

Summer 6-10-2019

# The Preparedness of Teachers in the Midwest Lutheran Synod to Teach English Language Learners: A Case Study in One High School

Ben Troge

*Concordia University - Portland*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.cu-portland.edu/edudissertations>



Part of the [Education Commons](#)

---

## CU Commons Citation

Troge, Ben, "The Preparedness of Teachers in the Midwest Lutheran Synod to Teach English Language Learners: A Case Study in One High School" (2019). *Ed.D. Dissertations*. 283.

<https://commons.cu-portland.edu/edudissertations/283>

This Open Access Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate Theses & Dissertations at CU Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Ed.D. Dissertations by an authorized administrator of CU Commons. For more information, please contact [libraryadmin@cu-portland.edu](mailto:libraryadmin@cu-portland.edu).

Concordia University–Portland

College of Education

Doctorate of Education Program

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED MEMBERS OF THE DISSERTATION COMMITTEE  
CERTIFY THAT WE HAVE READ AND APPROVE THE DISSERTATION OF

Benjamin Kurt Troge

CANDIDATE FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

Edward Kim, Ph.D., Faculty Chair Dissertation Committee

Tom Cavanagh, Ph.D., Content Specialist

Heather Miller, Ph.D., Content Reader

The Preparedness of Teachers in the Midwest Lutheran Synod to Teach English Language  
Learners: A Case Study in One High School

Benjamin Troge  
Concordia University–Portland  
College of Education

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the College of Education  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Education in  
Educational Administration

Edward Kim, Ph.D., Faculty Chair Dissertation Committee

Tom Cavanagh, Ph.D., Content Specialist

Heather Miller, Ph.D., Content Reader

Concordia University–Portland

2019

## **Abstract**

The enrollment numbers of English language learners (ELLs) in U.S. high schools continue to grow. This trend is not exclusive to public schools; many of the Midwest Lutheran Synod's (MLS) high schools are increasingly enrolling international students. As such, if preservice programs do not prepare teachers to instruct this student population, individual schools must provide the in-service professional development in ELL. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to gain an understanding of how a group of teachers at one MLS high school that enrolls international students describe how well prepared they were to teach their ELL student population. One research question guided this study: How do a select group of MLS teachers describe how well they were prepared to teach ELL students in their in-service training at their place of employment? The purposeful sample consisted of 10 teachers at one MLS high school who graduated from Midwest Lutheran College and had been teaching at this high school for at least one year. Data collection instruments included two rounds of face-to-face interviews and documents provided by the participants or the school. The inductive analysis model was used to analyze the data collected from the interviews and the interpretive analysis model was used to analyze the collected documents. The results indicated the participants were displeased with their undergraduate ELL training but pleased with the professional development provided at their school. However, teachers sought additional in-service professional development that specifically addressed the technical pedagogy associated with instructing ELL students.

*Keywords:* English language learners, Midwest Lutheran College, Midwest Lutheran Synod, cultural diversity, teacher efficacy, teacher empathy, professional development, preservice training, in-service training, school leadership

## **Dedication**

This dissertation is dedicated to my dad, Kurt Troge. Without pressure or coercion, he silently encouraged me to pursue education when the military was no longer an option. When asked what he thought I should “be” when I grew up he said, “Whatever God leads you to do to glorify His name.” It was his dedication to his students, American history, ministry, and preaching the Good News to all creation that inspired me to become a Lutheran educator. His desire to think outside of the box as a Lutheran principal has driven me to do the same. The last lesson he taught me before he left this earth for his heavenly home was to stay close to Jesus, love my family, work hard, and give all the glory to God. Many students were blessed to have him as a teacher and principal. I pray I can be half the husband, father, educator, principal, and man he was.

## **Acknowledgments**

First and foremost, I want to thank God my Father for putting me in the position I am in so this journey might be possible. Second, I want to thank my Savior Jesus for being the ultimate example of servant leadership. It is His example of servant leadership that has helped me through this process so that I might in turn serve others.

I also thank my wife, Katy. Without her undying support and encouragement, I am not sure all of this would have been possible. While I was reading and writing, she was taking care of our family by being both a mom and a dad.

To that end, I want to thank my five children: Skyler, Kylie, Mikayla, Grant, and Savannah for understanding the times I missed volleyball games, basketball games, track meets, trips to the pool, tucking them in at night, and parts of vacation time.

Next, I want to thank my editors, Pastor Carl Leyrer, Kim Winters, and Dr. Jason Lowrey, who know the MLS and were able to help me make this relevant for the MLS school system as well as Jeff Zuckerman who put the final professional touches on the document. I could not have done this without your help.

I also want to thank my school for giving me this opportunity as well as all of the teachers and fellow administrators who encouraged me through this process and were willing to put up with my lack of sleep and forgetfulness. Even though I might not have always been on my “A game,” your support and encouragement has been invaluable.

Finally, I would like to thank my faculty chair, Dr. Edward Kim, and committee members Dr. Heather Miller and Dr. Tom Cavanagh, for your support and assistance through this process. I had no idea what this process was all going to take, but it was Dr. Kim’s support that helped me push through the process.

## Table of Contents

Abstract .....	ii
Dedication .....	iii
Acknowledgments.....	iv
List of Tables .....	x
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
Introduction to the Problem .....	1
Conceptual Framework of the Problem .....	2
Background, Context, and History.....	2
Conceptual Framework for the Problem.....	4
Statement of the Problem.....	5
Purpose of the Study .....	6
Research Question .....	6
Rationale, Relevance, and Significance of the Study .....	7
Definition of Terms.....	7
Assumptions, Delimitations, and Limitations.....	9
Assumptions.....	9
Delimitations.....	9
Limitations .....	9
Summary.....	10
Chapter 2: Literature Review .....	12
Introduction to the Literature Review .....	12
Conceptual Framework.....	13
Review of Research Literature and Methodological Literature.....	15

Search Strategy .....	15
Preservice Training .....	16
Professional Development .....	18
Teacher Empathy/Attitudes .....	19
School Leadership.....	21
Summary .....	23
Review of Methodological Issues .....	25
Quantitative Research .....	25
Qualitative Research .....	26
Mixed Methods .....	29
Synthesis of Research Findings .....	30
Preservice Training .....	31
Professional Development .....	32
Teacher Empathy/Attitudes .....	33
Leadership.....	33
Critique of Previous Research .....	34
Chapter 2 Summary .....	37
Chapter 3: Methodology .....	39
Introduction.....	39
Research Question .....	39
Purpose and Design of the Study .....	40
Research Population.....	41
Sampling Method.....	41

Instrumentation .....	42
Data Collection .....	44
Semistructured Interviews .....	44
Document Collection .....	45
Identification of Attributes.....	46
Data Analysis Procedures .....	47
Interviews.....	48
Document Collection .....	49
Limitations and Delimitations of the Research Design .....	50
Limitations .....	50
Delimitations.....	51
Validation.....	52
Credibility .....	52
Dependability .....	53
Expected Findings.....	54
Interviews.....	54
Documents .....	54
Ethical Issues .....	55
Conflict of Interest Assessment .....	55
Ethical Issues in the Study .....	56
Chapter 3 Summary .....	57
Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results.....	58
Description of the Sample.....	58

Research Methodology and Analysis.....	65
Data Collection .....	65
Initial Interviews .....	66
Documents Collected .....	67
Follow-Up Interviews .....	68
Data Analysis .....	69
Initial and Follow-Up Interview Data.....	69
Collected Documents .....	70
Summary of the Findings.....	71
Presentation of the Data and Results .....	73
Documents .....	95
Themes From Across These Data.....	99
Summary.....	100
Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion .....	102
Summary of the Results .....	102
Discussion of the Results .....	105
Discussion of the Results in Relation to the Literature.....	109
Limitations .....	113
Study Design.....	114
Participants.....	114
Research Method .....	114
Data Collection .....	115
Implications of the Results for Practice, Policy, and Theory .....	116

Practice.....	116
Policy .....	118
Theory.....	119
Recommendations for Further Research.....	120
Conclusion .....	121
References.....	124
Appendix A: Consent Form.....	133
Appendix B: Interview Guide, Part I.....	135
Appendix C: Interview Guide, Part II.....	137
Appendix D: Document Request .....	138
Appendix E: Recruitment Email.....	139
Appendix F: Inductive Analysis Steps.....	141
Appendix G: Interpretive Analysis Steps .....	142
Appendix H: Statement of Original Work .....	143

## List of Tables

Table 1. <i>Overview of Participants</i> .....	59
Table 2. <i>Overview of Themes and Codes</i> .....	74
Table 3. <i>Overview of Themes and Corresponding Documents</i> .....	96

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **Introduction to the Problem**

The landscape of education in the United States continues to diversify as the 21st century approaches the quarter-century mark. English language learners (ELLs) are becoming more prevalent in classrooms across the United States. According to the United States Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (2018), the public school student population comprises 4.8 million ELL students, or 9.5% of the total student count, an increase of 1.4% from the years 2000 to 2015. Furthermore, according to National Kids Count (2017), more than 12 million children in the United States between the ages of five and 17 speak a language other than English at home, an increase of almost 2.5 million children from the turn of this century. Thus, our nation's teachers must be prepared to meet the needs students with disparate English-speaking abilities.

These statistics, however, do not tell the whole story of ELLs in schools as they do not reflect the ELLs enrolled in private schools. The Midwest Lutheran Synod (MLS) comprises 26 high schools across the United States, enrolling 5,493 students (as reported in the organizations 2018 statistics), of whom 10% are ELL. That enrollment percentage exceeds the national average, having risen tenfold since the year 2000. Consequently, there is a need to ensure the high school teachers in the MLS are adequately prepared to meet the diverse needs of the students in their schools.

The characteristics of today's secondary school classrooms are significantly different than those of the 20th century. Frequently, teachers enter culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms unprepared to provide ELL students with the education they deserve. Among other things, the skills that mainstream teachers need in linguistically diverse settings include

pedagogical and classroom management training in order to effectively reach students at all educational and linguistic levels (Gan, 2013; Jimenez-Silva, Olson, & Jimenez Hernandez, 2012; McGee, Haworth, & Macintyre, 2015; Penner-Williams, Diaz, & Gonzales Worthen, 2017; Short, 2013).

The need for teachers trained to instruct ELL students in MLS high schools continues to grow. Preparing teachers to become adequately prepared to instruct ELL students revolves around four main areas: (a) receiving proper preservice or undergraduate training, (b) receiving proper professional development or in-service training, (c) developing necessary empathy and attitudes toward ELL students, and (d) finding school leaders capable of leading schools with ELL students. Although there are four main areas, they are intertwined. This study was designed to explore how well prepared MLS teachers are to instruct ELL students, specifically through the professional development they receive.

## **Conceptual Framework of the Problem**

### **Background, Context, and History**

A vast amount of research has indicated most teachers have not received the training necessary to instruct underrepresented students, especially ELL students. Preparing teachers to meet the needs of ELL students involves providing adequate preservice training as well as in-service professional development. Without proper training, teachers of ELL students frequently lack the skills and empathy necessary to understand the full range of ELL needs (Berg & Huang, 2015; DiCerbo, Anstrom, Baker, & Rivera, 2014; Elfers, Lucero, Stritikus, & Knapp, 2013; Faez, 2012; Hutchinson, 2013; Johnson, Bolshakova, & Waldron, 2016; Penner-Williamset al., 2017; Zhang & Pelttari, 2014).

Preparing teachers for the Midwest Lutheran Synod (MLS) became a reality in 1884 when Dr. Midwest Lutheran College was built in New Ulm, MN, with the sole purpose of preparing teachers for the parish schools of MLS congregations and those in fellowship with the MLS. In 1995, Dr. Midwest Lutheran College amalgamated with Northwestern College of Watertown, WI, the MLS pastor training college, to become Midwest Lutheran College (MLC). MLS has a rich history of providing Lutheran education, which it has done for more than 150 years (Rademan, 2018). For many years, MLS parish schools and high schools limited themselves to primarily serve student populations that were members of the MLS. During the mid-1990s, the student population in MLS schools began to shrink significantly. Consequently, many MLS high schools across the country explored a variety of ways by which they could increase their student populations and thereby remain solvent. One of these ways was to expand their ministries to an international student population.

The MLS school system is unique in that the core content is taught by classroom teachers who are certified by the MLS. Adding to this uniqueness is that the majority of the 2,732 teachers serving in the MLS received their preservice training from their only teacher training college: MLC. Further increasing the challenge for MLS high schools with an international student population is the reality that the graduates of MLC are trained to primarily serve a distinctly Lutheran population, and undergraduate teacher training focuses on that main group of students. Consequently, as many MLS high schools expanded their international student programs, the high school leaders across the synod were obligated to provide their teachers the professional development opportunities necessary for the more effective instruction of their international ELL student population.

When there is a lack of ELL preservice training, the obligation of providing adequate, in-service professional development to their teachers will fall on the individual schools. This is a necessary obligation because, as previously indicated, instructing ELL students requires teachers to have a skill set that is different from general teacher preparation programs. Consequently, as many MLS high schools continue to enroll international students at a rate that exceeds the national ELL average, professional development opportunities such as inviting guest speakers to present to the faculty, attending MLS teacher conferences, and having a local teacher present information must be provided at the local level to meet the needs of ELL students (Cammarata & Tedick, 2012; Elfers et al., 2013; McGee et al., 2015).

### **Conceptual Framework for the Problem**

More often than not, teachers are underprepared to serve a student population of English language learners. So that teachers might become sufficiently equipped to instruct ELLs, they must be given opportunities to interact and work with this student population to better understand what their needs truly are. This includes the high school teachers of the MLS, who must undertake a constructivist approach to learning when it comes to serving an ELL student population (Baecher, 2012a; Cammarata & Tedick, 2012; Faez, 2012, Hutchinson, 2013; Jimenez-Silva et al., 2012; Khong & Saito, 2014).

Constructivism is a theory of learning in which individuals develop knowledge and meaning based upon previous experiences (Creswell, 2013, 2014; Patton, 2015; Stake, 1995). According to constructivist theory, people are able make sense of their individual circumstances by describing the real-life experiences they encounter. The knowledge and meanings constructed in individuals takes place through interaction with people, how they view their

circumstances, and assessing what things have a direct and immediate impact on their life (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2015).

I chose a constructivist approach for this study because of the role that I played within it. I was serving in my 12th year as principal of a MLS high school with an enrollment of approximately 80% international or ELL students and my 18th year serving in the MLS school system. Additionally, similar to the participants in my study, I graduated from MLC, the MLS teacher training college. Because I had much in common with the teachers in this study, I was able to use my personal background and experiences to help describe the participants' experiences.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The student enrollment in many of the high schools in the MLS has been steadily decreasing. One way many of the MLS high schools have addressed this decrease in student enrollment is by enrolling an increasing number of international students, most of whom are not native English speakers. The consequence is that MLS high school teachers must have the skills necessary to adequately instruct non-native English learners. Among the contributors to this problem are the preservice training teachers receive, the in-service training teachers receive at their place of employment, the teacher's empathy and attitudes towards ELLs, and the leadership of the school in which the teachers are employed (Berg & Huang, 2015; DiCerbo et al., 2014; Elfers et al., 2013; Faez, 2012; Hutchinson, 2013; Johnson et al., 2016; Penner-Williams et al., 2017; Zhang & Pelttari, 2014). This study contributed to the body of knowledge needed to address this problem by exploring how well prepared MLS high school teachers are to instruct ELL students. Specifically, this study focused on the professional development they receive at their school. The following question guided the research: How do a select group of MLS

teachers describe how well they were prepared to teach ELL students in their in-service training at their place of employment?

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to describe how well prepared MLS high school teachers were to instruct ELL students through the in-service professional development they received at one of the MLS high schools. As previously stated, to augment ministry opportunities, many of the MLS high schools are continuing to expand their ministries by enrolling international students from foreign countries. As a result, many of the students do not speak English as their native language. Consequently, the high school teachers in the MLS need to be equipped to instruct students who are ELLs. Because most of the high school teachers received their undergraduate degrees from the same college, the leaders of the MLS high schools face a similar situation; namely, teachers need in-service training to provide students who are learning English with instruction at their various levels. The study was designed to identify the in-service training that one particular MLS high school provided its teachers to equip them with the necessary tools to instruct their ELL students. Furthermore, the study was designed to help other high schools in the MLS understand what professional development is needed to assist their teachers in instructing ELLs.

