pre-interview journal,

Over the past three years, I have seen a tremendous increase in ELL students in all content areas. Many of these students arrive with limited to moderate English language skills. I have worked to modify and accommodate the language and relational skills needed to have students make meaningful contributions to our classrooms.

Mrs. Green was able to explain in her pre-interview journal,

I am more aware of cultural differences and try to understand their behavior and actions.

EAL students tend to interact with each other and don't feel as comfortable with the rest of the class. I try to make them interact more with the English students. The English students love having new students in class and don't seem to notice any differences. It is amazing how students can communicate with each other without using language.

Mrs. Brown elaborated as well:

Relationally I have observed that an ELL student is ready and willing to work with numbers, and I almost observe a relaxed composure. I often check in with the student and read questions out loud for them to make sure that they understand what is being asked. This is not a change. The area of change is the linguistic challenge of word problems - which are often omitted, read aloud, or during an assignment or test I write a simplified version of the word problem, or explain it to them.

Mrs. Jones added,

I have seen a change in our small school in all three of these areas. I no longer take for granted that students understand what I am saying or teaching in English. I am working harder to make sure students understand, expectations, directions, and lessons. I also see students polarize with relationships. Students seem to be more comfortable with other students with the same language or culture.

Sub-questions Answered.

Sub-question one. Participants had an optimistic outlook when answering the first sub-question, “What are your perceptions of your effectiveness in teaching mixed language ability classes?” While teachers had definite opinions about their effectiveness teaching the increasing number of ELLs, if they felt they had a weakness, they were intentional in reflecting upon it and finding ways to improve it. They were also able to give instances of best practices when addressing their effectiveness with a mixed, language, ability class.

Mr. Smith discussed,

I think I am more successful in my classroom now than ever. I am aware of all the different learners in my classroom. This has been a positive change over the years, as I become aware of how the students struggle to understand in my learning environment.

Mrs. Brown responded, “These challenges do not prevent me from being successful. They make us work harder. They make us collaborate more.” Mrs. Doe also explained, “This year these barriers do not deter me – I work hard to have the best attitude – if I was not aware of these challenges then I would not be as intentional I am with these learners.”

Sub-question two. Sub-question two asked, “How do faculty perceive changes in teaching methods due to increasing enrollment of ELLs?” This question was answered with great candor, as participants expressed the challenges of teaching many different levels of ELLs and the need to change pedagogy for these learners in order to be successful. Strategies for accommodations and differentiation was shared by the participants, as well.

Mr. Smith expressed,

The greatest challenge that I have faced linguistically is adopting curriculum to reflect modification and accommodation at four different ELL levels. It is easy to let students who

are unable to communicate and unwilling to try due to fear of making mistakes to sit quietly throughout the day and have limited interaction with the teacher. I have changed from looking at each student individually in wondering how I can modify the lesson for that student to working with our ELL department to develop accommodation based on Levels 1 to 4. This allows me to help lower level ELL with supports such as word boxes for quizzes and tests, oral examinations or shorten written expectations.

Mrs. Brown reflected on her science classes with a number of different levels of ELLs. She responded,

The increase in ELL students in the science class has been a challenge in that I have to be much more aware of checking in, having vocabulary sheets ready, accommodate tests for wording and length of questions. These accommodations are not something that frustrate or concern me however, as I do want them to have success in this topic. I am concerned that they have increased anxiety because of the language barrier.

Ms. Hart reflected,

There are so many different things going on with students now that we are trying to keep track of all of the accommodations for ELLs or students with learning disabilities.

Sometimes it is difficult to remember to keep checking in with kids or to know exactly how you should accommodate them.

Sub-question three. Sub-question three asked. “How do faculty identify linguistic barriers when teaching ELLs?” Participants discussed a prescreening assessment that took place before the teachers met the ELLs as one way of identifying linguistic barriers. Mr. Smith explained,

We have ESL assessments that identify the level of English proficiency our students have before they come into our content area classes. This initial assessment is so important. We

use an ESL guide from the ESL department as a resource which helps us meet the needs of the students.

Mrs. Brown explained how she assessed during her interview:

I mentally assess for understanding and I am clarifying for students. The more I work with these students the more obvious it becomes when they do not understand. I ask more questions and understand the range of ability that I am teaching.

Mrs. Doe explained the importance of the linguistic assessments,

Intentional assessment allows us to know and understand the multiple levels of ESL. This allows us to think over every aspect of our lessons. We can find the right solutions for the ELLs, these assessments allow accommodations that can help every learner.

All in all, participants understood the necessity of knowing the linguistic challenges of their students.

Sub-question four. The participants each identified various ways to perceive the relational needs of ELLs, as asked in sub-question four. The participants expressed that this was one of the greatest challenges in teaching ELLs. However, even though these challenges were identified, teachers were also able to explain positive strategies to combat the relational challenges. Ms. Hart was excited to explain,

Our school understands that this is not just about the academics and we are a very multicultural school. Our smaller class sizes allow us to be relational with all our students. I have purposeful intentional seating in my classes and I see relationships building at lunch. We turn “awkward moments” into cool learning moments as we learn new things about each other’s cultures. We are very good with affirming skills of all students.

More excitement was seen from Mr. Smith,

As a teacher I work to overcome the cultural barriers our students have. Chinese students are used to a culture of shame in Chinese schools, here we create a culture of love. I interact with students in halls, and in emails. I am assessable before and after school, as well as, take part in the ESL Summer program. I enjoy learning about culture and want to know more about my students.

Mr. Smith also explained the positive strategies he uses in his classroom to enhance relationships, “I use intentional pairing and plenty of positive feedback. I encourage students to ask questions of each other and give plenty of feedback. Students MUST know they are moving in the right direction.” Mrs. Doe explained the relational challenges as well,

My 5-6 grade students are very welcoming and inclusive. It becomes problematic when the ELLs are sticking together on the playground, but I am not sure what happens beyond the classroom. As a teacher, I am still figuring out how to push my students at the right time, but also to try to put myself in their shoes.

Sub-question 5. The final sub-question asked, “How do teachers perceive ethical challenges when interacting with an increasing number of ELLs?” Most participants reflected on circumstances that perceived bias, stereotyping, and ethical challenges. Mrs. Doe commented,

Ethically, my Canadian students have been challenged to broaden their global perspectives in all areas of their academics, and for many, for the first time ever, are learning alongside students who have little to no concept of Jesus Christ. For most of these students this seems strange, especially when their parents have chosen to invest in private Christ-centered education.

Mrs. Hart reflected,

Because I am with the ELLs more I hear “more” about the challenges. Students will tell me about rude or derogatory comments – which our administrator helps with and makes students aware of the disrespect. I also think we are aware of clique more than ever and are careful to guide classes away from excluding students.

Mrs. Green explained the ethical challenges of mixing cultures,

I think the biggest challenge is to not understand the culture as I try to communicate. I try to respect the culture and I try to understand what I should say and not say as I try to meet the needs of these learners. Plus, understanding and balancing the high expectations of the parents of our ELLs. This is difficult because the cultural expectations of parents can be so different than native students.

Mr. Smith had much to say about the ethical challenges at his ACSI school:

Unfortunately, I would say there are about 30-40% parents opposed to the international student growth in our school. I have heard and I quote “we are letting so many internationals in the school that they are stealing all the top awards away from the native students.” There are some misunderstandings here.

He also expressed challenges with international parents. “I also know that the international parents are very pragmatic and they are willing to do anything to ‘creatively move their child forward’”

Summary

Chapter Four gave an in-depth examination of the data analysis of the case study that explained the perceived challenges of practice due to increasing enrollment of ELLs for ACSI teachers in the Canadian Maritimes region using the guiding theory of ethics as first philosophy by Levinas (1981). The coding of the pre-interview journal prompts, transcripts, and observation confirmations was explained. Analysis of patterns and main themes was completed using ATLAS.ti. Plus, an exploration of the outlier of positive comments was conducted. These methods revealed that the use of Levinas' (1989) ethics as first philosophy did create a viable explanation of ACSI Maritime teacher challenges of practice due to increasing ELL enrollment.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Overview

The purpose of this case study was to examine the perceived challenges of practice due to increasing enrollment of ELLs for ACSI teachers in the Canadian Maritimes using the guiding theory of ethics as first philosophy by Levinas (1981). This chapter yielded a closer examination of the theoretical and practical application of the results of the case study. Themes were exposed by the research questions using Levinas' framework. The implications of the study for ACSI stakeholders were discussed. The limitations and delimitations of the study were reviewed, and the recommendations of future research were also delineated.

Summary of Findings

The central research question from the review of the literature was, "What are the perceived challenges of practice that K-12 ACSI Maritime school teachers face due to increasing ELL enrollment, using Levinas' linguistic, ethical, and relational constructs of the Other?" The premise was that the phenomenon studied could be explained using the linguistic, ethical, and relational constructs. Data analysis using ATLAS.ti did confirm that the challenges of practice could be explained using the Levinas (1989) constructs of the Other, as themes emerged from the word usage from the participants. These words were used as codes to examine the number of times a participant would use the words when describing their perceived challenges of practice due to increasing ELLs. Each participant was able to reflect and identify different challenges they faced while teaching a growing number of ELLs in their content area classes (see Figure 10), which showed a comparative view of the three categories of perceived challenges, relational, ethical, and linguistic.

This was observed in the self-reflective pre-interview journal prompts, as participants pondered changes in pedagogy to meet the needs of their ELLs. This was also discussed in the

interview questions and confirmed through the in-class observations. All three data collection methods intentionally asked participants to consider the theory framework and asked, “How have your content area classes changed linguistically, relationally, and ethically over the past three years with an increase of ELLs?” This yielded unified coded responses from participants creating themes within the data. Gall et al. (2010) defined theme as “recurring features of a case” (p. 350). These themes were captured in the recurring vocabulary of the thick, descriptive narrative from the participants.

The sub-questions also confirmed that the Levinas (1989) constructs aided in the explanation of these questions. “What are teacher’s perceptions of effectiveness in teaching mixed language ability classes?” “How do faculty perceive changes in teaching methods due to increasing enrollment of ELLs?” “How do faculty identify linguistic barriers when teaching ELLs?” “How do teachers perceive the relational needs of ELLs?” and “How do teachers perceive ethical challenges when interacting with an increasing number of ELLs?” These types of questions allowed more cohesion in the responses and greater insight into the challenges discussed by the participants.

Discussion

At the time of this research, the Canadian Maritimes have seen an enormous increase in English language learners (see Chapter One). Plus, recent trends continue to expose the growing number of international students studying in Canada. Since this study began in 2015, Canada has seen more increases in ELLs. “The number of international students enrolled in Canada has nearly doubled in the last decade and represents approximately 5% of all internationally mobile students” (CBIE, 2016, p. 21). At the end of 2016, the Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE) published its second survey of “Canada’s performance and potential in international education” (CBIE, 2016, p. 21). This survey examined the performance of the

Canadian government and the educational systems involved in international education. It revealed the motivation behind actively recruiting international students; “It is estimated that the global middle-class will increase its spending on education from \$4.4 trillion in 2012 to \$6.2 trillion USD by 2017” (CBIE, 2016, p. 21) and the commitment to continue this investment. This commitment was not only revealed in the increase of the number of students coming to study in Canada (see Figure 11), but also in the dollar amount invested by the Canadian government. It was reported that in “2012, the federal government committed \$10 million over two years to international education” (CBIE, 2016, p. 9). This is seen in Figure 11, as “considerable growth is reported for international students holding student visa and permanent resident cards” (CBIE, 2016, p.22).

<https://cbie.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/CBIE-Flagship-2014-E-WEB-RES-final.pdf>

Figure 11. International Students by Year, all Levels of Study. Adapted from World of learning; Canada's performance and potential in international education in 2015 (p. 22), by the Canadian Bureau of International Education (2016).

The research from Newcomers Services Canada, the government of Canada, and the CBIE examined the social, academic, monetary, and sustainability of international students (see Chapter One), and each study revealed the increase of ELLs coming to Canada and the commitment of future growth of international students. While much research in the literature review explored the challenges of practice for public school educators due to the increase of the English language learning population, there was a gap in the body of knowledge for ACSI schools experiencing the same phenomenon.

Public school systems have easily identified their growing international student

population with facts and figures, as seen in Chapter Two. These schools have actively researched the positive and negative perceptions public school teachers have with increasing ELL populations. In Chapter Two, I examined the public school research in the areas of methods of instruction, social, linguistic, and academic effects of ELLs on non-ELLs, effective and ineffective teaching practices and policies, teacher perceptions of efficacy, perceived challenges of ELLs, and the perceived challenges of educators teaching ELLs. All of this research gave voice to the public school educator and aided in the understanding of the public school phenomenon of the effects an increasing ELL population.

ACSI Maritime schools, however, still had no current data available at the time of the case study. These schools could not verify the assertion that they were experiencing the same effects of the same phenomenon as their public school counterparts. They did not have a voice in educational research. By laying a foundational framework that aligned with the ACSI mission statement, ACSI Maritime teachers were able to reflect, explain, and express their perceived challenges of practice. Using Levinas' (1989) theory of ethics as first philosophy enabled teachers the ability to discuss their challenges academically and ethically. Teachers were able to examine their own linguistic, ethical, and relational challenges that added a new voice to the body of knowledge. ACSI school teachers did report challenges of practice due to their growing and diverse ELL population, which was confirmed by the study. These challenges of practice also aligned with their public school counterparts.

The results revealed that participants struggled with linguistic challenges, as communication was hampered with international parents and students. Mrs. Jones reflected in her pre-interview journal, "I may expect too much of my students linguistically because I do not understand them or their needs. Mrs. Green also reflected on the many linguistic challenge in

her grade 5-6 class,

It is difficult to communicate with the parents since they often don't speak English. ELLs tend to feel more comfortable with other EAL students and don't make friends with other English students. Foreign students communicate with each other in their first language and I can't understand what they are saying. They also teach English students inappropriate words in the foreign language.

Participants also had much to say when discussing ethical and relational challenges. Mrs. Green was able to express these challenges by writing in her pre-interview journal,

If students know they will only be in Canada for a short time (2 years or so) they tend to put in less effort and don't seem to care or work hard. They also feel their marks will not matter when they return home. If they do stay longer (for university) the students feel public school offers them a better chance to get into a good school. Discipline is quite different in Canada compared to their home country. Foreign students don't seem to fear teachers or discipline. It is quite a challenge meeting the expectations of the all the parents involved.

Throughout the study it was evident that ACSI schools are also incurring challenges due to the growth in international student enrollment. The Levinas (1989) framework allowed the participants a working vernacular to capture the challenges and to be able to express those challenges in a proactive manner that can assist stakeholders in understanding the phenomenon effecting their ACSI schools. Up until this point there had been significant research that assisted public school stakeholders; however, this case study enabled me to examine the connections that ACSI teachers were making with best practices, challenges, and strategies for success.

Using Levinas' (1989) theoretical framework, this study reminded Christian educators to

look beyond the monetary value of teaching students from other countries and to realize the relational and ethical responsibility we have as human beings to aid the Other in our midst. This premise was also connected to the many teachings of Jesus, as he continued to teach and model loving others as thy self. As the participants reflected on the efficacy of their practice through the lens of relational, ethical, and linguistic challenges and successes, the essence of mission-driven Christian education was revealed. This was a novel addition to the exploration of the study. Over and over the participants could not reflect or discuss challenges without highlighting the opportunity to minister better to their students. This was expressed well by Mr. Smith's interview comment, "Chinese students are used to a culture of shame in Chinese schools, here we create a culture of love."

It is with this culture of love that ACSI teachers with ELLs have a remarkable opportunity to minister to new immigrant students and their families that come to their schools. The study revealed that these new additions to the school culture were not just challenges, but families that need our ministry and love. This was evidenced by Mrs. Doe's comments, "I am a huge fan of my students. I see relationships building all around me with families, in our churches and friendships."