### **Research Question**

This study addressed the following question: How do a select group of MLS teachers describe how well they were prepared to teach ELL students in their in-service training at their place of employment?

## **Rationale, Relevance, and Significance of the Study**

The language and literacy demands of ELLs in mainstream classrooms are rigorous. In many cases, they mirror the same expectations of students who are native English speakers. Yet, mainstream teachers are often ill-equipped to meet the needs of ELLs (de Jong & Harper, 2005). Because there is a great need to meet the needs of classrooms where there are linguistically diverse students, it becomes the responsibility of the school leadership to provide professional development to adequately train their teachers to meet those needs (McGee et al., 2015). López, Scanlan, and Gundrum (2013) noted the importance of training mainstream classroom teachers to meet the needs of all students with varying levels of English.

The relevance and significance of this study within the MLS school system is in line with what is taking place in high schools, public or private, throughout the United States. According to de Jong and Harper (2005), 42% of teachers instruct ELL students, yet only 12.5% of the teachers have more than eight hours of professional development to meet the needs of ELL students. With many of the MLS high schools expanding their ministries to include enrolling international students, there is a need to have teachers properly trained to instruct ELL students. If MLS high school administrators are properly informed about the importance of in-service, professional development programs designed to equip teachers to meet the needs of ELL students, they will then be able to better move their respective international ministries forward. This case study provided the aforementioned information for future MLS high school administrators.

## **Definition of Terms**

The following terms and definitions were applied to the purposes of this study:

*Cultural diversity*: Multi-ethnic groups of immigrant and non-immigrant individuals (Schachner, 2019).

*English language learners (ELLs)*: A national-origin-minority student who is limited-English-proficient (U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

*In-service training*: Focused professional development activities provided at the local level to address a particular aspect of education (Bostock, 2019; Olson Beal & Rudolph, 2015).

*Midwest Lutheran College (MLC)*: A pseudonym for the Midwest Lutheran Synod's teacher training college responsible for preparing teachers for the elementary and high schools within the synod.

*Preservice training*: Undergraduate teacher preparation programs that certify individuals to become licensed teachers (Baecher, 2012a; Hutchinson, 2013).

*Professional development*: Initiatives and focused training to assist teachers to meet the needs of the students they teach (Reeves, 2010).

*School leadership*: Any administrator who has decision making ability at his or her school. School leadership can include, but is not limited to, the principal, academic dean, and vice-principal.

*Teacher efficacy*: "Teachers' confidence in their ability to promote students' learning" (Hoy, as cited in Protheroe, 2008), p. 43).

*Teacher empathy*: "A necessary emotion, enabling teachers of language learners to gain cultural understanding" (Zhang & Pelttari, 2014, p. 181).

*Midwest Lutheran Synod (MLS)*: A pseudonym for a Lutheran church body consisting of approximately 400,000 members in approximately 1,300 congregations.

## **Assumptions, Delimitations, and Limitations**

As is the case with any scholarly research, researchers must consider any assumptions and limitations when conducting their research. Additionally, researchers need to limit the scope of research in order to make the study manageable. Therefore, delimitations, or boundaries, must be set.

### **Assumptions**

I made several assumptions when I undertook this study. Because of our shared interest in the MLS school system, I assumed participants would be honest about the in-service professional development they received during the two interviews. I also assumed the teachers would not be concerned or worried about any potential chastisement from their administrators for being honest. Finally, I also assumed participants would provide me with the documents I requested as part of the data collection process.

### **Delimitations**

Because of time constraints, distance, and available resources, I delimited my research to one high school in the MLS that enrolls international students. Additionally, I delimited the number of participants to those who had at least one year of experience at this high school and who graduated from the same MLS teacher training college, MLC. Finally, as recommended by Seidman (2013), I conducted two interviews with each participant.

### **Limitations**

Because the leadership of MLS high schools is autonomous, one limitation of this study was the information gathered from one high school may not be generalizable to the other high schools in the MLS. In addition, I had a shared interest in the MLS school system. The study was limited to the honesty and completeness to the interview questions. Another potential

limitation was my personal bias and knowledge about the undergraduate training at MLC, as I received similar training as those to be interviewed. To mitigate potential bias, I ensured that the personal information of the participants remained confidential, and I was transparent throughout the research process. Another limitation was that the documents collected were incomplete. While the small sample size allowed me to gain an in-depth understanding of the relevant in-service professional development provided at one high school, a more extensive study involving more MLS high schools may produce additional insight into how well prepared MLS teachers in general are to instruct ELL students.

### **Summary**

The number of ELL students in classrooms across the United States continues to increase from year to year, a trend that is mirrored in the MLS school system. As such, MLS high school teachers need the proper training to adequately provide the instruction every student deserves.

Any assessment of teachers' preparedness must examine the following: preservice undergraduate training, an individual teacher's attitude toward instructing ELLs, the school's professional development program, and support from the school's leadership. To meet the culturally diverse and linguistic needs in MLS high schools, teachers must be given the tools necessary to provide a rigorous education to all students, including the international student population. In this study, I focused on how individual schools can accomplish this through the professional development programs that a school provides its teachers.

This qualitative case study was designed to better understand the professional development that one MLS high school offers its teachers to meet the learning needs of its ELL student population. The study served as a springboard to further research of the MLS efficacy in ELL instruction.

Chapter 2 presents an overview of the current literature regarding the various factors impacting teacher ELL preparation, methodological issues of the research, and critique of previous research. Chapter 3 focuses on the research question, the purpose of utilizing the case study design, the process for sampling, data collection, data analysis, expected findings, and the ethical issues of the case study. Chapter 4 provides the data collected from the interviews and documents and the data are analyzed. Chapter 5 provides a summary of the results and discusses the results and their implications for practice, policy, and theory.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **Introduction to the Literature Review**

English language learners (ELLs) total approximately 9.4% of the students educated in the United States (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017). Not counting Southern Savior Academy, the school where I serve as principal, approximately 7% of the students in the remaining 25 area Lutheran high schools of the MLS are ELLs (2018 statistics). Thus, MLS classroom teachers must have the ability and tools to instruct their non-native English speaking students. Preservice preparation programs are one essential aspect to help teachers instruct all students (Darling-Hammond, 2006). The literature review suggested the bulk of past research has been conducted on the preparedness of public and private school teachers to meet the needs of ELL students. The purpose of this study was to begin a conversation regarding the preparedness of MLS teachers and their competency to instruct ELLs.

I am the high school principal of Southern Savior Academy (a pseudonym for my school) located in a southern Florida city. This Pre-K–3 through Grade 12 school currently enrolls 970 students from over 40 countries. Approximately 80% of the students at Southern Savior Academy are nonnative English speakers. In this context, it became apparent that many of the teachers, most of whom graduated from Midwest Lutheran College (the MLS teacher training college), needed additional training to teach ELLs. The same may be said of the other high schools within the MLS that enroll ELLs since their training is similar to the teachers at the school where I am the principal.

The MLS school system has been in existence for more than 150 years, with 2,732 teachers instructing 41,720 students (2018 statistics). At the high school level, there are 26 MLS schools, with a current enrollment of 5,493 students educated by 498 teachers (2018 statistics).

Initially, the high schools in the MLS school system were created to teach children of the Lutheran faith, but many have since evolved to enrolling non-Lutheran students; which includes recruiting non-Lutheran international students. Consequently, teachers in MLS high schools must be able to reach students not fluent in English. Because some of the high schools within the MLS rely on international students to maintain an adequate population level, this study on the preparedness of MLS teachers teaching ELLs is important both for both educative as well as sustainability purposes. In summary, researching the preservice and in-service training of the MLS teachers is important to the overall well-being of the synod's high schools. Thus, I designed this study to address how well teachers' preservice training and professional orientation prepared them to instruct ELLs in one MLS high school.

This literature review begins with a conceptual framework, followed by an examination of ELL preservice teacher training programs in the United States. The literature review also includes

- a review of ELL professional development available to teachers in the field,
- a review of teacher empathy and attitudes towards ELLs, and
- what MLS high school leadership should do to assist teachers on how to better instruct ELLs.

### **Conceptual Framework**

Multiple factors influence the education provided to culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms. Among these factors are teacher preparation programs, professional development in the field, and teachers' empathy and attitudes toward ELLs, and school leadership. Another consideration is teachers' existing beliefs about ELLs, beliefs that are often based upon previous interactions with ELL students (Russell & Russell, 2014). Many teachers of ELLs must

construct their own knowledge of how best to serve ELLs based upon their limited interactions with them. These limited interactions may give teachers an incomplete understanding of how ELL students best learn in an English-language environment (Khong & Saito, 2014).

Consequently, a key component to effectively training teachers to serve students, especially those who do not speak English as their native language, is to provide ample opportunities to work with ELL students so that an understanding of the needs of non-native English speakers develops (Baecher, 2012a; Cammarata & Tedick, 2012; Faez, 2012, Hutchinson, 2013; Jimenez-Silva et al., 2012; Khong & Saito, 2014). Often, teachers enter culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms underprepared to serve a population of first-time English learners. This includes high school teachers of the MLS. As such, teachers must undertake a constructivist approach to learning to best serve ELLs, which requires that all MLS high school teachers to better understand the situations in which they work.

The paradigm that drove this study was the constructivist theory of learning. Because of the nature of MLS schools and their history, many teachers have had to employ a constructivist approach to educating ELLs. Constructivism is a theory of learning in which individuals develop knowledge and meaning based upon previous experiences (Creswell, 2013, 2014; Patton, 2015; Stake, 1995). According to constructivist theory, the real-life experiences of adult learners create the reality they experience. Individuals construct meaning as they interact with the people, view their circumstances, and absorb the things that immediately impact one's life on a daily basis (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2015). In the case of teachers of ELL students, best practices can be taught in preservice training and professional development activities, but until teachers interact directly with ELL students, there is insufficient background knowledge or experience to best know how to serve this growing student population adequately.

MLS schools were created to serve the children of a parish, or in the case of the high schools, a federation of churches' students. The understood construct of these schools was to provide Christian education in the Lutheran tradition for little or no cost. However, with the cost of educating students steadily increasing over the decades, many schools have been driven to find alternative means of funding. One of these means has been to open the doors of area Lutheran high schools to an expanding international student population. That reality, in turn, has obligated teachers to instruct growing populations of nonnative English speaking students. Consequently, constructivist learning is paramount to equipping MLS teachers to teach a diverse group of students in mainstream classrooms.

This study was designed to answer how prepared MLS teachers are to teach ELLs in their preservice training and to determine the professional development they receive while employed in a MLS high school. Constructivist learning theory was used to organize and guide the research. I am an active principal and teacher in the MLS and the constructivist approach assisted me in understanding how other teachers in the MLS view their preparation to effectively teach ELLs. Creswell (2013) cited the words of constructivist theorist M. Crotty when he suggested that "the basic generation of meaning is always social, arising in and out of interaction with a human community" (2013, p. 8).

## **Review of Research Literature and Methodological Literature**

### **Search Strategy**

The literature search originally focused on how teachers' morale was impacted by teaching ELL students. However, as the search evolved, it geared itself more toward preservice training, and the programs teachers did or did not receive in order to effectively teach ELLs. While conducting searches, I learned there is more to being adequately prepared to teach ELLs

than just preservice training. Issues such as empathy and attitudes toward ELLs are connected to preservice training and should be emphasized. Professional development courses and experience while in the field also have an impact on teaching ELLs. Above all, school leadership affects a teacher's ability to show and practice empathy toward educating ELLs.

Employing the University of Concordia, Portland's online library as a main channel of research, I conducted a search accessing the following databases: ProQuest, ERIC, JSTOR, Wiley Online Library, and Science Direct. After running into roadblocks trying to learn more about the training teachers did or did not receive to adequately prepare them to teach ELLs, I accessed Google Scholar to broaden search options. Keywords explored included *principal leadership, teacher leadership, morale, English Language Learners, English as a second language, preservice training, ELLs, teacher empathy, teacher efficacy, sensitivity, teacher motivation, Professional Learning Communities, shared decision making, professional development, teacher buy-in, English as a second language, immigrant students, teacher motivation, teacher training, educational challenges, intrinsic motivation, school climate, inclusive education, teacher preparation, ELL teachers, ELL curriculum, TESOL programs, Latino students, sheltered instruction, cultural diversity, multicultural education, and foreign students*. In the following four sections—preservice training, professional development, teacher attitudes and empathy towards ELLs, and school leadership—I show the literature suggesting the reasons to conduct a case study on teachers in the MLS and their preparedness to teach ELLs.

### **Preservice Training**

The educational landscape across America is constantly changing. ELLs are becoming an increasing percentage of students being taught in schools today. Within the MLS, approximately 10% of high school students are ELLs (2018 statistics). Consequently, the

curriculum preparing teachers within the MLS, as well as in other colleges and universities, must evolve in order to accommodate this changing educational landscape (Cho, et al., 2012). Faez (2012) noted that teachers do not have the required knowledge and ability to support the increasing number of ELLs in today's classrooms.

In addition to the responsibility of educating all students, teachers need the confidence and skills to support students with a variety of linguistic and cultural backgrounds (Faez, 2012). These skills include having the pedagogical and classroom management training that affords teachers the ability to reach students where they are and instruct them accordingly (Gan, 2013; Jimenez-Silva et al., 2012; Short, 2013). Additionally, teachers need to know how to differentiate between students who face the challenge of learning a second language from those who have unrelated disabilities or academic struggles (Cheatham et al., 2014). As noted by Johnson et al. (2016), most teachers have not received the proper training on how to meet the individual needs of underrepresented students, especially ELLs.

In addition to increasing teachers' pedagogical knowledge in teaching ELLs, teachers also need preservice exercises and hands-on experience with ELLs in order to truly understand what these students are experiencing in a mainstream classroom (Hutchinson, 2013; Zhang & Pelttari, 2014). Although teacher education programs already include a number of requirements for certification, only a hands-on approach can help teachers engage in best practices in the classroom (Hutchinson, 2013). As Zhang and Pelttari (2014) noted, preservice teachers will be best equipped to teach ELLs when they have opportunities to develop specific skills and empathy in real-life settings, which will ultimately help them deliver culturally appropriate curriculum and instruction.

## **Professional Development**

When teachers are ill-equipped or underprepared in their preservice training to address the needs of ELLs, they are often left to rely on their own limited knowledge of ELLs and how best to reach them (Faez, 2012). Consequently, it becomes the responsibility of schools to provide teachers with the age-appropriate professional development. However, if these professional development activities are one-shot programs or are not frequent enough to address the changing teaching conditions, the professional development necessary to help equip teachers to teach ELLs will often fall short (Khong & Saito, 2014).

Johnson et al. (2016) noted that transformative professional development (TPD) can equip teachers with the tools needed to increase teacher effectiveness and increase the academic growth of ELLs. This program includes helping teachers master classroom management skills while simultaneously equipping them to teach content in a fashion that reaches students of all abilities and languages. Cammarata and Tedick (2012) found that teachers desperately need support in order to bridge the gap between language and content. Johnson et al. (2016) highlighted changed attitudes and behaviors from teachers (that is, being more comfortable with the varying cultures and linguistic abilities in content-rich classes) when they were provided professional development activities that focused on instructing ELLs.

An important factor in helping teachers gain the necessary skills in teaching ELLs is designing professional development activities which challenge teachers to examine their personal beliefs and practices about the languages their students speak (DiCerbo et al., 2014). Additionally, they noted that professional development which focuses primarily on equipping teachers to teach academic English (AE) can be instrumental in assisting ELLs to develop

awareness of the nuances associated with AE and thus provide opportunities to ELLs in learning how AE is used in professional and academic settings.

According to Elfers et al. (2013) however, providing professional development to teachers of ELLs is not sufficient in and of itself. Teachers must also be provided collegial opportunities to get together, collaborate, and discuss ELL students, content, and the various skills and practices individual teachers employ in their classrooms. One way in which this can be accomplished is through professional learning communities (PLCs). This practice is important because the needs of students learning English cannot be addressed by individual teachers or schools alone—it is the work of all educational professionals. This work can be accomplished effectively when schools and school leaders ensure support is provided not only through professional development activities, but also by coaches and paraprofessionals who work with ELL students and have mastered the skills to educate ELLs (Elfers et al., 2013).

More attention needs to be given to providing teachers with the skills needed to instruct ELLs (Berg & Huang, 2015). Teachers need to be prepared to teach students in multilingual and multicultural settings. This requires initiatives that address the skills not acquired in teachers' preservice training (Faez, 2012). In addition to mastering content, teachers must hone both their classroom management skills as well as their teacher skills for the ability to address the needs of all ELLs. When teachers acquire the skills necessary for a multicultural classroom environment, not only do students become comfortable; they tend to find academic success.