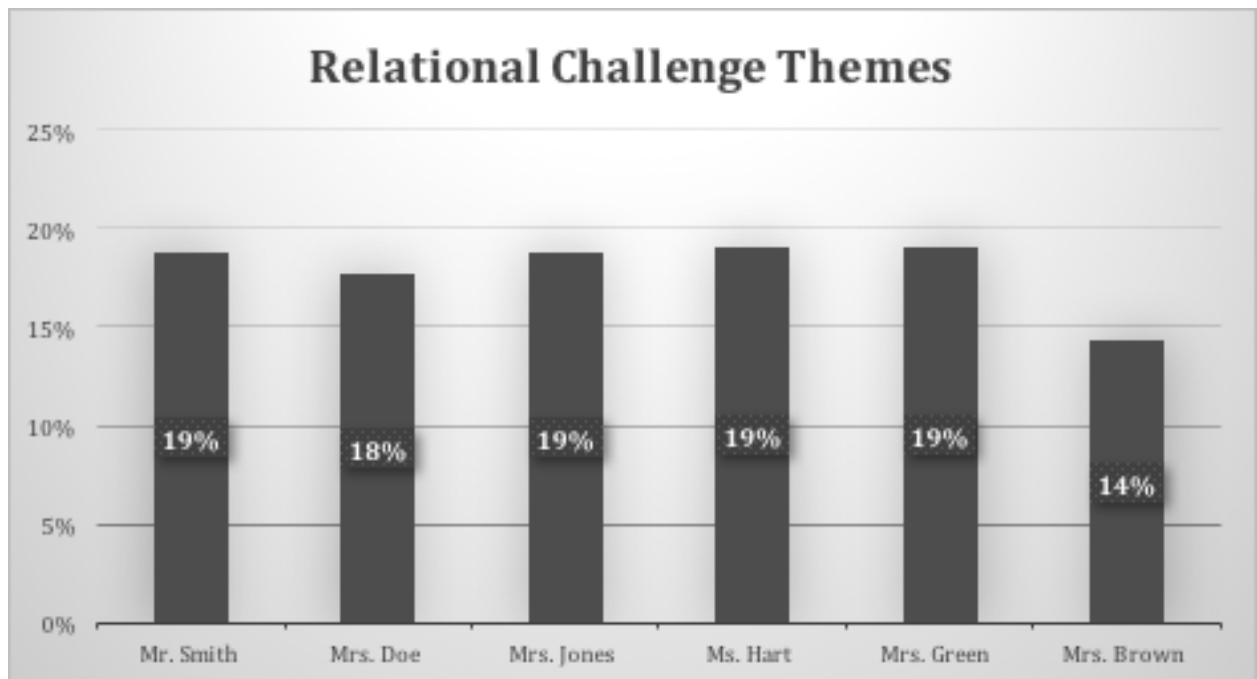
Yet, these opportunities are not without their challenges of practice, as revealed by the case study results and the literature review. The review of the most current literature exposed the body of knowledge from public school research, which revealed noteworthy challenges in linguistic mastery, relationships, and ethical treatment of ELLs in the public school sector. However, the literature review also exposed a gap in regard to ACSI teacher perspectives of the same phenomenon.

The explanation of the phenomenon in the case study was that ACSI teachers do reflect on the linguistic, relational, and ethical significance of teaching ELLs like their public school counterparts. Tellez and Manthey (2015) identified the perceived shortcomings of ESL public school teachers in California in their case study. They reported, “Research indicates that teachers continue to doubt their individual skills and capacity for working with ELLs” (p. 112). This was revealed in this case study, as participants discussed their perceived challenges of practice due to the increase of the ELLs in categories that included the theoretical framework. Teachers were able to discuss the ethics, linguistics, relationships, and best practices of ESL teaching. These themes brought cohesion to the narrative by expressing the “common ideas” (Creswell, 2013, p. 186) of the participants’ reoccurring word choice, allowing the voice of the participants to emerge. Using this framework allowed the understanding of the essence of the challenges facing these ACSI educators. Teachers shared their own struggles in the teaching of ELLs in the areas of relationships, ethics, and linguistics.

Figures 12, 13, and 14 indicate that a large of a percentage of the interviews and pre-interview journals were classified into the three main themes; the relational, ethical, and linguistic challenges, as revealed by the study. A majority of the participants spent 19% of the interview reflecting and discussing the perceived relational challenges that they had with content area classes with ELLs, as seen in Figure 12. There was a disparity in the discussion of ethical-perceived challenges between participants. Mr. Smith was concerned with the ethical challenges of his classes the most, as he discussed this for 19% of his interview, while Mrs. Green and Mrs. Brown only spent 10 % of their time discussing the ethical challenges of their experiences (see Figure 13). However, the largest gap between the participant responses could be seen when

discussing the linguistic challenges of ELLs. Mrs. Jones' interview discussed these challenges 31% of the time, while many other participants discussed this 19% of the time (see Figure 14).

Figure 12. Relational Challenge Themes by Participant.



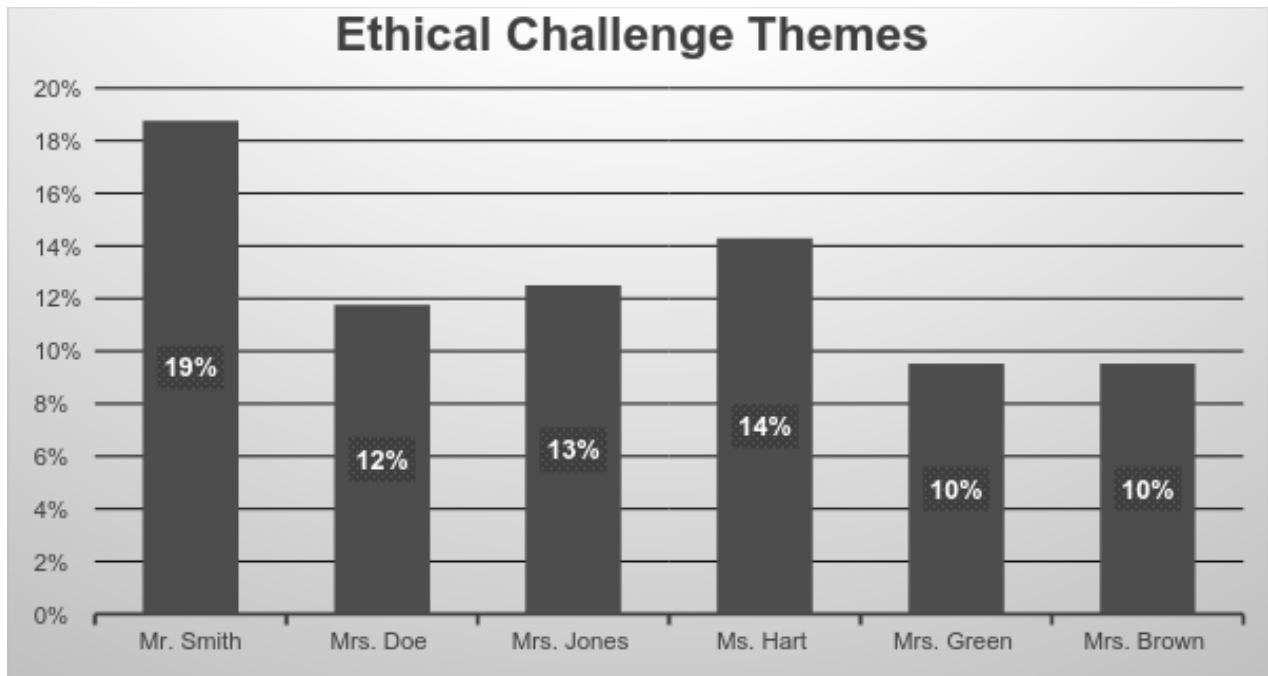


Figure 13. Ethical Challenge Themes by Participant.

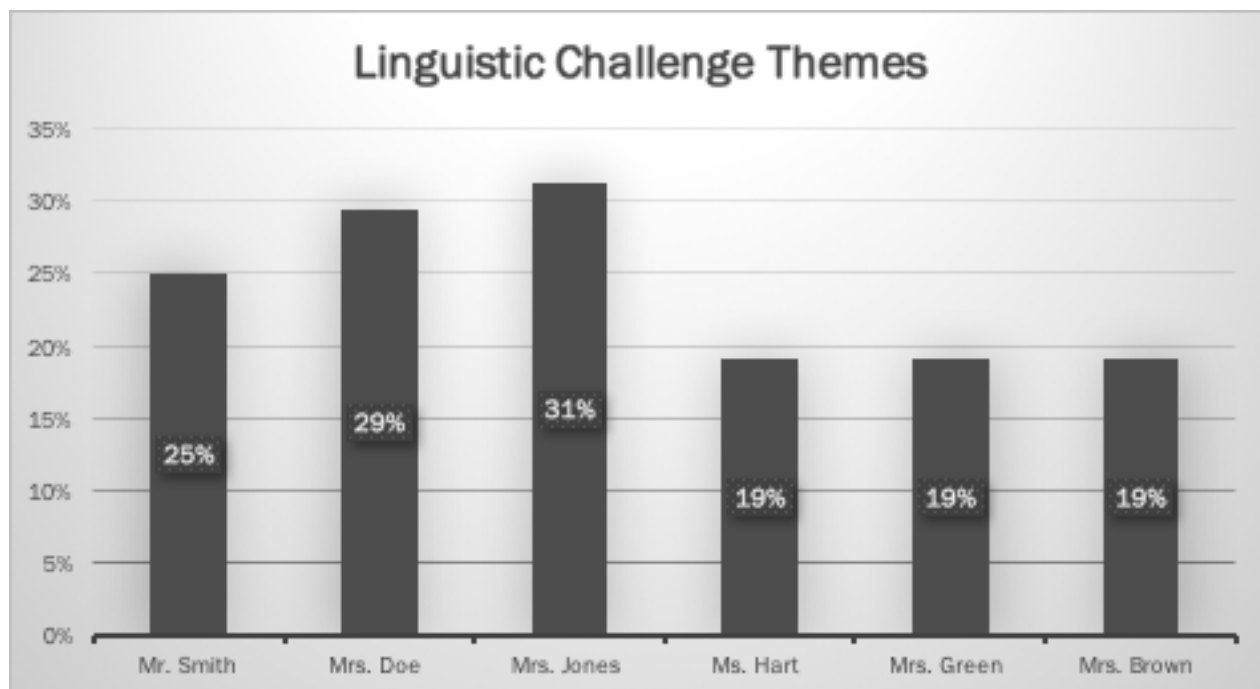


Figure 14. Linguistic Challenge Themes by Participant.

Implications

Practical Implications

The implications of the study equip ACSI stakeholders, teachers and administrators with practical information to better understand the challenges facing ACSI schools as the ELL population continues to increase. ACSI leadership could use the themes found in the study to allow for better professional development in the areas of pedagogy to meet the linguistic challenges that face the teachers, policy and international student sustainability to meet the ethical challenges discussed, and mission-driven instruction to meet the relational challenges of the teachers.

Chapter One of the study argued that ACSI educators must view all students, with or without language barriers, as more than just ineffective pedagogy or a sustainable income stream. This is a fine balance, as many international students pay extra fees for the extra

language services that they need to be successful in mastering a new language. As recently as 2016, Canadian Maritime local residents questioned magnitude of the gap between tuition fees for local students and international students. The local PEI newspaper had several editorials from local residents outraged by the “acceptance of tuition gouging international students” (Thibodeau, 2016, p. A6). Thibodeau (2016) pointed out, “international students will pay \$60,000 in the fall at UPEI, while Atlantic Canada students will pay \$12,000” (p. A6).

Additionally, understanding that ACSI teachers were comparable with their public school colleagues through the use of the predicted patterns from the existing body of knowledge from the public schools allows ACSI schools to use a broader scope when researching viable solutions to combat the perceived challenges. This unity in circumstances can aid leadership in finding the best practices to meet the needs of the educator.

Understanding that many teachers, both in public schools and in ACSI schools, struggle with their perceived efficacy of teaching ELLs allows for a more harmonious professional development in the Maritimes. The Maritimes is a small region in Canada, and shared resources could benefit the schools in the area and could create better sustainability of ESL programs and ELLs.

Empirical Implications

The empirical significance of the study could enlighten ACSI stakeholders with data that illustrates the effects of increased enrollment of ELLs on schools experiencing the phenomenon. By deconstructing the data into the main themes by participant, educational leaders could fine-tune professional development to meet the specific needs of the teacher. The data tables revealed information that can be used to equip educators with growing ELL populations, as strengths and weaknesses were reflected on and expressed. For example, a figure that shows the perceived

challenges of linguistics, as seen in Figure 4, could aid an administrator, educational consultant, or organization like ACSI to better plan for professional development days for teachers that express high levels of perceived linguistic challenges. If Figure 8 was also taken into consideration, then educational leaders may have a pool of teachers that were implementing best practices within the same the theme to aid teachers with high levels of perceived challenges.

By using Mrs. Jones as an example from the study, I can identify that this participant clearly struggles with linguistic challenges (31%) more than any other challenges (ethical challenges 13% and relational challenges 19%). An administrator could individualize Mrs. Jones' next professional development day to meet the needs of this teacher.

Theoretical Significance

As teachers explained the challenges they had with ELLs relationally and ethically, the significance of Levinas' (1989) theory as ACSI Christian educators with a mission to "inspire students to become devoted followers of Jesus Christ" (ACSI, n.d.) is clear. The study revealed that all the teachers struggled with balancing their job with their calling. Levinas (1989) called for responsible ethical education, education that was just, and education that sees beyond race and religion.

ACSI schools should see the theoretical significance for their schools accepting the challenge of Jesus' mission-driven schools, remembering Leviticus 19:18, "Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord," (NIV) as they welcome a more diverse population of learners into their hallways.

Delimitations and Limitations

The delimitations of the study are boundaries set by the researcher in regard to the setting, selection of participants, and phenomenon of the study. This was a bounded case study located in

ACSI Canadian Maritime schools, which is a local setting in which I had much expertise. This delimitation allowed for a narrow focus on the phenomenon being explored. The small numbers of schools, participants, and the uniqueness of the schools based on their ACSI affiliations were intentional delimitations that added to the body of knowledge for ACSI schools in the Maritimes with increasing ELL enrollment. The participants were purposefully sampled from the population of the ACSI Maritime teaching staff. These teachers needed to have at least three consecutive years of teaching at one of the three ACSI schools in the Maritimes; this allowed participants to have experienced an increase of ELLs. Participants had ELLs enrolled in their mainstream classes. This intentional delimitation was at the heart of the study due to the perceived challenges of practice that emerged from ACSI educators teaching mixed English language-ability classes and a growing number of ELLs. The use of Levinas' (1989) framework was a limiting factor as well, as the focus of the study was very intentionally built on these three constructs.

The limitations of the study were found in the sampling characteristics. The sampling size was a factor because of the small number of teachers included in the study. Another limitation was teacher bias with regards to ELLs and non-religious students attending a Christian school. ACSI teacher retention was another concern since teachers may have left before the study was completed. Additionally, enrollment rates of ELLs could have declined instead of increased over time. Finally, the limitation of perceptions may or may not be shared during the data collection, which could have skewed the voice of the teachers and the perceived challenges of practice for ACSI teachers with increasing ELL enrollment. My own bias was another factor, as I worked within the phenomenon being studied. Merriam (1998) explained that the human instrument's (the researcher) "observations and analysis are filtered through that human being's worldview, values, and perceptions" (p. 22).

However, rigorous measures were taken during the study to ensure researcher bias would not interfere with the voice of the participants. I intentionally used a script for open-ended interview questioning. The selection of viable participants did not include participants that were part of my ESL department. I also adhered to IRB protocol and completed member checking within 48 hours of transcriptions to validate participant answers. In addition, all data was incorporated in the findings of the case study.

Finally, teachers seemed honest and amenable to the study, but the discussion of ethics could have been problematic when discussing administration and stakeholders. This was seen as a possible limitation as well.

Recommendations for Future Research

After analyzing the data and explaining the perceived challenges of practice of ACSI Maritime teachers with an increasing ELL population using Levinas' (1989) ethics as first philosophy, I recommended the following considerations for future research.