### **Teacher Empathy/Attitudes**

Teacher empathy is that capacity that allows teachers to understand their students' feelings and emotions. High empathy also includes the ability to understand cultural and linguistic differences of students in the classroom. Personal and professional experiences

empower teachers to come to a better understanding of students who do not speak English (Faez, 2012; Khong & Saito, 2014; Russell & Russell, 2014; Sosa & Gomez, 2012; Zhang & Pelttari, 2014). Faez (2012) argued that although empathy is important to truly understand diversity issues in the classroom, it is not enough. He added that teacher training and professional development are paramount in truly helping teachers develop the pedagogical knowledge necessary to teach ELLs. Without this proper professional development, negative empathy towards ELLs will continue to hinder a teacher's ability to teach ELLs.

Zhang and Pelttari (2014) showed that ELLs need to be instructed in a safe and caring environment where they are treated as equals with their peers and where they can relate their own learned experiences to their new surroundings. Teachers need to realize that the immediate emotional responses ELLs face are feelings of frustration, isolation, confusion, and even embarrassment. One way in which teachers can learn to empathize with their ELL students is by participating in other language programs themselves where they will learn firsthand what ELLs face in the classroom. This and similar experiences afford the opportunity to help teachers identify with ELLs, and consequently, provide challenging and culturally appropriate instruction (Zhang & Pelttari, 2014, p. 191).

Teachers can also develop a more positive attitude toward ELL students in their classrooms by reflecting on their own past educational experiences and the frustrations they experienced as students. By reflecting on their own negative bias towards ELLs (such as their perception of the speed of ELL students' progress as well as the varying academic and linguistic levels in the classroom), teachers can change their mindsets and understand ELLs more completely (Khong & Saito, 2014). Russell and Russell (2014) commented that teachers' preexisting beliefs about ELLs as well as their lack of knowledge of diverse cultures can

ultimately create negative stereotypes of non-native English speaking students. To minimize the negative stereotyping of ELLs, teachers need to become more culturally-aware educators by getting to know their students, their families, and their cultures, and developing relationships that allow for empathy towards ELLs (Russell & Russell, 2014). In conclusion, there needs to be a change in teachers' belief systems about their ability to teach ELL students as well as their own personal belief systems about ELLs in order for ELL students to receive equitable education similar to native English-speaking students (Cammarata & Tedick, 2012).

Also contributing to a teacher's attitudes and empathy for ELLs is his or her own self-efficacy (Crowson & Brandes, 2014; Jimenez-Silva et al., 2012; Sosa & Gomez, 2012). Berg & Huang (2015) and Hutchinson (2013) noted that more attention should be given to preservice as well as in-service training to assist teachers in developing the confidence necessary to provide high quality education to a diverse group of learners. Without it, there will be further stereotyping as well as opposition to teaching ELLs, which will in turn influence power struggles within the classroom setting (Cummins, Mirza, & Stille, 2012). Furthermore, Sosa and Gomez (2012) identified strong training as a necessity to helping teachers strengthen their self-efficacy with ELLs.

### **School Leadership**

Effective leadership provides an atmosphere in a classroom where teaching and learning is a priority. To that end, there needs to be a focus on developing leaders who both understand and know how to support learners of various socioeconomic backgrounds as well as ELLs. School leaders cannot take a "business-as-usual" approach to education and to teacher training which assumes that all learners must fit into the existing school climate and that ELLs' needs are similar to native English speakers (McGee et al., 2015). Leaders must be aware of the dynamic

needs of their schools. Awareness allows school leaders to focus on creating both an environment and professional development activities where ELLs are provided quality instruction at every level (Elfers, et al., 2013; Sosa & Gomez, 2012). Getting teacher buy-in through activities such as PLCs and shared decision-making and/or distributed leadership is one such way leaders can ensure all students and especially ELLs have the support and instructional expertise from their teachers necessary to succeed (Elfers et al., 2013; Harris, 2012; Lai & Cheung, 2015; Sarafidou & Chatziioannidis, 2013; Wadesango, 2012a).

Harris (2012) commented that when schools restructure themselves in such a way that leadership is shared among the various stakeholders, there is a greater likelihood of positive school improvements. Furthermore, when principals and other school leaders share the responsibility of empowering others to make important school decisions such as curriculum improvements, selecting textbooks, and creating policies, the professionalism of teachers improves as well as their attitudes and morale, thereby improving student outcomes and behavior (Harris, 2012; Lai & Cheung, 2015; Sarafidou & Chatziioannidis, 2013; Trimmer, 2013; Wadesango, 2012a). When principals provide positive feedback on a regular basis, teachers feel empowered to be more committed to the school where they are employed. An additional by-product of providing positive and regular feedback is that teacher morale, attitudes, and empathy towards all learners improves (Lambersky, 2016).

Sebastian and Allensworth (2012) identified school leaders as the individuals primarily responsible for, as well as most effective in, creating a school climate that feels safe, creates students with better behavior, and generates optimal student outcomes. In the same way, these researchers noted that creating this safe and effective school climate comes from providing quality professional development. School leaders are instrumental in pointing out and explaining

the professional development needs of their teachers. When teachers recognize they have certain needs, such as skills specifically related to teaching ELLs, they tend to become more responsive to the professional development activities principals and other school leaders provide (Elfers et al., 2013). Elfers et al. (2013) argued school leadership must ensure quality professional development and classroom support for ELLs, as well as find a way to put the two together in such a fashion that no time or resources are wasted.

Leadership is essential for creating a school climate that embraces students of all learning levels, socioeconomic backgrounds, and language abilities. Furthermore, school leadership is needed to ensure that teachers who do not receive the necessary preservice training to teach ELLs are provided the proper and consistent professional development necessary to raise them to a level where they can provide effective instruction to ELLs. Without proper school leadership, teacher attitudes and empathy towards ELLs can weaken.

## **Summary**

Many factors play a part in helping teachers become adequately prepared to teach ELLs. To effectively study how well prepared MLS teachers are to teach ELLs, the research focused on (a) the preservice training teachers receive, (b) the professional development teachers receive with ELL instruction while in the field, (c) the empathy and attitudes of teachers toward ELLs, and (d) school leadership practices that help ELLs learn in schools.

During my research, I found in the literature that many preservice programs are not providing enough training in order to adequately prepare individuals to teach ELLs. Many teachers are beginning their education practices without the proper training to understand ELLs and their specific learning needs. As a result, pedagogical practices, as well as classroom management, suffer. Consequently, when preservice training is lacking, it becomes the

responsibility of the schools which employ these new teachers to prepare them with the adequate professional development to teach ELLs. When done intentionally and frequently, ongoing professional development can assist ELL teachers to overcome their initial weaknesses and help provide the rigorous on-site instruction ELLs deserve while simultaneously becoming more aware of cultural differences that might negatively impact their instruction. Preservice preparation programs and professional development activities have a significant impact on teachers' attitudes and empathy toward ELLs. Without proper training and development, there tends to be a negative attitude toward ELLs and lack of overall empathy toward these learners. Conversely, when teachers receive the appropriate amount of training, attitudes toward and empathy for ELLs increase, which in turn tends to have a direct positive correlation with pedagogical practices, classroom management, and overall school health. Finally, I found that school leadership is essential, not only in ensuring a rigorous program, but also in providing teachers with the professional development and additional resources necessary to teach ELLs. School leaders can accomplish this by sharing decision-making and leadership; empowering teachers to take ownership of the curriculum they teach, allowing input on the policies of the school; and, above all, by providing instruction in their respective content areas. In conclusion, school leaders are responsible for creating a positive school climate which embraces the opportunity to teach students of all abilities. Preservice training, professional development, positive teacher attitudes and empathy towards ELLs, and effective school leadership are intertwined components, all of which have an impact on a teacher's ability to effectively teach ELL students.

## **Review of Methodological Issues**

The methodological issues pertaining to the literature investigating the preservice training, professional development, attitudes and empathy, and school leadership of teachers of ELLs is diverse. Creswell (2014) found that researchers determine their method of research based upon their philosophical assumptions. Quantitative research tests theories by comparing the similarities or lack of similarities between variables, whereas qualitative research investigates the meanings people give to certain human issues. Mixed-methods research combines quantitative and qualitative research and thereby can provide a more complete understanding of the research being conducted that quantitative or qualitative research could not do alone.

### **Quantitative Research**

Surveys, questionnaires, and experiments are common strategies in quantitative research. The resulting data are then analyzed according to a specific instrument. Jimenez-Silva et al. (2012) and Zhang and Pelttari (2014) surveyed preservice teachers about their beliefs, attitudes, and confidence in teaching ELLs. Both studies demonstrated a need for adequate preservice training to assist teachers in developing confidence and empathy when teaching ELLs. Similarly, through a survey Russell and Russell (2014) assessed preservice teachers' cultural awareness and sensitivity towards ELLs. Cheatham et al. (2014) used an analog study to determine whether teachers who were made more aware of ELLs' language proficiency during their preservice training would be more aware of what instruction ELLs needed in the classroom.

The strengths of quantitative studies relating to preparing teachers of ELLs include identifying specific problems and deficiencies which need addressing. The findings from the quantitative research pointed out that additional research needs to be conducted on effective preservice strategies to adequately prepare teachers to teach ELLs (Cheatham et al., 2014;

DiCerbo et al., 2014; Jimenez et al., 2012; Russell & Russell, 2014; Zhang & Pelttari, 2014). Furthermore, a quantitative research study has the ability to test theories which can then be explored from different perspectives (Creswell, 2014). Additionally, Patton (2015) commented that quantitative data provides researchers the opportunity to compare data based upon set statistical data.

Limitations of the quantitative studies include the inability to determine to what extent cultural awareness impacts teachers' instruction and empathy towards ELLs (Russell & Russell, 2014; Zhang & Pelttari, 2014). Additional limitations of the quantitative research include the generalization of the research to a wider population due to the location of the study (Cheatham et al., 2014). Although able to infer specific problems to preservice training, the quantitative studies were not able to obtain feelings or comments from those being studied as to what would truly be effective with effective preservice training. Quantitative data ultimately gives close-ended data from which one must draw conclusions (Creswell, 2014).

### **Qualitative Research**

Citing himself as well as other qualitative research authors, Creswell (2014) described common characteristics of qualitative research: It must be conducted in a natural setting; the researcher are the key instrument with multiple sources of data; researchers must use inductive and deductive data analysis and focus on the participants' meaning rather than the meaning researchers bring; and the research must show reflexivity; holistic characteristics; and giving many different perspectives. Creswell noted four methods in qualitative research data, including observations, interviews, document collection, and audio/visual materials. These four methodologies are corroborated by other qualitative researchers (Baecher, 2012a; Cammarata &

Tedick, 2012; Elfers et al., 2013; McGee et al., 2015; Molle, 2013; Olson Beal & Rudolph, 2015; Sosa & Gomez, 2012).

While researching different aspects of school support systems for teachers of ELLs in 12 schools across four school districts in Washington state, Elfers et al. (2013) interviewed nearly 200 teachers, conducted at least two visits per school, and collected school documents. The researchers then coded their data according to their theoretical framework, their research questions, and from literature. Their qualitative research methods were used to give suggestions on new ways to provide pedagogical support for teachers' pedagogical work-to provide ELLs with better education. Their research across four districts allowed for cross-case examination by district, size, regional location, and linguistic diversity. Baecher (2012a) reached out to graduates in a Massachusetts TESOL program in a large northeastern university where the researcher had 77 teachers complete a questionnaire. She then interviewed 10 individuals, a focus group of eight participants, and conducted three full-day site visits. Her initial data were collected using interview transcripts as well as field notes she took during the site visits. She then coded and categorized the responses to the questionnaire and used the data she collected to provide recommendations for improving MA TESOL program coursework.

Qualitative studies such as Molle's (2013) might use a number of research methodologies such as audio recordings, transcripts from whole group interaction sessions, semistructured interviews, pre- and postsurveys of a particular program implementation, as well as field notes taken throughout the research process. Molle used the multiple methodologies to make inferences about the shared meaning of the five groups she studied implementing a professional development program designed to assist teachers in developing ELL teaching skills.

In their case studies, Olson Beal and Rudolph (2015) as well as McGee et al. (2015) used semistructured interviews to conduct their research. Olson Beal and Rudolph included observations of meetings and one 60- to 90-minute follow up interview with informed participants. The researchers analyzed the transcripts line by line, breaking the data down into units of meaning in order to identify macro- and micro-issues of ELL instruction at the university level (2015). McGee et al. utilized a constructivist approach to their exploratory case study investigating leadership practices in supporting teachers of ELLs. Interviews were conducted and audiotaped, transcribed, and returned to the participants for verification. The data were analyzed using an iterative process moving between the data and literature with reflection and discussion among the researchers throughout the case study.

Creswell (2014) cited information from qualitative research authors Bogdan and Knopp Biklen as well as Merriam that identified advantages of qualitative research. Advantages include but are not limited to: being present to record specific information from participants; recording information as it happens; allowing the researcher to control questions during interviews; allowing participants to give additional information not initially requested; receiving specific language and words from the participants; and providing opportunities to record data unobtrusively through audio-visual means. Some limitations to qualitative research include but are not limited to: being too intrusive during observations; not gaining the rapport necessary to conduct the research; producing biased responses during interviews; incorrectly filtering interviews; collecting incomplete data from documents; collecting inaccurate documents; or being unable to access some private documents; and being disruptive by presence alone, which in turn might affect responses (p. 192).

## **Mixed Methods**

Creswell (2014) noted that mixed methods researchers collect both quantitative and qualitative data and such studies must be conducted rigorously. He commented that “the key idea with this design is to collect both forms of data using the same or parallel variables, constructs, or concepts” (p. 219). It becomes a researcher’s responsibility to use both forms of data to determine if there is or is not a correlation of information. The validity of mixed methods research might be compromised if there are unequal sample sizes or if different concepts or variables are utilized with either form of research. In using mixed methods methodology, one must “establish the validity of the scores from the quantitative measures and to discuss the validity of the qualitative findings” (p. 224). Creswell suggested a researcher might choose a mixed methods approach to research in order to build off of the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative data (p. 215).

In an effort to identify what professional development methods might be utilized to improve teachers’ effectiveness and linguistic sensitivity towards ELL students, Berg and Huang (2015) used a mixed-methods approach. The quantitative data included surveys and rubrics whereas the qualitative data included interviews with open-ended questions. The researchers then triangulated their data to increase the validity of their research. Patton (2015) noted that triangulating data utilizing multiple sources assists researchers overcome the skepticism that accompanies research that only uses singular methods (p. 556).

Cho et al. (2012) utilized surveys to gauge teacher candidates’ attitudes towards ELL students. Using the quantitative data, they then recorded the participants’ responses to the surveys in open-ended questionnaires. Faez’s (2012) mixed-approach included questionnaires to record descriptive statistics to record the level of empathy with ELLs, the participants’

understanding of diversity-related issues, the participants' self-reported ability to teach ELL students, as well as the responsibility the participants' responsibility was towards teaching ELL students in mainstream classrooms. She then interviewed the 25 participants of the study to identify themes to provide a more complete understanding of the results of the questionnaire. Hutchinson (2013) used pre- and postprofessional development course surveys to measure preservice teachers' change in attitudes over time towards linguistic diversity and ELL students in classrooms. She then analyzed the preservice teachers' classroom observations to qualitatively identify attitude shifts towards the professional development provided between the pre- and post-course surveys. Hutchinson noted there were no significant results in the quantitative data; however, the qualitative observations provided her with data which demonstrated the need to give future educators experiences to assist them in becoming teachers more adept at providing the instruction needed in today's diverse classroom settings. Hutchinson described the observations through thick and rich descriptions, describing in detail the changes made by the participants.

Mixed methods provided these researchers opportunities to identify a specific problem, and then follow up the quantitative research with opportunities to dig deeper through qualitative means. Qualitative data affords researchers an avenue to draw conclusions based upon the responses of those being studied. Limitations to mixed methods can include a researcher's bias, sample sizes, or different concepts in the research being conducted (Creswell, 2014).