Quantitative Studies

A quantitative analysis of the statistical correlations between the efficacy of teachers' perceived challenges of practice and the success of their ELLs would be beneficial. This study could allow an examination of the challenges (delineated into three categories explained in this study) and their relationship to student success. A quantitative study may link statistical significance to challenges, best practices, and student success. This may aid administrators in making decisions in teacher training and support.

Another possible quantitative study could examine the relationship between the teachers' years of experience to their perceived challenges. The data from this case study revealed differing perspectives with what participants deemed as the most challenging construct. A

qualitative study analyzing the correlation between years of experience and the perception of the most challenging construct could allow administrators better support and mentoring opportunities for experienced teachers.

A Broader ACSI Case Study

While studying the ACSI Maritime region yielded positive results for this study, the Maritimes are a very small portion of the international organization. A broader case study may aid ACSI in getting a global perspective on the challenges facing their schools with increasing ELLs. This may also allow ACSI to equip teachers with more training, professional development, and targeted conference workshops.

A Public School Case Study

While analyzing the data, I could not help but wonder if Levinas' (1989) framework was naturally congruent with Christian schools. This compatibility was discussed at length in Chapter One. A public school case study in the Maritimes might yield very different results. Do public educators see the mission-driven opportunities to reach out to their students? Do public school administrators see the importance of relational and ethical commitment to ELLs in their schools? Does the public school learning environment allow for the building of ethical, relational, and linguistic success that cannot be quantified with a grade or empirical data? A public school/ACSI school comparison case study using the same theoretical framework may also yield different results.

Summary

This case study began as an exploration into the challenges that face Christian educators working with students from around the world with language barriers. These are students that desire to learn a new language, a new culture, and make new friends. These are students that the

Lord has blessed many ACSI Maritime schools within that last three years. In this quest, Levinas' (1989) reminder to educators that they have a responsibility to their students to teach more than just English to ELLs was emphasized. Thus, the case study used the theoretical framework of Levinas (1989) to explain the relational, ethical, and linguistic challenges facing teachers with an increasing ELL population.

The six teachers studied did reflect and discuss their perceived challenges of practice easily by using this theory. They celebrated the positive strategies that allowed them to be more successful within their classrooms. They also discussed many best practices that they employed to combat their perceived challenges with their struggling ELLs. To witness the care and compassion these teachers had for their students was to witness what Levinas defined as, "education as profound ethical event" (Todd, 2003, p. 11).

Breaking down relational, ethical, and linguistic barriers is also what Jesus called in Matthew 25, "Inviting the stranger in." This is the heart of the mission for all ACSI schools. A perfect example of this was witnessed at Alpha Christian Academy, when a mother of an ELL wanted to discuss the Bible curriculum with one of the participants. The mother asked, "What is this book used in my sons' Bible class?" She went on, "These classes are talking about things we do not believe." In which her son replied (in perfect English), "Mom, it is not the book that I am learning from, it is the people in the school." This is ethics as first philosophy indeed.

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APPENDIX A: INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN CANADA BY YEAR

<http://cbie.ca/media/facts-and-figures/>

Figure A1. International students in Canada by year. This figure includes all in international students in Canada in the years 2001 to 2012 in all levels of study. Unless otherwise stated, all data is from Citizenship and Immigration Canada (Statistics Canada, 2014).

APPENDIX B*The Teacher as a Person*

https://gcs.myschoolmanagement.com/content/file_container/file_container_read.php?file_container_id=56

APPENDIX C

Instructional Skills Checklist

https://gcs.myschoolmanagement.com/content/file_container/file_container_read.php?file_container_id=56

APPENDIX D*Classroom Interaction Analysis*

https://gcs.myschoolmanagement.com/content/file_container/file_container_read.php?file_container_id=56

APPENDIX E

https://gcs.myschoolmanagement.com/content/file_container/file_container_read.php?file_container_id=56

APPENDIX F

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

9/16/2016

Susanne Huizing

IRB Approval 2613.091616: Levinas, Leviticus, & Language Learning: A Case Study Exploring ACSI Maritime Schools' Challenges of Practice Due to Increasing ESL Enrollment

Dear Susanne Huizing,

We are pleased to inform you that your study has been approved by the Liberty IRB. This approval is extended to you for one year from the date provided above with your protocol number. If data collection proceeds past one year, or if you make changes in the methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must submit an appropriate update form to the IRB. The forms for these cases were attached to your approval email.

Please retain this letter for your records. Also, if you are conducting research as part of the requirements for a master's thesis or doctoral dissertation, this approval letter should be included as an appendix to your completed thesis or dissertation.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB, and we wish you well with your research project.

Sincerely,

Administrative Chair of Institutional Research
The Graduate School

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APPENDIX G

The Liberty University Institutional
Review Board has approved
this document for use from
9/16/2016 to 9/15/2017
Protocol # 2613.091616

CONSENT FORM

Levinas, Leviticus, & Language Learning: A Case Study Exploring ACSI Maritime Schools'
Challenges of Practice Due to Increasing ESL Enrollment

Susanne Huizing
Liberty University
School of Education

You are invited to be in a research study of perceived challenges of practice of ACSI Maritime teachers with increasing ELL enrollment. You were selected as a possible participant because: (1) you have taught at an ACSI school in the Maritimes for more than 3 years, (2) you have observed increasing ELL enrollment, and (3) you teach ELL in content area classes. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

Susanne Huizing, a doctoral candidate in School of Education at Liberty University, is conducting this study.

Background Information: The purpose of this study is to explore the perceived challenges of practice that K-12 ACSI Maritime school teachers face due to increasing ELL enrollment. These challenges will be categorized as linguistic, ethical, and relational.

Procedures: If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

1. Respond to an emailed screening survey. This should take no longer than 15 minutes.
2. Complete two on-line, pre-interview journal prompts via email or Google docs. Each prompt should be no longer than 500 words.
3. Participate in a face-to-face recorded interview. This should take no longer than 90 minutes.
4. Check the transcripts of the interviews and reveal changes and edits to the researcher or sign off on the validity of the transcripts. This should take no longer than 60 minutes.
5. Schedule classroom observation via email. This should take no longer than 5 minutes.
6. Participate in observation of a content area class teaching ELLs. This will take one class period, which will be determined by the individual school schedule.
7. Check the transcripts of the observations and reveal changes and edits to the researcher or sign off on the validity of the transcripts. This should take no longer than 60 minutes.

Study Risks and Benefits:

The risks involved in this study are minimal and no more than the participant would encounter in everyday life.

The benefits to participation in this study may include:

The study may enable ACSI stakeholders a glimpse at the perceived challenges ACSI teachers may be facing as ELL enrollment increases. This information may aid in the formation of better training and support for teachers and information for administration with growing English Language Learner enrollment.

Compensation: You will receive the world famous Sue Huizing blueberry muffins for taking part in this study.

The Liberty University Institutional
Review Board has approved
this document for use from
9/16/2016 to 9/15/2017
Protocol # 2613.091616

Confidentiality: Note that all data will be secured using 2 methods of encrypted data storage. Data collection will be confidential and pseudonyms will be used for participants and their corresponding schools. Data will be under the sole ownership of the researcher. The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report I may publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

To ensure privacy, the names of the schools and the participating educators will not be used. A number system will be used to identify the participating school and pseudonyms will be used for participant names. The interview will be conducted in a private research room or private meeting room depending upon the facility. Data will be secured as it is password protected in iCloud storage and in Google Docs storage. Field notes will be kept in a locked file cabinet in a locked office in the researcher's locked home. The researcher will be the only one with access to the information.

Data will be destroyed as hard copies will be shredded, and iCloud and Google Docs stored documents will be deleted.

No names will be used while video / audio recording is taking place.

Once the video recordings are transcribed and member-checked, videos will be stored using encrypted data storage. Identifying information will be omitted in the transcriptions, as pseudonyms will be used. Additionally, each recording will be separated by interview and observation and time / date stamped. If a participant should withdraw, the individual recording can be deleted from both encrypted data storage units.

Voluntary Nature of the Study: Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University, ACSI, or your school. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

How to Withdraw from the Study: If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

Contacts and Questions: The researcher conducting this study is Susanne Huizing. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at Shuizing@Liberty.edu. You may also contact the research's faculty advisor, Doctor Ellen Black, Ed.D, at Elblack@Liberty.edu. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd, Green Hall Suite 1887, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

Please notify the researcher if you would like a copy of this information to keep for your records.