### **Synthesis of Research Findings**

I found no literature addressing how well prepared are MLS teachers to instruct ELLs in the professional development they receive when employed in a MLS high school. The literature that is available on the topic of preparing teachers to teach ELLs revolves mostly around teacher

preservice training as well as professional development in general. The intertwined subtopics in the literature —preservice training, in-service professional development, teacher empathy/attitudes towards ELLs, and the role school leadership plays in developing teachers' ability to teach ELLs—suggests preparing teachers to teach ELLs is not as simple as undergraduate preservice training because teachers who enter the field of education may have preconceived but unproven attitudes toward ELLs. Beyond that, teachers need continuous in-service training to adequately meet the needs of all learners. Finally, it is the responsibility of school leadership to provide professional development opportunities and to create an environment that embraces all learners and provides the best possible environment for them to succeed.

### **Preservice Training**

As previously stated, classrooms across the United States are becoming increasingly diverse (Faez, 2012). Accordingly, those preparing to become teachers need the appropriate preservice training to support those students who are learning English. Many programs are not following the available data that indicate if student achievement is to be supported, all teachers must be prepared to address the vast differences inside a classroom (Cummins et al., 2012). Preservice training programs equip future teachers with the ability to understand how ELLs learn English so that they can then differentiate instruction accordingly (Baecher, 2012a; Cammarata & Tedick, 2012; Cheatham et al., 2014; DiCerbo et al., 2014; Faez, 2012; Hutchinson, 2013; Jimenez-Silva, 2012; Johnson et al., 2016; Khong & Saito, 2014; McGee et al., 2014; Olson Beal & Rudolph, 2015; Russell & Russell, 2014). Russell and Russell (2014) noted that preservice teachers hold preconceived beliefs about students from diverse backgrounds. As a result of prior experiences, sensitivity towards ELL students can be positively or negatively impacted based

upon the preservice training one received. Many teachers of ELLs must rely on their own insufficient knowledge and experiences with teaching students learning English (Khong & Saito, 2014). The conclusion is that preservice training must be improved so teachers are better equipped to effectively provide ELL students with the education they deserve. As Cho et al. (2012) noted, individuals training to become teachers need to be adequately prepared not just for the language diversity they will find in the classrooms but for the various circumstances they will face with the families of ELL students.

### **Professional Development**

Regardless of the profession, continuous professional development is necessary to be up-to-date with current trends, practices, and technology. To that end, teachers in the field need the professional development and support necessary to adequately provide differentiated instruction to ELL students (Berg & Huang, 2015; Commarata & Tedick, 2012; Elfers et al., 2013; Khong & Saito, 2014; McGee et al., 2015). According to DiCerbo et al. (2014), professional development is necessary to assist teachers as they modify their instruction to best address the needs of all learners but, most importantly, ELLs learning English in mainstream classrooms. Johnson et al. note that a focused professional development program has the ability to equip teachers with “new strategies, curriculum, content, and reform-based practices” (2016, p. 491). This empowers teachers to overcome various barriers they might encounter when instructing ELL students. With the lack of preservice training, schools often find themselves having to find the professional development tools necessary to effectively train teachers of ELLs (Elfers et al., 2013; McGee et al., 2015). Instructing ELL students requires a skill set different from general teacher preparation programs. Consequently, as schools struggle with how best to serve learners

from various cultures and different languages, professional development programs must be made available to teachers in the field (Cammarata & Tedick, 2012).

### **Teacher Empathy/Attitudes**

Teacher preparation programs as well as professional development activities for teachers in the field have a direct impact on teacher empathy and attitudes toward ELLs. The literature shows that teachers often enter the field of education with preconceived attitudes toward ELL students based upon their previous experiences, creating stereotypes, which in turn have a direct negative impact upon the instruction being provided in a multicultural and language diverse classroom (Berg & Huang, 2015, Cammarata & Tedick, 2012; Crowson & Brandes; Cummins et al., 2012, Faez, 2012; Hutchinson, 2013; Jimenez-Silva et al., Khong & Saito, 2014; Molle, 2013; Russell & Russell, 2014; Sosa & Gomez, 2012; Zhang & Peltari, 2014). Zhang and Peltari (2014) noted that when preservice teachers are given experiences which expose them to ELL students, they may develop empathy toward ELLs which, in turn, assists the preservice teachers in providing the appropriate curriculum and instruction to meet the culturally diverse needs of the students. To that end, appropriate preservice training and professional development in the field assists teachers in developing their empathy and understanding of diversity related issues when teaching ELLs (Berg & Huang, 2015; Faez, 2012; Hutchinson, 2012; Jimenez-Silva et al., 2012; Molle, 2013; Sosa & Gomez, 2012; Zhang & Peltari, 2014).

### **Leadership**

As discussed earlier, school leaders often must provide the professional development necessary to assist teachers of ELLs (Elfers et al., 2013; McGee et al., 2015; Sosa & Gomez, 2012). McGee et al. (2015) noted that school leadership must identify specific practices teachers must employ in a diverse classroom. However, as many researchers have suggested, school

leaders cannot successfully implement the needed professional development culture without teacher buy-in, an essential component to any curricular and instructional modifications (Elfers et al., 2013; Harris, 2012; Lai & Cheung, 2015; Sarafidou & Chatziioannidis, 2013; Wadesango, 2012b; Yoon, 2016). Without sharing the decision-making process in schools, school leadership will often face obstacles to effectively implement the changes needed in diverse settings. McGee et al. (2015) identified effective leadership as a critical component to successful teaching and learning in classrooms with ELLs. When school leaders involve teachers in bringing about changes, the culture and climate improves, which, in turn, has a positive impact on teaching and learning (Elfers et al., 2013; Harris, 2012; Lai & Cheung, 2015; Sarafidou & Chatziioannidis, 2013; Yoon, 2016).

An analysis of the results of these studies suggests there are multiple aspects involved in determining whether or not teachers are adequately prepared to teach ELLs. It is simplistic to say preservice training alone can successfully prepare teachers for a classroom with non-native English speaking students.

### **Critique of Previous Research**

The research method I selected to conduct my research is a case study. This qualitative approach involves the study of a particular situation that involves “the study of a case within a real-life, contemporary context or setting” (Creswell, 2013, p. 97). With a case study, the researcher investigates a single case or multiple cases using multiple sources of information to better understand a problem or concern that is of particular interest to the researcher. Creswell (2013) comments that effective case studies will utilize multiple forms of qualitative data such as interviews, observations, documents, and audiovisual materials to develop themes or issues which the researcher can use to draw conclusions and meanings from the case(s) being studied.

In a case study, using one source of data is usually not enough to truly develop an in-depth understanding of the case(s). The scholarly articles analyzed in the literature review include quantitative, qualitative, and mixed method approaches to identify how well teachers are prepared to teach ELLs. Some scholarly articles utilized in the literature review include case studies of the topic being researched. Because of my experience in the MLS school system, and ability to understand “insider” MLS teacher responses, a case study investigating how well prepared MLS teachers are to teach ELLs is an appropriate method for the research.

The topic under investigation is determining how well prepared are MLS trained teachers to instruct ELL students in the preservice training they received and in the professional development teachers receive when employed in a MLS high school. The literature, particularly with the case studies reviewed, is relevant to my course of study because the conclusions reached by the researchers indicated that teachers are not receiving the appropriate amount of preservice training to effectively instruct ELLs (Baecher, 2012a; Cammarata & Tedick, 2012; Faez, 2012; Hutchinson, 2013; McGee et al., 2015; Olson Beal & Rudolph, 2015). Furthermore, the research also identified professional development as a key contributor to positively impacting teachers’ ability to provide the appropriate instruction to non-native English speaking students (Berg & Huang, 2015; Commarata & Tedick, 2012; Elfers et al., 2013; Khong & Saito, 2014; McGee et al., 2015). In terms of extending a study of this topic to my work setting, the conclusions identified by the researchers were relevant to the MLS school and teacher training system. Because Midwest Lutheran College trains educators in the MLS school system and the high schools in the MLS are increasingly enrolling ELL students, Midwest Lutheran College must provide the preservice MLS teachers need to effectively instruct that student population.

Furthermore, the leadership in the MLS Lutheran high schools must provide the appropriate professional development to their teachers to meet the needs of their ELL student populations.

The majority of the case studies in the literature followed Creswell's (2013) guidance to use multiple sources of data to draw conclusions. Most of the research was credible. Baecher's (2012a) teachers ( $N = 77$ ) completed a questionnaire, and Baecher conducted 10 interviews, one focus group interview with eight participants, and three full-day site visits to collect her data. Elfers et al. (2013) conducted a large case study of four school districts in Washington state to analyze the support classroom teachers need to work with ELLs. The researchers used semistructured interviews, classroom observations, multiple site visits, and collected school and district documents to draw their conclusion. Faez (2012) involved 25 teacher candidates from one intensive teacher preparation program in a Canadian university. Using pre- and post-course surveys as well as classroom observation data, Hutchinson (2013) included 25 preservice teachers from a small regional campus from a large research university to draw her conclusions. In researching two primary schools in New Zealand, McGee et al. (2015) conducted semistructured interviews and then analyzed the data multiple times utilizing an iterative process by moving between the data collected and the literature available on best practices in supporting teachers of ELLs. Olson Beal and Rudolph (2015) used a case study to investigate the impact a 5-year federal grant a university was awarded to prepare teachers to meet the needs of Latino and ELL students. The researchers used semistructured interviews, observations of meetings, and follow-up interviews to draw their conclusions.

Cammarata and Tedick (2012) also used interviews to collect data for their research of teachers involved in an immersion program designed to help teachers become better prepared to instruct ELL students. Of all of the case studies in the literature review, this study had the

smallest sample size of collected data. The researchers collected data from two interviews from three participants in their study. Although the sample size was the smallest, the conclusions drawn by Cammarata and Tedick (2012) were similar to the conclusions drawn by other researchers with larger sample sizes.

In summary, the case studies demonstrated the need for adequate preservice training of teachers to effectively instruct ELL students. Additionally, the research showed that professional development in the field is also a critical component in providing teachers the appropriate tools needed in classrooms with ELL students. These factors have a direct impact on teacher empathy and their attitudes when instructing ELLs (Berg & Huang, 2015; Commarata & Tedick, 2012; Faez, 2012; Hutchinson, 2013; Molle, 2013). Furthermore, effective school leadership becomes paramount in providing the professional development needed in schools with ELL students (Elfers et al., 2013; McGee et al., 2015). Given that the high schools in the MLS continue to increase the number of non-native English speaking students, the research demonstrated a need to investigate how well prepared are MLS teachers and administrators to meet the needs of this particular student population.

## **Chapter 2 Summary**

The numbers of ELL students in America's classrooms continues to increase each year (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017). This situation is being realized in the MLS school system as well (2018 statistics). Consequently, educators need to be prepared to meet the culturally diverse and linguistic needs of students under their care. Every educator must have the pedagogical skills necessary to provide a rigorous education to all students at their level regardless of the students' English-speaking ability. The trend of increased numbers of ELL students entering the classroom does not appear to be slowing any time soon.

The review of research on teacher preparedness to teach ELLs indicated that preservice teachers must be provided with specific training to become adequately prepared to meet the needs of a diverse group of students; this, unfortunately is currently lacking in preservice programs. Additionally, the review of literature emphasized that professional development opportunities must be provided to classroom teachers currently in the field so they might improve their techniques to teach ELL students. The literature review also showed that positive and negative teacher empathy and attitudes toward instructing ELL students is directly affected by the training one does or does not receive. Finally, the research demonstrated that it becomes the professional responsibility of school leadership to provide the in-service training and tools necessary to support teachers in the classroom.

The high schools in the MLS continue to expand their international student programs for a variety of reasons. This trend has grown exponentially over the past decade. To that end, the need to have more teachers prepared to teach ELL students continues to increase in the MLS. The review of literature indicated a need to conduct a study on how well prepared MLS trained teachers are to instruct ELLs from the preservice training and professional development they received. The study addressed one research question: How do a select group of MLS teachers describe how well they were prepared to teach ELL students in their in-service training at their place of employment?

## **Chapter 3: Methodology**

### **Introduction**

The high schools in the MLS have increasingly enrolled foreign students over the past decade. Consequently, the number of students in MLS high schools who do not speak English as their native language has continued to grow. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to determine how well prepared MLS teachers are to teach ELL students. Yin (2009) commented that the need for a case study arises when there is a need to understand a particular social phenomenon. He further commented that a case study is the preferred method in “examining contemporary events” (p. 11). The literature examining teachers’ ability to instruct ELL students indicated a lack of preservice training as well as a need for professional development in the field. School leadership is also influential in affecting teachers’ ability to effectively instruct ELLs. The method of research was a case study because I sought to understand the “particularity and complexity of a single case” (Stake, 1995, p. xi). The MLS school system is unique in comparison to other school systems in that the teachers must be certified to teach in the MLS, and a majority of those teachers earn their undergraduate degree and MLS certification from its lone teacher training college. As such, a case study on teacher preparedness to teach ELL students within the MLS may help direct future teacher training programs within the MLS school system.

### **Research Question**

The research question was designed to gain a better understanding of the training MLS teachers have received to instruct ELL students and what support systems need to be created or refined to best prepare teachers in the future. To that end, the following research question was

addressed: How do a select group of MLS teachers describe how well they were prepared to teach ELL students in their in-service training at their place of employment?

### **Purpose and Design of the Study**

The purpose of this case study was to collect qualitative data to investigate how well prepared MLS teachers are to teach ELLs in the synod's high schools. A strong case study will provide an in-depth understanding of some unique phenomenon (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2009). The MLS school system is unique in that the core content and classroom teachers are certified by the MLS. Furthermore, the majority of the teachers within the MLS school system earn their undergraduate teaching degree and state teaching license from its sole teacher training college, Midwest Lutheran College. Similar to Olson Beal and Rudolph's (2015) case study on teacher preparation programs to meet the needs of ELL students, this case study involved a unique and bounded system; one that is "an object rather than a process" (Stake, 1995, p. 2).

Data were collected from teacher participants from one particular MLS high school: Midwest Lutheran High School (a pseudonym was used to protect the identity of those who participated in the study). This high school actively recruits international students to attend its school. Many of the other high schools within the MLS have modeled their international program after Midwest Lutheran High School. My focus was on teachers who graduated from Dr. Midwest Lutheran College (changed to Midwest Lutheran College in 1995) and who were charged with instructing the international students who were not native English speakers. Because of the focus of understanding the ability of MLS teachers who graduated from Midwest Lutheran College to instruct ELL students, I used a case study to better illustrate the issue (Stake, 1995). The case study included elements of an intrinsic case study in which I investigated a particular case (Stake, 1995). Intrinsic elements were included in this study because I graduated

from the MLS teacher training college and am a principal at one of the high schools in the synod. Consequently, I have a vested interest in the success of all the high schools and the education of all students within the MLS.

The case study was conducted through face-to-face interviews at Midwest Lutheran high school, located in the Upper Midwest. The participants were asked specific questions related to their preservice training at Midwest Lutheran College as well as specific questions related to ELL professional development opportunities that have been provided by Midwest Lutheran High School's leadership. Additionally, participants were asked open-ended questions related to their training, thereby allowing for more in-depth responses. Documents related to ELL training were also requested from the participants.

### **Research Population**

The population of this study included teachers from Midwest Lutheran High School who had at least one year of teaching experience at Midwest Lutheran High School and graduated from Midwest Lutheran College. All participants had at least one year of experience instructing ELL students at Midwest Lutheran High School. The common characteristics of the teachers included their experience, disciplines taught, and number of sections taught. The teachers were willing to participate in interviews; several also provided documents related to their preservice training and in-service professional development activities specifically addressing ELLs.

### **Sampling Method**

To identify and select participants who were knowledgeable about the preservice undergraduate training MLS teachers received at MLC, the strategy of purposeful sampling was used. Purposeful sampling was appropriate because of the uniqueness of the MLS educational system and my familiarity with the system thereby allowing for a more in-depth understanding of

the phenomenon being studied (Hatch, 2002; Patton, 2015). By selecting the specific individuals for this study, I was able to use the findings to “purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study” (Creswell, 2013, p. 156). Purposeful sampling was used to select participants who graduated from the same MLS teacher training college, taught in the same MLS high school, and who taught ELLs from the high school’s international student program.

I sought permission from the president of Midwest Lutheran High School to conduct my case study at that school, who, upon granting permission, identified the teachers at the school who met the research population criteria. Patton (2015) noted that in qualitative research, there are no real rules for the exact number of participants for a study. However, in order to gain depth rather than breadth in the research, a researcher might choose to keep the sample size small. Bloomberg and Volpe (2012) also noted that the researcher’s intent of the study along with the setting of the research dictates how many participants the researcher should recruit for the study. Because I conducted my research in one MLS high school that had approximately 40 teachers, the sample size included 10 teachers who graduated from Midwest Lutheran College, had taught at Midwest Lutheran High School for at least one year, and had taught ELL students who were a part of Midwest Lutheran’s international student program.

### **Instrumentation**

Possible sources for evidence in a case study can come from documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant-observation, and physical artifacts (Creswell, 2013; Hatch, 2002; Patton, 2015; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2009). To completely understand the training Midwest Lutheran High School teachers used to adequately instruct ELL students, this case study relied on three sources of data gathering: (a) an initial interview, (b) document

gathering, and (c) a follow-up interview. The multiple sources of data gathering helped identify the undergraduate training Midwest Lutheran High School teachers received at Midwest Lutheran College to teach ELL students, the in-service training teachers received at Midwest Lutheran to teach ELL students, and the tools, techniques and technology the school leadership provided teachers at the school to adequately teach ELL students.

One of the most important sources of data collection in a case study is the interview (Hatch, 2002; Yin, 2009). The initial interview of the purposeful sampling of teachers at Midwest Lutheran High School was a standardized, open-ended semistructured interview with the intent of taking all of the respondents through the same sequence of questions with the exact wording following an interview guide (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2015; see Appendix B). Because of the geographical distance between myself and the individuals being interviewed, I arranged a week that was convenient to the participants and conducted face-to-face interviews that fit their schedules (Creswell, 2013).

Patton (2015) commented that documents can serve as a rich source of information in qualitative research. Furthermore, Stake (1995) and Yin (2009) noted that documentation can be used in every case study and can take on many forms. After I obtained permission from the school administration and the individuals I interviewed, I collected documents to “corroborate and augment evidence” (Yin, 2009, p. 103) from the initial interview.

After the initial interview was completed and documents received and analyzed, a follow-up interview was conducted in order to probe for more information. The second interview consisted of a second set of questions that were based from the findings from the first interview (Koelsch, 2013; see Appendix C). Answering carefully worded questions, the interviewees

either supported or contradicted information collected from the first interview (Yin, 2009). The same set of questions was asked of all of the participants (Patton, 2015).

Based on the instruments and data I collected, I reviewed and analyzed the training Midwest Lutheran teachers received during their undergraduate teacher training at Midwest Lutheran College, the professional development provided on-site, and the training tools provided by the school's leadership. The triangulation of data collected strengthened the research conducted on how well prepared MLS teachers are in teaching ELL students (Creswell, 2013; Hatch, 2002; Patton, 2015; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2009).

### **Data Collection**

Data for this research were gathered from 10 purposefully sampled teachers from Midwest Lutheran High School who teach ELLs. Before the data collection began, I obtained approval from the Concordia University Institutional Review Board to conduct the research. I then sought permission to collect data from the participants at Midwest Lutheran High School (see Appendix A). I informed the participants the intent of the research, that there would be an initial interview of 60 minutes, a request for documents that would corroborate the information provided during the initial interview, and a follow-up interview of approximately 60 minutes with questions developed from the findings of the first interview (Hatch, 2002; Koelsch, 2013; Stake, 1995). Creswell (2013) noted that qualitative data can take many forms. Creswell (2013), Hatch (2002), Patton (2015), Stake (1995), and Yin (2009) noted that a major strength of conducting a case study involved collecting data from many sources.

### **Semistructured Interviews**

Two one-on-one semistructured interviews were conducted with 10 purposefully sampled teachers from Midwest Lutheran High School. The first interview was conducted onsite; the

second interview was conducted over the phone. The first interview was conducted with a set of predetermined questions and lasted between 25 and 45 minutes. The first interview sought to understand the undergraduate training each teacher received at Midwest Lutheran College to teach ELL students, the professional development each received at Midwest Lutheran High School to teach ELL students, as well as how the leadership support at Midwest Lutheran High School prepared those interviewed to teach ELL students. Those interviewed were expected to have had unique experiences to the questions posed (Stake, 1995). To support the responses to the first interview, the second interview consisted of questions based on the findings from the first interview and lasted between 15 and 30 minutes (Hatch, 2002; Koelsch, 2013; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2009). All interviews were scheduled to accommodate the schedules of those being interviewed. The questions for the first interview were provided to the participants a week prior to the interview and the questions for the second interview were provided to the participants one day ahead of time to allow for reflection on ELL training experiences. Both interviews were recorded, as were the responses to the questions on a prepared interview guide (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2015; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2009). After the interviews were conducted, I compared my field notes to the recorded answers to ensure accuracy. This provided me the opportunity to reflect and elaborate on the information provided (Patton, 2015). Once the field notes were completed and I transcribed the interviews, the recorded interviews were deleted to ensure the privacy of the participants was maintained. The responses recorded on the interview guide were saved on my local computer, on my Google Drive account, as well as on an external hard drive.

### **Document Collection**

Patton (2015) commented that documents provide a “rich source of information about many organizations and programs” (p. 293). Furthermore, Yin (2009) noted that “documentary

information is likely to be relevant to every case study topic” (p. 101). To that end, after the initial interview, I asked the participants for documents that related to the training they had received to teach ELL students. I provided the participants with a list of preferred documents before the first interview was conducted (see Appendix D). In theory, documents such as a school’s self-improvement plan, minutes of meetings, administrative documents, memoranda, and other internal documents can corroborate evidence from other sources and play “an explicit role in any data collection in doing case studies” (Yin, 2009, p. 103). The participants provided only a few documents, which along with those from the school’s website I analyzed to assess patterns, content, and experiences of the participants. All documents received were stored on my local computer, on my Google Drive account, and on an external hard drive to ensure their safekeeping.

Yin (2009) commented that “the most important advantage presented by using multiple sources of evidence is the development of converging lines of inquiry” (p. 115). Patton (2015) noted that triangulation of data is an ideal method to conducting a case study. I conducted two separate interviews and studied the documents to better ascertain teachers’ undergraduate training, the professional development currently offered, as well as what teaching techniques and tools the school leadership at Midwest Lutheran High School presented to the participants that better prepared them to teach ELL students (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Hatch, 2002; Yin, 2009).

### **Identification of Attributes**

The attributes that defined and guided this study were the preservice teacher training of ELL students, professional development provided to teachers of ELL students, the empathy and attitudes of teachers who instruct ELL students, and school administrative leadership practices.

The instruction teachers give to ELL students will be based upon the training teachers received to effectively teach ELL students. Midwest Lutheran High School actively recruits foreign students; therefore, teachers must provide an appropriate, individualized education to all those they teach. The goal was to understand the specific training the teachers at Midwest Lutheran High School received in order to better teach those students who are not native English speakers.

The training and experiences of teachers at Midwest Lutheran High School, who have all graduated from Midwest Lutheran College, was the focus of the research. These teachers shared the same training, school leadership, and student population. The teachers interviewed had at least one year of teaching experience at Midwest Lutheran High School. Each teacher had the same preservice training at the MLS teacher training college; consequently, all had similar backgrounds to share. Combined, these attributes contributed to the overall understanding of the training MLS teachers receive in order to effectively instruct ELL students. This case study attempted to understand how secondary teachers at Midwest Lutheran High School were prepared to teach ELL students.

### **Data Analysis Procedures**

The data analysis involved collecting large chunks of data, making sense of the data by breaking the information down into meaningful patterns or themes, then putting it back together again (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Creswell, 2014; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2009). Bloomberg and Volpe (2012) suggested that there are four phases of analyzing data: “organizing the data, generating categories, identifying patterns and themes, and coding the data” (p. 135). Creswell (2014) noted similar phases to analyzing the data but suggested two more phases: advancing the description of the themes in the narrative and interpreting the findings. Patton (2015) and Yin (2009) both recommended conducting a cross-case analysis to develop additional themes and

patterns. In all, data analysis required me to narrow the data down to manageable chunks in order to make sense of the whole (Creswell, 2014; Hatch, 2002; Patton, 2015; Stake, 1995).

Analysis of the data was inductive in nature and followed Hatch's (2002) nine steps of inductive analysis (see Appendix F). I developed broad categories of information from the interview transcripts, documents I collected from the participants, as well as from the written notes recorded by me in a journal. I was able to break down the large categories into more manageable corresponding themes by coding the data (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Creswell, 2014; Hatch, 2002; Patton, 2015). Creswell (2014) suggested I incorporate multiple approaches to validate the collected data. I found and developed meaning from the collected data by triangulating different sources, using member checking and rich, thick description to convey my research findings, and by clarifying what bias I brought to the study.

## **Interviews**

Two interviews per participant were conducted in the case study during which the respondents answered the questions related to the training they received to teach ELL students. Although Seidman (2013) recommended that the second interview take place three to seven days after the first, I was unable to conduct the second interview for about six weeks after the first one was completed. Both interviews followed an established set of questions. The second interview questions were developed based upon the findings from the first interview and after the documents were analyzed. With carefully worded questions, the interviewees were able to support or contradict information collected from the first interview (Yin, 2009). Although a list of questions guided the interviews, I was able to probe the participants for a deeper understanding with questions that developed during the course of the interviews (Hatch, 2002).

Immediately following the first interviews, I transcribed the recorded interviews (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Patton, 2015). I then summarized the conversations and reviewed the data and developed a deeper understanding of the information provided by the interviewees (Stake, 1995). The data were then divided up and coded into similar categories, the first step of analyzing the data (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2015). To help maintain data validity, I member-checked the summarized information with the participants for accuracy (Creswell, 2014). Next, I read and reread the transcripts and summaries to potentially identify additional codes. Key phrases and ideas were highlighted and comments were made in the margins as a way of interacting and holistically thinking about the data (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Hatch, 2002). As a way to help maintain research validity, the data analysis process was replicated with the second interview.

### **Document Collection**

Following the first interview, I asked the participants for documents related to the research question. Stake (1995) commented that the process of studying documents is similar to conducting interviews. Therefore, I collected documents provided by the participants as well as documents collected by me from online sources. After the documents were collected, they were coded and analyzed for data related to the research questions (Stake, 1995). Document analysis helped me make sense of the information provided in the interviews as well as giving me a complete picture of the training teachers received in order to effectively teach ELL students (Patton, 2015). The document collection process helped me triangulate the data collected with the first and second interviews, thereby allowing me an opportunity to come to a more in-depth understanding of the topic being studied (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012).

## **Limitations and Delimitations of the Research Design**

The credibility of a case study can be impacted by limitations and delimitations. Being transparent about the limitations and delimitations helped maintain reliability and validity and thereby ensured the study was trustworthy (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012).

### **Limitations**

Limitations are the outside conditions the researcher might not be able to control and thereby weaken the study (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). Before I conducted this study, I identified four potential limitations: (a) the research was centered in only one area Lutheran high school within the MLS, (b) I relied on only two interviews and document collection to gather data, (c) there was a potential for bias because I attended the same college as those interviewed, and (d) the reliance on the participants to provide a sufficient number of documents.

Recognizing the limitations of a study is an important aspect when conducting research. I chose Midwest Lutheran High School as the focus of my study because of the school's active recruitment of international students. Although the school statistics provided by the MLS Commission on Lutheran Schools (2018) indicated that 7% of the synod's student population consists of international students, the statistics are not broken down to the percentage of international students enrolled in each school. To that end, other high schools might enroll a higher or lower percentage of international students than the school I researched; therefore, centering the research on one high school was a limitation. In this case study, I relied on two interviews and document collection to develop themes and answer the research question. I also assumed the participants were honest with their answers. A third limitation was my bias and knowledge about the undergraduate training at Midwest Lutheran College because I received my undergraduate training as did the teachers I interviewed. For that reason I asked nonleading

questions and remained neutral during the interview process. Finally, a fourth limitation was the failure of participants to submit a sufficient number of documents to triangulate the data collected from the interviews. Consequently, I needed to search for additional documents on the school's website to ensure enough documents were collected in order to develop themes that answered the research question.

To ensure credibility, I was careful not to allow my own biases influence the study (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Creswell, 2013). I attended MLS schools during my childhood; moreover, my father, mother, and other relatives had taught or are teaching in MLS schools and I am a principal and teacher in the MLS.

This case study focused on the in-service training the teachers received from their current school in order to effectively instruct ELL students. Although the findings were intended to assist the MLS teacher training system as a whole, the conclusions drawn from this case study may not be transferable to other MLS high schools because the in-service training received at each area Lutheran high school can vary depending on the institutional leadership.

### **Delimitations**

Delimitations help describe the choices and boundaries made by the researcher (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p. 114). The boundaries I selected for this study included purposeful and homogeneous sampling, instrumentation, member checking, rich and thick descriptions, and clarifying the bias of the researcher. Purposeful sampling was used to select participants from one high school, Midwest Lutheran High School, because of its work with international students. The sample size included 10 teachers who attended Midwest Lutheran College for their undergraduate degree and had been teaching at Midwest Lutheran High School for at least one year. I relied on the leadership of Midwest Lutheran to identify 10 teachers who

met that criterion. The study included two interviews. Seidman (2013) recommended that the second interview be conducted three to seven days apart, but the second interviews could not be conducted until approximately six weeks later.

### **Validation**

For a qualitative case study to be credible and dependable, it must “attempt to assess the ‘accuracy’ of the findings” (Creswell, 2013, p. 249). One way in which I improved the validity of the research was by using multiple sources and strategies so that the evidence provided could be corroborated (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2013; Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2015). To ensure this case study was credible, triangulating data from different sources, checking for accuracy with the participants, writing detailed descriptions of the findings, and clarifying bias was essential to this study (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Creswell, 2013). Additionally, participant consistency was checked by a second interview, thereby adding to the validity of the study.

In this case study I investigated the ELL training of 10 MLS high school teachers in one high school whose leaders actively recruited students from foreign countries. I intended the results to be transferable to other high schools in the MLS because many of the other high schools in the MLS also actively recruit international students. The transferability of the study was accomplished through the richness of the descriptions as well as the amount of detailed information relating to the shared experiences of the participants ELL training (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012).

### **Credibility**

The validity of a study is determined by both its credibility and dependability. To ensure this study, I member-checked for accuracy during the interviews, clearly described the data collected, and clarified my bias in the research. Member checks were completed during the

interview by asking clarifying questions and recording their answers in my notes. Additionally, member checks were completed after the interviews were completed by giving the participants a written copy of the interview transcripts to read over and clarify the recorded comments.

Member checking allowed the participants an opportunity to review and verify the data collected was accurate. All participants were informed of member checking from the outset of the research so they could ensure their story was complete and accurate (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Creswell, 2013; Koelsch, 2013).

The data collected were presented in narrative form using, in Creswell's (2013) terms, "rich and thick descriptions" (p. 168). Participants had the opportunity to reflect on their information after reading the descriptions. I was sure to use the participants' own words to ensure they understood the descriptions. Before the initial interview, I informed the participants that I also graduated from the same college as them and most likely received the same undergraduate training. Additionally, I revealed that my school recruited and enrolled students who are ELLs.

### **Dependability**

The dependability of the research is determined based upon "whether one can track the processes and procedures used to collect and interpret the data" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p. 113). To improve dependability, I described in detail how the data were collected, coded, and analyzed. Additionally, dependability was increased by thoroughly acknowledging my personal bias as well as the biases of the participants in the study. Finally, meticulous records were kept throughout the study, thereby creating a transparent trail that can be reviewed by other researchers (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012).

## **Expected Findings**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the preparation of 10 teachers at Midwest Lutheran High School for teaching ELL students. Through interviews, I collected and analyzed data to understand how the undergraduate program at Midwest Lutheran College and in-service professional development provided at Midwest Lutheran prepared them to teach the international students at their high school. Additionally, the documents collected identified the in-service training and tools these participants were provided at Midwest Lutheran High School to adequately instruct ELL students.

### **Interviews**

I conducted two interviews with the intent of investigating the undergraduate training as well as the in-service training the participants received in order to adequately instruct ELL students. Having graduated from the same institution as the participants, and having worked with other teachers who graduated from the same institution, I anticipated similar responses to the interview questions posed. I anticipated that the teachers received some in-service training and tools at Midwest Lutheran High School to assist the teachers in their efforts to teach ELL students.

### **Documents**

I provided the participants with a list of desired documents (see Appendix D) to help gain a greater understanding of the in-service training provided at Midwest Lutheran High School. I anticipated the documents would demonstrate the extent to which the school puts an importance on providing the resources, tools, and training to the teachers at Midwest Lutheran High School so they can adequately instruct ELL students.