APPENDIX H

Interview Transcripts

Alpha Christian Academy with Mr. Smith

Mr. Smith – Sept. 24 Open-Ended Interview Question:

An iPhone 5s video/ audio was used, as well as, scribed field notes.

Mr. Smith has been in Christian education for 24 years and is currently working on his Master's Degree in Education. He has noticed an increase in ELLs in his content, area classes over the last four years. His main content area is History.

1. What are your most common challenges of practice linguistically as an ACSI teacher with increasing ELLs in your classes?

To effectively distinguish between the many levels of ELLs; To have an understanding of the levels of learners in my class and accommodate them in clarifying content, quizzes and projects; To effectively teach a level and not just think I have 12 different learners, that need me to do 12 different things. Another common problem is checking for real clarity and comprehension; not just "faking it" and shaking their heads because they are afraid to be wrong.

2. How do you assess for linguistic barriers in your mixed language skills classroom?

We have ESL assessments, that identify the level of English proficiency our students have, before they come into our content, area classes. This initial assessment is so important. We use an ESL guide, from the ESL department as a resource, which helps us meet the needs of the students.

3. What accommodations and adaptations do you make for your ELLs to make language more accessible?

Depending on the ELLs language level, I use word boxes, pre-vocabulary, translators, give notes ahead of time, instructions written in native language, intentional pair shares or groupings with higher level ESL students, and the use of their technology to take pictures of instructions. I will also alter expectations on projects or give shorter assignments, when I know translations must be done first.

4. What are the most common challenges of practice you experience relationally as an ACSI teacher with increasing ELLs in your classes?

To have all students feel comfortable, culturally, with each other; To have students genuinely want to reach out to each other or to engage each other in conversation.

5. How do you interact with your ELLs outside of your classes?

As a teacher I work to overcome the cultural barriers our students have. Chinese students are used, to a culture of shame in Chinese school; here we create a culture of love. I interact with students in halls, and in emails. I am assessable before and after school, as well as, taking part in the ESL Summer program. I enjoy learning about culture and want to know more about my students.

6. What strategies do you use to foster relationships within your content area classes with students that have mixed language abilities?

I use intentional pairing and plenty of positive feedback. I encourage students to ask questions of each other and give plenty of feedback. Students MUST know they are moving in the right direction.

7. What ethical challenges have you experienced with stakeholders in your school as ELLs increase?

Unfortunately, I would say there are about 30 – 40% parents opposed to the international student growth in our school. I have heard, and I quote, “we are letting so many internationals in the school that they are stealing all the top awards away from the native students.” There are some misunderstandings here. I also know that the international parents are very pragmatic and they are willing to do anything to “creatively move their child forward”.

Our staff has come a long way, although some still do not see the opportunities and may focus negatively on the extra work as they deal with more parents, more paperwork, and more expectations. Administration needs to be able to balance the financial benefits, as well as, the ministry opportunities. Plus, they need to understand the money component and how it keeps lower tuition for all. Also, not to fall into the temptation of doing too much; to push too hard and “go too far”. But I think we have a fine principal that does that.

8. How do you proactively deter ethical challenges in your content area classes?

Intentional grouping, current events and cultural news that fosters good discussions;

Positive feedback and discussion.

9. How do linguistic, relational, or ethical barriers in your classroom prevent you from successful educational outcomes?

On the contrary, I think I am more successful. I am aware of all the different learners in my classroom. This has been a positive change over the years, as I become aware of how the students struggle to understand. I feel great empathy; it must be exhausting.

10. What are the strengths of your ESL program as the ELL population increases?

Diversity in learners, great professional development, cultural exposure, mission opportunities.

11. What are the weaknesses of your ESL program as the ELL population increases?

More professional development for Maritime teachers that are feeling the impact of the increase in ELLs. We need to be careful of burnout, as we try to meet the needs of all the learners; Effective assessments to know where the ELLs are progressing or not.

Alpha Christian Academy with Mrs. Doe

Mrs. Doe – Sept. 27 Open-Ended Interview Questions:

An iPhone 5s video/ audio was used, as well as scribed field notes.

Mrs. Doe has been teaching elementary science classes at GCS for three years, she is also the lead 5-6 teacher. She has seen the increase in ESL students and has four levels of ESL students this year in her content area classes.

1. What are your most common challenges of practice linguistically as an ACSI teacher with increasing ELLs in your classes?

Looking back over the last three years has been exciting. The change seems to have happened fast. International 21st century education has propelled GCS to change and be more collaborative.

2. How do you assess for linguistic barriers in your mixed language skills classroom?

Intentional assessment allows us to know and understand the multiple levels of ESL. This allows us to think over every aspect of our lessons. We can find the right solutions for the ELLs, these assessments allow accommodations that can help every learner.

3. What accommodations and adaptations do you make for your ELLs to make language more accessible?

With the increased number of Chinese students, more students are tempted to speak Mandarin; the English only policy allows students more English practice. I also allow for more time on assignments, check for understanding and clarify assignments. In the areas of History and Science I model as much as possible. In Math my students attempt word-problems. I use pre-vocabulary for final projects in Science and History. Intentional grouping is also important.

4. What are the most common challenges of practice you experience relationally as an ACSI teacher with increasing ELLs in your classes?

My 5-6 grade students are very welcoming and inclusive. It becomes problematic when the ELLs are sticking together on the playground, but I am not sure what happens beyond the classroom. As a teacher, I am still figuring out how to push my students at the right time, but I also try to put myself in their shoes.

5. How do you interact with your ELLs outside of your classes?

I am a huge fan of my students. I attend hockey, cheerleading, gymnastics and attend events. I see relationships building all around me with families, in our churches and friendships.

6. What strategies do you use to foster relationships within your content area classes with students that have mixed language abilities?

I use intentional pods with a lower level ESL student and a higher level student and other native speakers as well.

7. What ethical challenges have you experienced with stakeholders in your school as ELLs increase?

Some parents are questioning their intentions for choosing GCS as a Christ-centered education with so many students that have no concept of who Jesus is. This makes some parents...uncomfortable. This mentality seems not to come from the students; as they seem comfortable with the diverse cultures, they respect the other cultures. Teachers need to be careful. Some seem uncomfortable with the change, as they may be uncomfortable with the change from the old GCS to the new GCS. Maybe it is a fear that my child may not get the same level of education when we are teaching so many levels of different learners.

I think the administrator has a challenge balancing space and his vision. Finding a balance between understanding the ministry of GCS and knowing when to move forward; some things may need to put on hold because it can't be done well at this time. The administrator needs to know how to facilitate quality Christian education for all.

8. How do you proactively deter ethical challenges in your content area classes?

I am very intentional in mixing our students and leading discussions where they are accepting of one another.

9. How do linguistic, relational, or ethical barriers in your classroom prevent you from successful educational outcomes?

This year these barriers do not deter me – I work hard to have the best attitude – if I was not aware of these challenges then I would not be as intentional as I am with these learners.

10. What are the strengths of your ESL program as the ELL population increases?

Accessibility to the ESL, department experts, to answer questions and support, which is one less thing I need to worry about. Plus, this year the Language Arts was split into the ESL classes which made Language Arts better for all learners. Plus, all ESL students now have once consistent ESL teacher.

11. What are the weaknesses of your ESL program as the ELL population increases?

Independent work can be problematic, as well as, more access to materials that are on par for ESL levels of proficiency.

Beta Christian Academy Mrs. Brown

Mrs. Brown – Oct. 20 Open-Ended Interview Question Transcripts:

An iPad video/ audio was used, as well as scribed field notes.

Mrs. Brown was interviewed on October 20 during a break out session of the ACSI teacher's convention. She is a passionate Christian educator that has worked 10 years in the field of education. She has spent 2 years in the public school sector and 8 years in the ACSI Christian school she is currently employed at. She teaches grade 7 Math and grades 7-12 Science. She has seen an increase of ELLs in her content area classes over the last several years.

1. What are your most common challenges of practice linguistically as an ACSI teacher with increasing ELLs in your classes?

"I now understand that (the content area) of Science is a whole different language unto itself. A student may have basic conversation skills, but have no connection to the language that I use in Science. I create barriers myself because I use what I think is a common vocabulary - which may not be so common to my ESL students. I try to be more visual and now model in my classroom to make less challenges."

During the November 2 Observations – many visuals were used, as was modeling what was expected within the lesson.

2. How do you assess for linguistic barriers in your mixed language skills classroom?

“I understand that there is a difference between Math and Science. Numbers seem universal and my assessments are effective. Science I mentally assess for understanding and I am clarifying ideas for students. The more I work with these students the more obvious it becomes when they do not understand. I ask more questions and understand the range of ability that I am teaching.

Since the ESL specialist makes herself available, I we can gauge where each student is progressing or is in need of extra attention.”

During the November 2 Observations Mrs. Brown was found to be a teacher that has mastered the art of multi-leveled questioning

3. What accommodations and adaptations do you make for your ELLs to make language more accessible?

“I now have a better understanding of how these students learn and make connections to the language of Science. I model a lot now. I use a lot of visuals. I have different expectations so the students can be successful. I have parallel expectations of work that needs to get done. I see each student and train myself to prepare more to meet their needs.”

During the November 2 Observations Mrs. Brown was also observed using proximity as a management tool. She also employed red, green, and yellow color coded cards to help students ask questions and signal when assistance was needed. This was an

effective way to help timid or cautious learners to signal the teacher without drawing attention to themselves.

4. What are the most common challenges of practice you experience relationally as an ACSI teacher with increasing ELLs in your classes?

Mrs. Brown was very excited about answering this question. There was no hesitation.

“Our school understands that this is not just about the academics and we are a very multicultural school. Our smaller class sizes allow us to be relational with all our students. I have purposeful intentional seating in my classes and I see relationships building at lunch. We turn “awkward moments” into cool learning moments as we learn new things about each other’s cultures. We are very good with affirming skills of all students.”

During the November 2 Observations Mrs. Brown pointed out the intentional seating of students in her class of 21 grade 7 Math students.

5. How do you interact with your ELLs outside of your classes? *“I think it is important to find connections with the kids outside of school. I don’t let talents be hidden. I find out what they like to do outside of class. I notice things about my students and enjoy learning about them.”*
6. What strategies do you use to foster relationships within your content area classes with students that have mixed language abilities?
- “I use intentional grouping and plenty of affirmation. I encourage students to ask questions of each other and affirm each other. Students really do like learning new things from one another.”*

7. What ethical challenges have you experienced with stakeholders in your school as ELLs increase?

“I think the biggest challenge is the having so many cultural differences that we may not even realize. ESL students need to know they can be wrong or say no and it will be okay. Many students will “fake it” because in their culture they may not have been allowed to try and be wrong. Respect is another challenge because respect looks different in other cultures. Respect of women, genders, age, authority is all part of this. Also, respecting others’ backgrounds or beliefs; In science I have evolution to work through.”

8. How do you proactively deter ethical challenges in your content area classes?

“Respect, affirmation, and discussion. We discuss and share a lot of differences and many students think the differences are “cool”.

9. How do linguistic, relational, or ethical barriers in your classroom prevent you from successful educational outcomes?

“These challenges do not prevent me from being successful. They make us work harder. They make us collaborate more.”

10. What are the strengths of your ESL program as the ELL population increases?

“Better communication with other teachers and striving to improve more and more. There is more support now thanks to Drew (the ESL specialist).”

11. What are the weaknesses of your ESL program as the ELL population increases?

“We are too busy to be proactive in planning and getting more down on paper.”

Beta Christian Academy Mrs. Green

Mrs. Green – Oct. 20 Open-Ended Interview Question Transcripts:

An iPad video/ audio was used, as well as scribed field notes.

Mrs. Green was interviewed on October 20 during a break out session of the ACSI teacher's convention. She is a passionate Christian educator that has worked 20 years in the field of education at the ACSI Christian school she is currently employed at. She teaches grade 5 & 6 and Math & Science. She has seen an increase of ELLs in her content area classes over the last several years.

1. What are your most common challenges of practice linguistically as an ACSI teacher with increasing ELLs in your classes?

“As students in my class often audit the class and do not receive marks / grades, I realize that the language of Math is fine, but most learners struggle in Science. I make sure that I do not teach “just in my language” but I need to clarify instructions more and clarify in many different ways as I check for understanding. Students in my class often audit the class and do not receive marks / grades.”

During the November 2 Observations Mrs. Green was observed clarifying instructions and checking for understanding of all her students in her grade 5 mixed ability Math class.

2. How do you assess for linguistic barriers in your mixed language skills classroom?

“I ask a lot of clarifying questions that cannot be answered with yes or no. I also ask students to explain back to me; it is a process to check for real understanding.”

During the November 2 Observations Mrs. Green was observed using many different questioning techniques to make the lesson successful for all learners.

3. What accommodations and adaptations do you make for your ELLs to make language more accessible?

“There are a lot of intentional strategies that I use. I try to make study notes available ahead of time. I collaborate more and more with the ESL specialist. I realize that numbers are numbers, but spend more time explaining and clarifying instructions. I also know not to use cursive writing and that printing clearly is important to these learners. I really do use more printouts and model lessons more.”

During the November 2 Observation, many visuals were used throughout the classroom with Math terms and Math facts to aid students. Plus, Mrs. Green modeled every single step of the Math processes that she was explaining. Many methods of teaching were used in the mini-lecture, practice drills, and seatwork in this lesson.

4. What are the most common challenges of practice you experience relationally as an ACSI teacher with increasing ELLs in your classes?

*“Our school is a very diverse environment where students feel very comfortable with each other, so ESL kids make connections easily. I am intentional with groupings of students. Our kids are very accepting... **(she smiles and laughs, as she reflects and remembers circumstances which show this)**. Our kids think it is cool to embrace something new; like during lunch, as new foods are shared. Our kids love to hear presentations from kids that didn't grow up here; there is a lot of interest in learning about a new culture, tradition, or food.”*

5. How do you interact with your ELLs outside of your classes? *“I spend a lot of lunchtimes observing and interacting with my students. We learn a lot about each other as we incorporate food and fun at lunchtime.”*

6. What strategies do you use to foster relationships within your content area classes with students that have mixed language abilities?

“I use intentional grouping. I am also very aware of the importance of presentations and fostering positive relationships as students encourage each other and learn something new from each other. I make sure we build confidence and create a safe environment for students to participate and give plenty of opportunities to speak.”

During the November 2 Observations Mrs. Green pointed out the Science posters and presentations and reiterated that “as students became experts with their presentations confidence grew during student-led question and answer time”.

7. What ethical challenges have you experienced with stakeholders in your school as ELLs increase?

“I think the biggest challenge is to not understand the culture as I try to communicate. I try to respect the culture and I try to understand what I should say and not say as I try to meet the needs of these learners. Plus, understanding and balancing the high expectations of the parents of our ELLs. This is difficult because the cultural expectations of parents can be so different than native students. Students may not be motivated, but their parents expect us to motivate their kids; especially if students are only at the school for a short time.”

8. How do you proactively deter ethical challenges in your content area classes?

“Create a classroom that respects diversity; learn about the kids and the parents and keep communication open with everyone; students, parents, ESL specialist and other teachers”.

9. How do linguistic, relational, or ethical barriers in your classroom prevent you from successful educational outcomes?

“These challenges do not create barriers but make my work harder; I collaborate more and try to prepare more.”

10. What are the strengths of your ESL program as the ELL population increases?

“Better support, communication and collaboration with our ESL specialist. The specialist does a great job of holding us accountable and tracking us down to get the students, the support they need.”

11. What are the weaknesses of your ESL program as the ELL population increases?

“Planning better to have the work to the ESL specialist, on time, and to have the pre-vocabulary ready. We know what to do, but having the time to do it before it is needed is challenging.”

Beta Christian Academy – Ms. Hart

An iPad video/ audio was used, as well as scribed field notes.

Ms. Hart was interviewed on October 20 during a break out session of the ACSI teacher’s convention. She is a passionate Christian educator that has worked 3 years in the field of education at the ACSI Christian school she is currently employed at. She is the ESL specialist at her school and adds ESL support for content area teachers. She has seen an increase of ELLs in her content area classes over the last three years at her school.