I anticipated the data collected would be able to assist the other high schools in the MLS who recruit international students because the high schools in the MLS mostly employ teachers who received the same undergraduate training at Midwest Lutheran College. I expected to find that the teachers would have received some training and tools at their school to better teach the international students they recruit. The results of this study added to the existing literature on the undergraduate training of teachers who instruct ELL students and presented a unique perspective pertaining specifically to teachers trained at Midwest Lutheran College—specifically, those who teach in MLS high schools.

### **Ethical Issues**

An important part of any social sciences research project involves following the recommended ethical practices and procedures of the American Psychological Association. Ethical issues involve ensuring the subjects in the study are anonymous, and that potential conflicts of interest are identified (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Creswell, 2013, 2014; Patton, 2015). Additionally, following the Concordia University's IRB directives also helped address any potential ethical issues. I informed participants of any possible risks and benefits of joining the study. Furthermore, all participants signed the approved consent form, and each was assigned a pseudonym. The credibility of the data collected and conclusions were increased when I was transparent of the procedures I used, fully disclosed my position in the study, and recognized the potential ethical issues involved in the study (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Creswell, 2013, 2014; Patton, 2015).

### **Conflict of Interest Assessment**

I am a graduate of Midwest Lutheran College. At the time of this study, I had been a teacher in the MLS for 17 years and a teacher/administrator at Southern Savior Academy for 11

years. The site of the research was Midwest Lutheran High School, an upper Midwest MLS high school. Although Midwest Lutheran High School was part of the MLS and the participants graduated from Midwest Lutheran College, I had no influence or authority over the school or the participants. As such, I had a working knowledge of the trend within the MLS high schools of actively recruiting international students. I was sure to maintain transparency with the participants, all of whom signed a consent form (see Appendix A) in which the participants received a full explanation for the purpose of the study as well as what was required from them. The participants were allowed to opt out of the study at any point.

I had no direct influence over the teachers or administrators at Midwest Lutheran High School. Because of the homogeneous nature of the MLS, as well as the desire of the teachers within the MLS to serve as parochial teachers within the synod, I anticipated that the participants would respond candidly in both of the interviews and provide documents to assist me in this study.

### **Ethical Issues in the Study**

I was completely transparent with the participants by providing them with the information about the case study. I abided by the three principles of the so-called Belmont report: respect for people; beneficence (do not harm, and maximize benefits and minimize possible harm), and justice (who would benefit from the study). I provided the participants with the purpose of the study, the expectations of the study, and the process I would use to conduct the study (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Creswell, 2013, 2014; Patton, 2015). I informed the participants that all voice recordings would be destroyed once the recordings were transcribed and analyzed. Additionally, all participants were given the transcriptions of the interviews to ensure that the information transcribed was accurate. The participants were ensured that at no

time would they be placed into a position of harm or wrongdoing, and their names would not be identified. The benefits for the participants included helping them reflect on best practices when it comes to instructing ELL students as well as helping them identify what their school can do better in their in-service professional development.

### **Chapter 3 Summary**

The MLS created a school system more than 150 years ago so that local congregations could provide Christ-centered education to their local church members at little or no cost. Over time, with decreasing congregational members and with the cost of education increasing, the MLS, especially its high schools, needed to explore ways to expand their ministries. Some high schools in the MLS began recruiting international students, many of whom are not native English-speaking students. As indicated in the literature review, in order to be effective in instructing ELL students, teachers need a solid undergraduate training as well as in-service training at their local school. The research question was designed to identify how well MLS teachers were trained to instruct ELL students, as well as how much support is currently provided at one of the MLS high schools that actively recruits international students. By collecting data employing three phases, I was able to triangulate the data to ensure validity and develop a deeper understanding on the preparation MLS teachers in one high school received in teaching ELL students. In this chapter, I described the methodology of the case study and provided the questions, setting, participants, data analysis, limitations, and delimitations. Additionally, I included the potential ethical issues involved within the outlined study.

## **Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results**

This qualitative case study was designed to show how well prepared were a group of teachers from one MLS high school to teach the ELL students enrolled in their school. More specifically, this case study was designed to better understand the issues and experiences related to the in-service training the teachers received that helped them provide instruction to non-native English speakers (Hatch, 2002). I interviewed 10 teachers from one Midwest Lutheran MLS high school who had taught ELL students at some point in their tenure at this school. This study investigated the following research question: How do a select group of MLS teachers describe how well they were prepared to teach ELL students in their in-service training at their place of employment?

In this chapter, I present a complete description of those who participated in the study, the research method used, and how the collected data was analyzed. Data for this study were collected from an initial face-to-face semistructured interview, from documents collected from the administration, some of the participants and the school's website, and a follow-up phone interview. After presenting the results of the data and analysis, the chapter concludes with a summary of the findings.

### **Description of the Sample**

After contacting the school's administration, I identified a number of teachers who met the criteria necessary to participate in this study. I initially contacted 10 individuals by email (five men and five women) who met the required criteria: (a) they graduated from MLC and (b) they had taught at Midwest Lutheran for at least one year. Of the 10 individuals initially contacted, all were willing to participate in the study. Five of the participants had a master's degree, two were pursuing a master's degree, and three did not have a degree above a bachelor's

degree. The total years of experience in education ranges from two years to 23 years. The years of experience at Midwest Lutheran ranged from one year to 18 years.

### Description of the Participants

This section provides a detailed description of those who participated in the study. Table 1 provides an overview of the participants with their pseudonyms, the total number years of experience, the number years of experience at Midwest Lutheran, and the subject area they have taught ELL students.

Table 1

#### *Overview of Participants*

Pseudonym	Total years of teaching experience	Years of teaching experience at Midwest Lutheran	Subject discipline taught
Eli	14	7	English, P.E., Religion
Robert	23	18	Religion, Art
Elsa	12	6	English, Algebra
Jennifer	6	6	English
Jessica	10	9	Spanish, ESL
Kate	9	4	English
Stephanie	11	1	Music, Foreign Language
Matt	2	2	Social Studies
James	14	10	Social Studies, Religion
Jacob	15	1	Social Studies, Religion

**Eli.** Eli always had a passion for athletics and working with youth. Having been influenced by countless coaches along the way, Eli wanted to find a way to impact lives while staying connected to athletics; teaching seemed to be a natural fit to him. MLC was not Eli's first choice of schools to attend after high school, but after first enrolling at another midwestern university to study athletic training, Eli decided shortly before the year began to enroll at MLC so he could continue playing sports at a collegiate level. Eli was not sure he wanted to actually teach until after his student teaching experience during his last year at MLC. After graduating from MLC, Eli spent his first seven years of teaching at a school in the Pacific Northwest. The most rewarding aspect of teaching for Eli was watching students who were struggling with a concept or situation find success—that is, the learning process. At the time of this study, Eli was in his 8th year at Midwest Lutheran.

**Robert.** Robert's desire to become a teacher stemmed from his faith in Jesus. Because he said Jesus loves people, and because Robert loved people, he thought attending MLC was the clearest route to a career that involved his faith. Prior to coming to Midwest Lutheran, Robert served for five years as a multigrade teacher and principal at a Lutheran school in the southern United States. Robert's greatest joy in teaching involves developing relationships with students and encouraging them to reach new realizations and understandings. Because Robert is not always sure that what he is doing is truly what he should be doing, he is a life-long learner. At the time of this study, Robert was in his 18th year at Midwest Lutheran.

**Elsa.** Elsa was fortunate to have great teachers that connected with their students in both her grade school and high school experience. Consequently, she had a drive to do the same as a teacher. Additionally, because Elsa thought it was important to use the Gospel as part of her teaching, she wanted to teach in the same system she grew up in. As a result, she enrolled in the

MLS teacher training college. Prior to coming to Midwest Lutheran six years ago, Elsa taught at four other Midwestern grade schools located throughout the Midwest. Elsa's expertise involved supporting students who needed academic and organizational support. As such, her favorite part of teaching at Midwest Lutheran involved watching students grow in their sense of self and confidence as they move from their freshman year to their senior year. Additionally, Elsa truly enjoyed getting to know students and their families on a personal level, often outside of the classroom.

**Jennifer.** At the time of this study, Jennifer had spent all six of her years in the MLS teaching ministry at Midwest Lutheran. Jennifer did not decide to become a MLS teacher until late in her senior year of high school. Jennifer's college counselor advised her to attend MLC because of her love for reading and desire to find a job that was challenging and rewarding. Jennifer admitted she is by no means an expert in anything, but she was learning a lot about ELL instruction and truly wanted to help Midwest Lutheran's faculty get better at teaching their ELL population, both about their respective content areas and about Christ. Jennifer thought being a Christian teacher and being an ambassador of Christ made her job more important and rewarding. Her energy came from seeing her students take ownership of their faith and apply it to their own lives. Teaching English was one way she thought she could reach students on a personal level and get her students to think critically about literature and their own opinions and defend their thoughts accordingly.

**Jessica.** Jessica had grown up always wanting to become a teacher, until she was in high school where she admittedly did not want to do what others were telling her to do. Consequently, Jessica was ready to attend a college to earn her pre-med degree but then something inside her made her do a 180-degree change and attend Midwest Lutheran College.

She truly believed God changed her mind one night because she had been so dead-set against going to MLC. Only God Himself, she said, could have changed her mind. Jessica had spent all of her nine years in education at Midwest Lutheran as an ESL teacher of international students. Jessica truly enjoyed the “a-ha” moments as some of the most rewarding parts of teaching. She found teaching the most challenging when she was unable to connect and form relationships with students or when students are apathetic or disrespectful. As an ESL teacher of international students, Jessica hoped to see her students blossom into successful mainstreamed students who have good relationships with their American classmates.

**Kate.** Kate traced her desire to become a teacher to when she was in kindergarten. This drive to become an educator did not waver through high school. There was one point while enrolled at MLC that Kate was questioning her choice to become a teacher, but with her parents’ encouragement, she finished and was grateful for their encouragement ever since. She said she loved every moment of teaching. After teaching for a few years, Kate became a mother but did not leave education; instead, she was able to use her skills at a Sylvan learning center tutoring students who needed extra help. Before joining the Midwest Lutheran faculty, Kate taught preschool for a little while. Teaching English at Midwest Lutheran for the last five years had been a rewarding experience. Furthermore, the relationships with students and their families brought her the most joy as a teacher. The emails and comments from graduates thanking her for something she did for them over the years brought an additional level of joy to her teaching ministry.

**Stephanie.** Stephanie chose to attend Midwest Lutheran College because she wanted the ability to teach in the MLS school system. Additionally, she believed she had the skills and ability to help students discover the love of learning. Throughout her 11½ years of teaching,

Stephanie had taught in a variety of schools and levels, often dictated by where her husband was working at the time. At the time of this study, Stephanie was in her 2nd year of teaching at Midwest Lutheran in both the middle school and high school levels. Stephanie said she enjoyed working closely with students and trying to discover their personal learning style and finding the tools necessary to teach them in a way that they will be the most successful. Stephanie continually tried to find resources that could work with her ESL students. She found it rewarding when students who only knew a little English came up to her just to talk for a while. Stephanie liked to help the students figure out what they need to be successful, even if that was just helping them determine the next step. Stephanie wanted her students to become confident and grow to want to learn more.

**Matt.** Matt grew up in a family where both his parents were MLS teachers. As a result, he was exposed to an environment that encouraged him to attend Midwest Lutheran College. However, after high school Matt wanted to attend a public university so he could run competitively at the collegiate level. However, after analyzing the situation, and knowing he wanted to become a MLS teacher, Matt decided instead to attend MLC so he would not have to jump through hoops to become a certified MLS teacher. At the time of this study, Matt was in his 3rd year at Midwest Lutheran and enjoyed his role they asked him to serve. Matt believed that his calling was to help provide structure and the Gospel to students who did not grow up in a traditional MLS situation. Although he considered discipline his specialty, Matt continued to find better ways to communicate and understand students who come from different areas of the world. Matt considered this the hardest obstacle of his call to Midwest Lutheran but said providing both his students and their parents with his clear vision of the character that he wanted to develop in them was what drove him forward every day.

**James.** While in high school, James received encouragement from teachers, coaches, and his grandfather to use his gifts in the MLS teaching ministry. It was not until a summer out of the United States doing mission work that he considered the teaching ministry. He said he felt the excitement and drive to share the good news of the Gospel as a teacher in the MLS school system. Matt did not view teaching as a job but as his passion. He said he loved interacting with students and helping them reach their full potential while helping them understand that they were a loved and redeemed child of God. James saw developing personal relationships as a strength of his because his background and personality helped him connect with the students on a personal level. With this strength he could help students navigate the changing landscape of society and help them relate that to the Bible. Prior to coming to Midwest Lutheran, James spent his first four years teaching in a multigrade setting in a small Midwestern grade school. Since then, James had served Midwest Lutheran for the past 10 years.

**Jacob.** Jacob went into teaching in the MLS school because his greatest joy was watching young people mature into young, trustworthy, and respectful Christian men and women who were fitted to serve as the next generation of leaders in MLS churches and communities. Upon graduating from Midwest Lutheran College, Jacob served as a multigrade teacher and administrator for seven years at a small MLS school in the Midwest. He then spent another seven years as a teacher and administrator at a larger MLS school, also located in the Upper Midwest. At the time of this research, Jacob was in his 2nd year at Midwest Lutheran. Jacob chose to attend Midwest Lutheran College because he wanted to serve in the Gospel ministry as a teacher, telling others about the message of salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

## **Research Methodology and Analysis**

I used an intrinsic case study design to understand how a select group of MLS teachers were prepared to instruct ELL students. The research question that guided this study was: How do a select group of MLS teachers describe how well they were prepared to teach ELL students in their in-service training at their place of employment?

The data collected included responses from an initial semistructured interview, a follow-up member checking interview (Hatch, 2002), as well as documents collected from the school, the individuals interviewed, and information presented on the school's website. I used the inductive analysis model to analyze the initial and follow-up interviews and the interpretive analysis model to analyze the documents collected from the school, the individuals, and the school's website (Hatch, 2002). Before conducting the follow-up interview, I summarized and shared my findings from the initial interview with the participants in order to establish credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). By sharing my initial findings with the participants, I was able to determine whether my interpretations of their responses were accurate. At this point, the participants were able to add additional information or modify anything that was interpreted incorrectly (Koelsch, 2013).

### **Data Collection**

The data collection process took part in three phases and over the course of two months. First, I conducted initial face-to-face interviews with the participants. Second, as I was analyzing the initial interviews, I collected documents from the individuals interviewed as well as from published information from the school itself. Finally, I conducted a follow-up phone interview with the participants based off of the analysis of the first interview.

## **Initial Interviews**

To find individuals who had been teaching at Midwest Lutheran for at least one year and had graduated from either DMLC or MLC, I contacted the school's administration to collect that information. After identifying potential candidates, I sent a recruitment email (Appendix E) to 10 teachers asking for their participation in the study. All 10 emailed me back stating that they would be interested in participating. I forwarded the Concordia consent form (Appendix A) to sign and email back, indicating their agreement to participate in the study. Once I had received all of the consent forms, I contacted the school's administration and asked for permission to conduct face-to-face interviews over the course of a week. Two weeks prior to my visit to the school, I emailed the participants the initial interview questions so they had time to reflect on the questions I planned to ask them. I then set up interview times with the participants and met with them in a private, vacated office in the school.

The three sets of initial interview questions (Appendix B) were approved by the dissertation committee and IRB prior the interviews. The first set included four questions asking for information related to the undergraduate training the individuals received at MLC specifically related to ELL students. The second set included three questions inquiring about the professional development the teachers received at Midwest Lutheran that assisted them in instructing the ELL students they teach. The third set of four questions elicited how the school leadership helped them prepare to instruct the ELL students in their classroom.

The same procedures were followed during the first set of interviews. After I met the teachers in the school office, I asked them if they had any questions about the consent form and informed them that their identities would remain confidential. Additionally, I informed the participants that I would record the interviews on my phone as well as on a hand-held recording

device and simultaneously take notes on the interview guide, which contained the predetermined interview questions (Appendix B). As the interviews commenced, I probed for additional information by asking clarifying questions (Hatch, 2002). The interviews lasted between 20 and 45 minutes. After the interviews ended, I informed the participants that I would be transcribing the interviews and then emailing them the transcription to check for accuracy. I also mentioned I would be contacting them to conduct a second interview, this time by phone.