1. What are your most common challenges of practice linguistically as an ACSI teacher with increasing ELLs in your classes?

“Teachers understanding the needs of the students and just how limited their language skills may be. Some teachers may not understand that some students may listen and nod and really not understand anything being said.”

2. How do you assess for linguistic barriers in your mixed language skills classroom?

“Checking for understanding for me is not just a grade. I ask, clarify, model, point, and have students use other students for translation. We all work hard to make sure real understanding is taking place.”

3. What accommodations and adaptations do you make for your ELLs to make language more accessible?

“I have seen a real increase in pre-vocabulary, a greater use of visuals, and more power points and hand-outs. We are using more types of teaching strategies than just speaking or lectures. I use more modeling and examples in my lessons. Plus, I am always reviewing. I use end of day review; the process of building and reviewing. I make modifications on tests and quizzes so students can be successful. We do Read Out-louds with questions to check for understanding.”

4. What are the most common challenges of practice you experience relationally as an ACSI teacher with increasing ELLs in your classes?

“To bring in content area classes and allow for conversations to build self-esteem; To allow conversations as motivation for learning and relationships.”

5. How do you interact with your ELLs outside of your classes?

“I spend a lot of lunchtime observing and interacting with my students. We learn a lot about each other as we incorporate food and fun at lunchtime. Plus, I support them afterschool during their sports. I am rooting for them. I want them to know that I want them to succeed.”

6. What strategies do you use to foster relationships within your content area classes with students that have mixed language abilities?

“I try to create opportunities for lots of conversations, not just academic opportunities, but social interactions, as well.”

7. What ethical challenges have you experienced with stakeholders in your school as ELLs increase?

“Because I am with the ELLs more, I hear “more” about the challenges. Students will tell me about rude or derogatory comments, which our administrator helps with and makes students aware of the disrespect. I also think we are aware of cliques more than ever and are careful to guide classes away from excluding students.”

8. How do you proactively deter ethical challenges in your content area classes?

“I don’t allow the “hierarchy of students; the belief that no student is better than another. I am very aware of who hangs out with who, and I make sure there is no hateful or negative comments.”

9. How do linguistic, relational, or ethical barriers in your classroom prevent you from successful educational outcomes?

“I think we work hard so that we don’t allow challenges to prevent barriers. There are still challenges and we are still trying to figure out the best way to accommodate each learner.”

10. What are the strengths of your ESL program as the ELL population increases?

“We are all committed to working together and collaborating. We all work hard to do our best to improve as we get more students, but not every teacher is communicating well, and I see the effects of this on the ELLs. I do understand that this takes time and that we are all getting more comfortable with the process as time goes on.”

11. What are the weaknesses of your ESL program as the ELL population increases?

“Communicating and getting stuff early from content, area teachers, to know their plans ahead of time, to support my students and also the teachers. Plus, the ESL department always needs more resources, training and clearly defined outcome for the ESL students.”

Gamma Christian Academy – Mrs. Jones

An iPad video/ audio was used, as well as scribed field notes.

Mrs. Jones was interviewed on Dec. 7. She has worked 10 years in the field of education at the ACSI Christian school she is currently employed in New Brunswick. This school has 110 students in JK – grade 12. It’s has 2 English language camps one in the winter and one in the summer that takes ELLs from China and Korea. She has taught Kindergarten and High school electives, but since the increase of ELLs in her school she has now become the ESL director.

1. What are your most common challenges of practice linguistically as an ACSI teacher with increasing ELLs in your classes? *“We have a huge entry point of students in grade 9 & 10, entering our school for English language training. We need to support and get our students ready for classes in grade 11 – 12. We have to support them to complete all the assignments and get them what they need to make the grades on their own, with support, but with the skills they need.”*
2. How do you assess for linguistic barriers in your mixed language skills classroom? *“We started the year with all our ELLs in all their classes and find the classes they need extra support. We may take them out of some content, area classes and we will modify the classes that we feel are important that they need to develop. We collaborate and communicate with*

each other to know what work maybe too challenging for the students as they are in their classes. Our staff is very good at checking for understanding and they are very good at communicating the support the students need. I do try to assess for all the criteria – reading, writing and phonics. I have a packet that I use to see what the ELLs know.”

3. What accommodations and adaptations do you make for your ELLs to make language more accessible? *“We modify assignments, we give notes early, our students don’t take notes but are given pre-printed notes ahead of time to look for new vocabulary. They have access to extra support during classes when needed, and afterschool, to review if they need help with clarification. Students will work on the same. Literature packs with an easier reading version of the same work that other students are working on and we will make the accommodation for each individual student based on their needs. We have the luxury to do that with the number of students we have.”*

4. What are the most common challenges of practice you experience relationally as an ACSI teacher with increasing ELLs in your classes? *“We used to intentionally buddy up students with other students, but that didn’t work because the international students are not warm or cozy, or sometimes even don’t make an effort. This year we changed our all English policy in the school. But this year we allow our elementary kids to speak their native language at their first recess and the high school can speak their native language at lunch. This is the only time they can do this and we are finding that there is a huge difference in their relationships. It just takes time; they are not going to come into the school ready for relationships. They are self-conscious of themselves and I think it is better if we don’t force*

it. We do help students with peers, to make sure they get to where they need to be. Sometimes, we may ask too much.”

5. How do you interact with your ELLs outside of your classes? *“I know these kids as the director of the program. I know their homestays, I know their parents, I know them. I know a bit more about them. We all participate in school functions together, but the homestays would be the ones that interact with them most outside of school.”*
6. What strategies do you use to foster relationships within your content area classes with students that have mixed language abilities? *“I am concentrating just on them. I pull them out of their classes. They know at the end of the day; they are spending time with me every day. Plus, they know I am interacting with their parents and they trust me. I am integrated in all their life when they are here.”*
7. What ethical challenges have you experienced with stakeholders in your school as ELLs increase? *“Ummm – (Mrs. Jones pauses here for a while to gather her thoughts) I would not say this is a problem here, because it is not different with any other new student. They are not treated differently because they are from somewhere else, they are just new. It takes a while for both sides to get comfortable. They all have to choose to be part of those relationships, and some of the kids don’t choose this and we need to find out how to make the kids comfortable or uncomfortable.”*
8. How do you proactively deter ethical challenges in your content area classes? *“I don’t think we can. It all takes time and I think in hindsight I may have pushed this. Yes, I want the students in a safe, loving environment for all our students, but I think we need to cut them some slack as they all get used to each other.”*

9. How do linguistic, relational, or ethical barriers in your classroom prevent you from successful educational outcomes? *“My expectations of the program, as I design the program for the ELL to be successful. My expectation of what I thought the program should be. Now, I have learned that each student is different.”*
10. What are the strengths of your ESL program as the ELL population increases? *“We have the luxury to design a program, an individual program for each student to help them be successful. It is ever evolving. It can be changed as we continually evaluate the students and their progress. We can take them out of classes to see what works best for each student and support them when necessary.”*
11. What are the weaknesses of your ESL program as the ELL population increases?
“Understanding the importance of knowing that each kid is different, and each level and their progress is so different. It is easy to forget how fluid the ELL is. It is always different and always changing, and that can be challenging. We need to make sure we are flexible with what we are doing, to meet the need of the student.”

Appendix 1

Interview Screening Survey

1. What ACSI Canadian Maritime school do you teach at?
2. How many years have you been teaching at your school?
3. Have you signed at least a one-year contract for the current teaching year?
4. Are you a content area teacher teaching ELLs?
5. Have you seen a noticeable increase in English Language Learners (ELLs) in your content area classes?
6. What content area do you teach?
7. What are the language proficiency levels of your ELLs?
8. What is the number of ELLs in your content area classes?
9. Are you able to complete two journal entries via email before your scheduled interview?
10. Are you able to meet for a 60-minute interview to discuss your challenges of practice due to teaching ELLs in content area classes?
11. Are you amenable to having a single content area class observation after the 90 minute interview in your content area classroom?
12. Do you have time to review transcriptions of the interview and observation via email, within one week of the interview?