After all the interviews were conducted, I spent about the next two days personally transcribing the recorded interviews. I also noted voice inflection, pauses, and any other details that might shed light on the participants' answers. I read through each transcription and listened to each interview a second time to ensure everything was transcribed accurately and nothing was missing. I shared the transcripts with the participants via email within 24-hours of completing the transcriptions in order to confirm accuracy and to give the participants an opportunity to make corrections. Every participant replied that the transcriptions were accurate and no additions or corrections were needed.

### **Documents Collected**

Prior to conducting the interviews, I emailed the participants a list of documents I sought that might shed light on what steps the school was taking to assist the teachers in preparing them to instruct ELL students (see Appendix D). A few of the participants provided me with documents, and the administration provided me with a couple as well. After the initial interviews were conducted, I also went to the school's website to collect information pertaining to the research question.

## **Follow-Up Interviews**

After I conducted the initial interviews I analyzed the data and noticed two trends related to the professional development provided to the teachers at Midwest Lutheran. I used these two trends to develop six additional questions that would either support or contradict the information collected from the first interview (Yin, 2009). I contacted the participants to set up the follow-up phone interview, this time recorded over the phone. The six questions designed for the follow-up interview were divided into two sections. Three questions specifically related to the professional development offered to the teachers at Midwest Lutheran, and three addressed the school's leadership and their support to the teachers instructing ELL students (see Appendix C).

During the interview I took notes on the interview guide to record impressions and additional thoughts that came to mind as the participants were speaking. The purpose of this interview was to afford the participants an opportunity to support or contradict the information they provided during their first interview as well as to elaborate further on the trends I noticed during my analysis of the first interview (Hatch, 2002; Yin, 2009).

The follow-up interview occurred approximately seven weeks after the first interviews. The interviews took place over the course of about one week and were conducted over the phone. The phone interviews were recorded on my cellphone or iPad as well as on a hand-held recording device. The follow-up interviews lasted between 12 and 30 minutes. After the interviews were completed, I transcribed them. Again, I read through the transcripts while listening to the recordings to check for accuracy and to ensure nothing was missing. After I determined the interviews were recorded and transcribed accurately, I emailed the participants a copy of the transcripts to confirm accuracy and to allow for clarification if it was needed. Nine out of the 10 participants responded that everything was accurate, and one participant responded

with an additional clarifying paragraph to one of the questions to add detail to what was said in response to a question.

### **Data Analysis**

I used the inductive analysis steps (see Appendix F) to analyze the data collected from the interviews and the interpretive analysis steps (see Appendix G) to analyze the documents collected from the participants, the school, and from the school's website (Hatch, 2002).

Because the data and categories were easy to identify, I divided the information into categories right away to begin the inductive analysis (Hatch, 2002). In the following section, I present the identified patterns and emergent themes after explaining how the inductive steps were completed.

#### **Initial and Follow-Up Interview Data**

To analyze the data collected from the initial and follow-up interviews, I used Hatch's (2002) inductive analysis model. I started with an initial read-through of the participants' interviews to try and get a feel for the content and what the data were telling me. I then read through the data again to try and identify any easily identifiable frames of analysis that needed to be analyzed. After the second read-through, I identified three domains: (a) preservice training identified, (b) in-service professional development, and (c) support from school leadership. I assigned each domain a color, read the data again, and marked entries related to the domains. I then read the entries by domains and recorded the main ideas from each interview according to their respective domain. Then, I looked for patterns, relationships, and themes within the domains. I then used Saldaña's (2016) holistic coding process to code the identified patterns utilizing the InVivo CAQDAS coding program. During the coding process, I looked for data examples to support my patterns and then searched for nonexamples of my patterns. I identified

18 codes while coding the patterns. Relationships among the patterns were then identified and written down. The patterns were then written as one-sentence generalizations. Finally, I selected data excerpts that supported my generalizations.

After the data were reduced, I identified three themes within the domains: (a) there was strong dissatisfaction with the lack of preservice ELL training provided during the participants' undergraduate program; (b) the school did a good job providing professional development opportunities to the teachers to address the diversity and various cultures on campus, but the training did not include technical aspects directly related to helping teachers instruct ELLs; and (c) the school leadership was supportive of the teachers to help them meet the needs of their students. After the themes were created, I searched for additional evidence to support the themes. To justify the relationships among the patterns, generalizations, and themes, I created a matrix with the emergent themes and the corresponding codes.

### **Collected Documents**

To analyze the documents I collected from the school, the school's website, and the participants in the study, I used Hatch's (2002) interpretive analysis model. The documents I collected included the school's strategic 5-year plan, an in-service reference form, some transcripts from the participants, and pages from the school's website describing the international program and all of its components. I had hoped for more documents from the participants, but they were unable to locate most of the requested documents provided to them in Appendix D.

To begin the interpretive approach with the collected documents I identified impressions to be analyzed. It required me to read through the documents three or four times before I could identify the interpretations. The four interpretations I identified included: (a) caring and supportive environment (b) multicultural environment, (c) expectations of students, and (d)

program description. After I identified the interpretations, I assigned each interpretation a color, and I highlighted each document by interpretation. I then read each document by interpretation and recorded the main ideas and findings on a summary sheet. After the summaries were written, I looked for patterns, relationships, and themes within the interpretations. I coded the identified patterns using Saldaña's (2016) initial coding process and then looked for data to support my patterns. Additionally, I searched the documents for nonexamples of my patterns. I proceeded to look for relationships among the patterns, I wrote one-sentence generalizations of the patterns, and then selected data excerpts to support my generalizations.

Through the data reducing process, I identified three emergent themes: (a) the school provides a caring and supportive environment for its students with qualified teachers, (b) the school provides multiple cultural experiences in a multicultural environment, and (c) the academic program is rigorous as demonstrated by the expectations of the students. I created a matrix to show the relationship between the emergent themes and the written data that supports those themes.

### **Summary of the Findings**

Because Midwest Lutheran is just one of the high schools in the MLS that actively recruits and enrolls international students, and because the MLS schools call (hire) teachers who graduated from MLC, it was important to understand why in-service training is an important component of helping MLS teachers learn how to instruct ELL students. The participants described their undergraduate training, their in-service training, and the support provided by their school's leadership to instruct ELL students.

Although all 10 of the teachers expressed overall satisfaction with their undergraduate training to become teachers, none had received any training to prepare them to teach ELL

students. All the teachers said their undergraduate training stressed English language acquisition and literacy, but the training never delved into the realm of instructing any student who did not speak English as his or her primary language. Therefore, these teachers felt unprepared to teach ELL students. Consequently, it was important for Midwest Lutheran to provide the training and instruction necessary to equip them to teach their international student population. To that end, the participants noted that Midwest Lutheran encourages teachers to continue their education, and the school provided the resources and finances possible to make that happen. Additionally, the participants commented that there were multiple in-service opportunities to grow as professionals and the school offered in-service training specifically related to understanding other cultures. However, all of the participants also said that there was a lack of training specifically related to the actual pedagogy of teaching ELL students and would have liked the opportunity to learn more strategies related to instructing ELL students. The participants spoke positively about the administration's support for professional growth. Ample professional growth opportunities were provided by the administration, and participants noted that the school leadership was aware of the diversity of the school and addressed it through a variety of in-service opportunities. However, the participants also expressed a desire for the school leadership to provide more professional growth opportunities specifically related to instructing ELL students.

The participants spoke positively about the school's encouragement to pursue advanced degrees and additional professional growth opportunities and about the variety of in-services provided by the school's leadership. The participants noted that the school prepared them to address the cultural diversity within the school but could have done a better job helping them learn pedagogy specifically related to instructing ELL students, especially because they did not

receive any undergraduate training related to teaching ELL students. The documents showed that the school had high academic standards and the school leadership was cognizant about the need to address the cultural and language diversity in the school. The school's strategic plan and in-service "Quick Primer on Adjustments for International Students" addressed that particular need. Various pages on the school's website demonstrate that the teachers needed to be adequately prepared to instruct a wide variety of international students.

Overall, the interview data and the documents collected revealed themes that supported the research question. The remainder of this chapter is dedicated to discussing the emergent themes in detail.

### **Presentation of the Data and Results**

I analyzed the initial and follow-up interviews as well as the documents I collected using the inductive analysis model and interpretive analysis model respectively (Hatch, 2002). During the analysis process, various patterns (codes) revealed themselves and therefore the data gained meaning. As the data were analyzed, 18 codes emerged (see Table 2).

#### **Theme 1: There was strong dissatisfaction with the lack of preservice ELL training provided during the participants' undergraduate program.**

To understand the need for in-service training related to instructing ELL students, I first needed to understand to what extent the participants received undergraduate training that might have prepared them to teach ELL students. There was strong dissatisfaction with the lack of preservice ELL training provided during the participants' undergraduate program. All of the participants said they received a good undergraduate training but they were dissatisfied with the lack of training they received to instruct ELL students. The following codes support this theme and are discussed below.

Table 2

*Overview of Themes and Codes*

Theme number and developed theme	Code
Theme 1: There was an overwhelming dissatisfaction with the lack of preservice ELL training provided during the participants' undergraduate program	Lack of preservice training ELL's or diversity training Differentiated instruction Prepared to teach in the MLS and average students Training for ministry as a whole
Theme 2: The school does a good job providing professional development opportunities to the teachers to address the diversity and various cultures on campus but the training does not include technical aspects directly related to helping teachers instruct ELLs	A wealth of in-service professional development provided Advanced degrees encouraged Book studies Encouragement to continue education Individual drive to grow and learn more Lack of technical professional development strategies during in-service professional development Understanding cultures
Theme 3 - The school leadership is supportive of the teachers to help them meet the needs of their students	Lack of tools – providing the necessary tools Leadership emphasizes best practices for all students Leadership emphasizes understanding culture Leadership encourages continuing education Leadership is supportive and encouraging of teachers to meet ELL needs Recommendations to leadership Support from school leadership - Summer English program and bridge program for International students

**Code: Lack of preservice training ELL's or diversity training.** During the initial interview, all of the participants commented that they could not recall any undergraduate training related to ELL students. Many of the teachers replied that they tried to remember something related to ELL students and could not come up with anything. Jennifer said, "ESL was always an afterthought to some of the main courses, but there was no specific ELL instruction."

Stephanie said that she could vaguely remember reading an article or a paragraph in a book during one class but could not remember spending any time on the topic at all. The most Stephanie could remember was that the professors talked about exceptional learners in general. Kate said that she could not remember anything about it at all and that everything was just “kind of lumped together.” Eli and Robert both noted that teaching ELL students was never intentionalized and Jacob said that he “would have felt ill-prepared to deal with ELLs” right out of college. Some of the participants thought long and hard about their undergraduate training and even went looking for old course syllabi and college transcripts. Jacob said:

I really thought long and hard about how much I could remember about any class I took and it wasn't intentional that we even talked about English language learners. . . . I even went back and tried to find some of my syllabi and to no avail. But to my recollection, I don't really recall ever being taught about how to reach English language learners. Even the 10 credit course, or in teaching reading and language arts, and reading and social studies or whatever it was. I don't recall being taught it.

Elsa was passionate about her reply after she had reflected deeply about her undergraduate training.

I went back and I looked for my transcripts and I couldn't even find those and it's been a lot of years. So, I guess what struck me was that there wasn't a lot of talk of diversity. You know, our Lutheran elementary schools were not very diverse. So, I think there was very little stress on English language learners with the curriculum that I can recall. I mean I'm sure there was some, I'm sure there was some in the core teaching reading class. So how well were we prepared? I just don't have any strong memories of anything specific. And again, like anything sort of like diversity training or anything that as far as

it lies now. I just wasn't done in the early 1990s or mid-90s when I was there. [It] just wasn't a discussion. Right or wrong it just wasn't.

James and Matt did not remember anything at all and thought that their undergraduate training did not touch on the topic at all. Robert was a little more candid about the preparation to teach ELLs when he said "on a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being superb and 1 being not so well, probably a 1."

**Code: Differentiated instruction.** Although the participants noted that their undergraduate training lacked instruction specifically related to ELL students, the participants did comment positively about being taught good differentiation skills. Some of the participants thought that the differentiation skills they learned did assist them in being able to teach ELL students. Eli noted that the differentiated instruction he was taught was "in the realm of someone who needed additional support but didn't necessarily have the language barrier that was there." Jennifer, Stephanie, and Kate commented that they were taught to differentiate their instruction and they were able to transfer those learned skills to Midwest Lutheran, even though the skills they learned were not tied with instructing ELL students. James thought that "they did a fairly nice job preparing you for a lot of different situations . . . different levels of learners." To the best of his recollection, James thought that the differentiation was geared more towards where students were in the classroom and not based off of a student's culture. Robert summarized his thoughts about his lack of ELL training but learned teaching skills this way:

A person who actually cares about what they're doing is going to look for different ways to reach each student regardless of what their learning obstacles or challenges might be like language, or some other issue that they might [have] or might get in the way of learning.

**Code: Prepared to teach in the MLS and average students.** Undergraduate students who enroll at Midwest Lutheran College do so with the intent of teaching within the MLS school system. Graduates from this college receive a Bachelor of Science in Education diploma in either the elementary or secondary track. Participants noted that they were well prepared to teach the average MLS student but not necessarily an exceptional student or ELL students.

Jacob said that he “was fairly well prepared overall to teach in the MLS.” Jennifer’s sentiment was similar to Jacobs in that she felt “prepared for your average student. I feel prepared for, or I felt prepared for students with IEPs. But I did not feel prepared for exceptional students and/or ELLs.” Kate said that she “felt pretty comfortable leaving there feeling like, okay, I think I can handle the EBD kid or I can understand a little bit with autistic kids and stuff like that.” Matt thought that the undergraduate training was geared towards the typical learner and that the school “could have done a better job at those who needed special education and there was, and I mean there was not focus at towards learners who spoke a different language.” James noted that he thought he could have used the basics of how to teach English at the lower levels and apply it to instructing ELLs because just like younger students, ELL students are also learning English for the first time. Finally, Eli noted that “until you are in the actual culture of the school, it’s tough to, I guess, ensure how prepared you are.”

**Code: Training for ministry as a whole.** One of the unique aspects of graduating from Midwest Lutheran College is that, unlike other teacher training programs, graduates are assigned to their first teaching job. To the average person this concept is difficult to comprehend. However, to those attending MLC, it is ingrained in the students from their first year that they are “signing up” to do ministry; to go somewhere on faith and trust that God will use your skills

where He best sees fit. Consequently, the training provided at MLC is focused around a general education classroom situation and not so much towards a particular type of setting or ministry.

When describing his training at MLC, Eli commented that he did not believe ELL instruction was in the mindset of the school or of the people that were training teachers from a ministry aspect of things:

What's difficult with Midwest Lutheran College is when you are training to become a teacher, those instructors have no idea where you are going to be sent and so you are sent to, you know, an urban setting, that's one thing. You could be sent to a completely rural school where all of a sudden you are teaching four grades and, you know, everybody is coming in from the farm fields. So your opportunities I guess, come assignment day and call day, vary so much that it's difficult for the instructors to identify and address all of the needs that are there. . . . I think if you talked to each individual instructor they would have a passion for helping people for their particular situation wherever they are at.

Robert said that the training he received prepared him to serve with a servant's mindset because the instructors he had modeled what it meant to have a heart for ministry. Consequently, a person who cares about what they are doing in the classroom will do whatever it takes to reach his or her students. Robert stated:

You know, when you care about actually getting your content across, and you care about that student as a person, you're going to look for ways to reach them. And if that means doing something different, then you do it. It's not, "Hey, this is how I do my thing, good luck. If you pick it up, good, and if you don't, better find a way."

Kate and James expressed similar sentiments as the other participants. They were well prepared to go out into the field and put into practice what they had learned. They knew there

would be a learning curve along the way, but, overall, they had the tools necessary to provide quality instruction and do ministry wherever they were sent.

**Theme 2: The school does a good job providing professional development opportunities to the teachers to address the diversity and various cultures on campus but the training does not include technical aspects directly related to helping teachers instruct ELLs.**

The second theme was that Midwest Lutheran provides many professional development opportunities for its teachers. These professional growth opportunities take on many forms: in-service activities, encouragement to pursue advanced degrees, book studies, and others. The professional growth provided to specifically address their ELL population is more cultural in scope and there is a lack of training specifically to the technical aspects of teaching an ELL student. The codes listed below support this and they are discussed accordingly.

**Code: A wealth of in-service professional development provided.** Throughout the interview process, the participants expressed satisfaction with the amount and variety of annual professional development provided at Midwest Lutheran. The participants highlighted in-service activities, professional learning communities, workshops and conferences, and book studies as the main sources of the kinds of professional development that is provided.

In describing the kinds of provided professional growth, Kate noted Midwest Lutheran “has gotten very thorough and focused.” Jacob commented that the professional development activities are “very well thought out [and] applicable to our ministries here at Midwest Lutheran.” Robert mentioned that the professional development activities are “focused, purposeful, applicable, geared towards assessment and learning, [and] developing learning in all students.” Elsa said that Midwest Lutheran does an “excellent job” when it comes to providing professional development. “They do a good job of covering very academic topics as well as

diversity issues and just kind of mindfulness in general.” Jessica noted that whenever a new teacher comes on board at their school, he or she is provided training to prepare for the various cultures the new hire will be interacting with. Kate spoke positively about how focused the leadership was in directing the various forms of professional development activities. Matt said the school is really two kinds of topics at the moment, “one being learning targets and trying to measure the skills of students [and] cultural awareness.” James best summarized to what extent professional development is a focus at Midwest Lutheran.

I think they do a good job. I think of them giving us plenty of opportunities to grow as learners. We have our monthly PLCs where we meet in groups and usually we have a book we are reading and we can talk about different strategies we are learning about at that time. As a faculty, they encourage getting your master’s degree and continuing your education that way. Even after that, they encourage you to continue your learning in your field that you’re teaching in so I think they do a really good job of always learning--lifetime learners.

The wide variety of professional development activities was one of the most easily recognizable themes when analyzing the data. The participants were complimentary of the wide variety of methods provided as well as the different topics discussed from year to year. However, when specifically asked about professional development geared toward ELL students, the participants noted that the focus has been more so on cultural awareness and not on technical skills that can be used to teach ELL students.

**Code: Advanced degrees encouraged.** Throughout the data collection process, one of the professional development activities highlighted was how much Midwest Lutheran encouraged teachers to pursue their master’s degree. Eli, Jacob, Elsa, Kate, Matt, and James all

noted that the encouragement to pursue an advanced is degree is heavily stressed by the school's leadership. Jacob said that "there is a culture of advanced learning here. . . . They encourage all of their staff to have master's degrees and they do take some steps to help you accomplish those goals." Kate expanded on that thought a bit further:

Midwest Lutheran is really unique in that they really promote being able to get your master's degree. I think that's unique across the board with high schools. . . . They pay for over half of it and they also give you [an] incentive pay raise, which I think is pretty unique across the board in our schools so they put that as a high importance.

**Code: Book studies.** As the interviews progressed and discussions expanded on the types of professional development utilized, an additional highlighted activity mentioned was that of the school's leadership giving the teachers at least one book per year to read. Seven of the 10 participants noted that book studies were an important component to their in-service activities. Robert commented that the topics can change from year to year depending on what the administration would like to focus on that year. They could include technology, differentiation of instruction, assessment, cultures and any other relevant topic at the moment. One book that was highlighted was *Foreign to Familiar: A Guide to Understanding Hot – And Cold – Climate Cultures* by Sarah Lanier.

The participants who mentioned this book noted that about a year ago the school wanted to focus on the cultural diversity in the school; this was one book the faculty read prior to the beginning of the school year. Eli commented that they read the book so they would be "able to identify what [their] students' needs are and maybe interactions in culture within their country." Jennifer said that they read the book so they would be "sensitive and knowledgeable about different cultures." Jessica said that the book is used as part of the cultural training at the school

for new faculty members. In the end, book studies are a small part of the overall professional development opportunities provided at Midwest Lutheran.

**Code: Encouragement to continue education.** To one degree or another, almost every participant commented that the school encourages its teachers to actively pursue continuing their education. This is demonstrated by the in-service opportunities provided as well as the encouragement to pursue a master's degree. However, the culture of continuing education expands beyond that as one can take workshops and classes that do not necessarily lead towards a terminal degree.

Eli mentioned more than once that "there is a culture of advanced learning here." Stephanie stated that "I would be able to go to a conference if there was something that seemed appropriate and useful." To that end, Elsa noted that the school

is moving towards it being very strength based. They look at who they have and they assess what are their strengths and really encourage people to hone in on those. They are just extremely supportive of continuing ed. They encourage us to have advanced degrees and they support us financially.

Jennifer commented that when she has concerns instructing ELL students, the school "encourages me to pursue and get my own education in it. I don't think I would be getting my masters if I wasn't so frustrated with how little I know." Both Jessica and Stephanie said that besides being encouraging, the school is flexible and if they were to look and find something they would like to go to and attend, the school would most likely approve it and financially support them doing so.

Overall, the participants spoke highly of the administration's encouragement for them to pursue their education. Professional development can take on many forms and the school

leadership is supportive of all kinds. No matter what avenue the teachers wish to pursue, the administration would like for them to do something.

**Code: Individual drive to grow and learn more.** As the participants were answering the questions posed to them, it became clear that there was an intrinsic drive in them to continually grow as educators. Sometimes that growth simply involved applying strategies they had learned independently from in-service activities; other times it meant experimenting with strategies and assessments to meet individual needs in the classroom. Stephanie commented that because the in-service focusing on international students was directed more toward the cultural side of things, she took it upon herself to just do online research by herself to learn more technical strategies she could use in the classroom. Other participants, like Eli, said he was determined to pursue a master's degree so he could better support his students. Yet others, like Robert, took advantage of the support given by the administration to continue their education by proposing a trip to China to study education abroad for a summer. In all, it was clearly evident that the participants were willing to explore on their own how they can best serve their diverse student population.

**Code: Lack of technical professional development strategies during in-service professional development.** As I analyzed the data, one of the strongest themes that emerged was that although Midwest Lutheran does a good job equipping its teachers with knowledge about dealing with different cultures, professional development is lacking that specifically addresses the technical strategies needed to instruct English language learners. The participants were complimentary about how the school handles the cultural component, but every participant expressed a desire for the school to offer more professional development that dealt the technical components in a classroom with ELL students.

Stephanie, Kate, Matt, James, Jessica, and Jennifer all stated the school did not provide in-service activities to assist the teachers with their teaching skills related to instructing ELLs. Kate mentioned that “we haven’t had much that has helped me teach them [ELLs] as far as knowing, you know, how I could totally implement this into my lesson.” Furthermore, she commented that when I was asking questions related to specific in-service activities, she had not really thought too much about it because she usually just “figure[d] it out [and] we haven’t been trained in a lot of this different stuff.” James noted that the school is helpful as a whole in assisting the teachers reach their kids as far as learning is concerned but the school is “not really focused on English as second language necessarily.” Jessica wished the school would spend more time on different strategies to help ELLs. She was happy with the work done on helping the teachers learn about cultures and diversity “but we haven’t really gotten into the different kind of tools and strategies that we can use, so I think that would be really helpful.” Matt’s commentary was similar. He noted that the teachers had not had professional experiences helping them teach those students who had a native tongue other than English.

As the participants were commenting about the lack of technical professional development related to ELL students, most expressed a great desire to learn more on how best to instruct ELL students. Their sentiment was that Midwest Lutheran provided a wide variety of professional growth opportunities that addressed the cultural aspects of teaching international students, but the desire to dig deeper into the actual pedagogy of teaching ELL students was clearly evident.

In analyzing the school’s professional development to help ELL students, Jacob said, “It’s not what it could be. I think we could probably develop a more robust program for helping students that are ELL learners.” Jacob suggested that even an online webinar with people who

had experience working with ELLs would have been beneficial. Stephanie wanted to go to a workshop or have an experienced ELL teacher come in and explain how best to teach her particular group of students. Similarly, Kate echoed wanted methods classes and pedagogy strategies to help her address the ELL students she teaches. Matt was passionate about his desire for specific professional development in this arena “because none of our faculty know how to do it.” Robert desired to get more into the practice of instructing ELLs. “In general, I think we are a pretty emotionally intelligent group of people and I think, at some point, you need to move forward. So I think focusing on practice is key.” To that end, Robert said that “cultural awareness is great and it’s critical . . . but unless you’re educating properly, what are we doing?” Jennifer wanted to get more specific with her technical professional development as she would like to learn more about understanding how ELL students acquire the English language and what realistic expectations she can set for them. Jennifer expressed this sentiment:

I would like to see more professional development on the actual pedagogy of teaching ELL students. I think we focus on culture. Culture’s great, culture’s wonderful and it takes us far. But fundamentally, how kids learn their second language is completely different than how kids learn their first language. So, I would like to see more education on how second language is acquired among the whole faculty so that we know what to expect fundamentally from these kids and when to expect it.

Jessica expressed a similar desire to have the faculty learn more:

If it were possible to get our whole staff to be taught different strategies to help ELLs, I think that would be really helpful. We’ve done a little bit about, you know, culture and understanding where people come from and diversity, but we haven’t really gotten into [the] kind of tools and strategies that we can use, so I think that would be really helpful.

**Code: Understanding culture.** As previously noted, Midwest Lutheran enrolled students from many different countries, bringing with them their various backgrounds and cultures. All of the participants noted the school does an admirable job addressing the cultural differences that exist in the school, which, in turn, helped the teachers reach them at their various levels. Addressing cultural differences can take on different forms. Sometimes addressing those differences means professional development directed toward the teachers; other times it meant offering programs that help students transition to the American education system.

Stephanie appreciated the professional development she received that not only addressed the international student population but also the local population that came from different cultural backgrounds.

As far as last year a big focus of ours was just culture and diversity. And so, again, that helped us to understand kids and it was a little eye-opening for me. Not just that culture means kids that don't speak English, look different than us...understanding that kids come from different homes and backgrounds and I think that was really great so I think we do a good emphasis on professional development.

Jennifer commented,

Our school prioritizes being sensitive and knowledgeable about different cultures. . . .

The ones [professional development activities] that have to do with culture most often helps me just to understand where my student is coming from in terms of what things are important to them or how they're going to react to certain situations. Those have been really helpful for me [and] my ELL students.

Eli stressed that understanding the different cultures is essential for the students and the teachers that interact with them on a daily basis. He noted that the school has done a good job in this area.

We are trying to understand where [the] students are coming from and knowing that we have 13 countries represented in our student body this year, [it is important] to understand that because they are an international student. They don't fall into one bucket 'cause every culture is going to be different among those 13 countries that's there. So . . . understand even [the] basics of the country to reading the book study on "Foreign to Familiar," being able to identify what students' needs are and maybe interactions in culture within their country, I would say is something this school has [done] a nice job on.

In addition to the professional development, Elsa believed some of the other activities the school offers help address culture and diversity.

Many opportunities to address culture are taken as we have this huge international festival every two years, there's a running global leadership team, mentor/mentee program, international student representation on the student council and that's all stuff the kids are doing, but I think that helps us learn tremendously. Without those things, I would believe my cultural awareness would be pretty dim.

Finally, for all of the teachers, knowing that they would be working with and assisting students who did not come from a traditional MLS school posed a challenge. but one that must be met. As Matt said,

I got to really remove myself from just the standard kind of MLS world that we live in and think about what it would be like to be a student coming from a different country,

speaking a different language and coming here. Like I said, I still have a long way to go but that's moving for me because that's my job.

Throughout this narrative about addressing culture and diversity, the participants were pleased with how the school brings awareness to their situation. However, the participants continued to express a desire to receive more assistance with the technical aspects of instructing ELL students.

**Theme 3: The school leadership is supportive of the teachers to help them meet the needs of their students.**

The third and final theme that arose from the data analysis reflected the school leadership's support of the teachers to help them meet the needs of their students. Whether it was through professional growth opportunities or by financial backing, the participants expressed gratitude towards the school's administration for all of their support. Without strong administrative support, the general sentiment was that the teachers would be unable to meet the diverse needs of their students. However, the participants also noted that there are areas that need addressing and improvement. The following codes support this theme and are discussed below.

**Code: Lack of tools—providing the necessary tools.** When asked if the participants had the tools available to meet the needs of their ELL students, the responses were somewhat mixed depending on how the individuals interpreted the question[s]. Specifically, all of the participants thought that there was a lack of training provided to assist the teachers. Kate mentioned that “we haven't had much that has helped me teach them as far as being able to implement ‘this’ [strategy] into my lesson. You know, there hasn't been anything like that.” Eli said that he often asks himself these questions: “Have we put the tools in place that are needed to help them

succeed? Do we have the tools to meet the kids' needs? Are those tools being carried out to successfully meet those needs?" Furthermore, Eli thought that the teachers as a whole are where they need to be from a caring standpoint "but they sometimes get hung up on not having the resources to always meet all of [the students'] needs." James said that other than word that the administration might offer a class to help teachers help ELL students, he lacked the tools he needed to assist him in his classes. However, James added, "I don't think they intentionally do it, but they do give us the means to carry on our education or to extend our education on different areas that we find important."

**Code: Leadership emphasizes best practices for all students.** From a general education point of view, the participants expressed an overall satisfaction with the support the school's leadership provides the teachers in reaching the students. Eli said:

Our academic dean has done a fantastic job getting out and creating those conversations that are going to get our teachers out of their comfort zone and really focus on, "is my instruction the best for [the] students in my class." Not, what do I prefer, but what is best the students in my class?

To that end, Eli thought the school did a better job being proactive about addressing the students' needs now than when he first got to the school a little more than eight years ago. He said that their discussions "have the entire student base in mind" as they go about preparing for an upcoming school year. As the leadership prepares the teachers for an upcoming school year, Robert noted that the administration will identify a need, whether it is "technology, differentiation, assessment, whatever issue" and provide a book for faculty study and discussion. Jacob said a recent focus has been on assessment; something that needs attention regardless of the student population because it "makes you think about 'why am I giving this to our students?'"

I think this helps all of our students, or it helps me relate to all of our students.” Elsa was passionate about how successful their PLCs have been and how beneficial it is to have them divided among the various departments as they discuss topics like technology and assessment. Kate appreciated the time when the administration brought in some guest speakers who put the teachers into some uncomfortable situations that made them think about what it was like to be “different” from others. This helped her understand the needs of the whole student population and the diversity within the school. James thought that the school leadership did a good job addressing the needs of all students. He commented,

We’re taking a look at the different groups of people we have; going beyond cultures. We have so many different types of learners that each time we have a PLC or an in-service we’re looking at how to make those students feel comfortable. We’ve done diversity trainings to make sure that each culture does feel welcome. And we’ve done that quite a bit and looking at homework and those types of things with the home life kids have nowadays to make sure we’re meeting all of those needs.

**Code: Leadership emphasizes understanding culture.** Understanding different cultures was a recurrent theme, whether from a professional development or school leadership support perspective. Most participants thought that this was an important component of who they are as a school. Elsa stressed understanding and emphasizing the various cultures in the school is “critical and shouldn’t be taken for granted.” Eli said that the school leadership has begun to look at improving is “understanding just how culturally diverse we are as a student body, not just from an international standpoint, but from a domestic standpoint.” Jennifer thought that before the school year even starts, the school always did a good job of “being really honest about the kind of students that are going to be in [the] classroom and the kind of struggles

that they're going to have." Jessica and Elsa also said this was an area of strength for the administration. When the school needs to find additional teachers, Eli mentioned that they are upfront with potential teachers by suggesting "this is a core piece of who we are as a school and if you're not comfortable with that, maybe where you are currently serving is the best place for you at this time."

Although the majority of the participants spoke positively about how the school leadership emphasizes understanding different cultures, one participant, Matt, thought they could do a better job. "We've kind of touched on cultural awareness briefly with a couple kinds of activities, but think we still have a longer way to go." He said most of the cultural awareness he has developed has been mostly done on his own. Matt's comments were the outlier from all of the participants.

**Code: Leadership encourages continuing education.** Whether it was through in-service activities, or by bringing in guest speakers or encouraging advanced degrees, all of the participants mentioned that the school's leadership did a good job emphasizing professional growth.

**Code: Leadership is supportive and encouraging of teachers to meet ELL needs.** An overwhelming trend that emerged while analyzing the data was how satisfied the participants were with the support the school leadership offered them to meet the needs of their ELL student population. All the participants expressed positive sentiments towards the school's leadership in this regard. Even though the participants recognized that the school's leadership could have provided additional pedagogical guidance related to ELL students, they did recognize that the administration was open to suggestions and willing to make adjustments to help the teachers do what they needed to best reach the ELL student population.

Eli said that the “administration is extremely supportive of our teachers and at the same time wanting to meet the needs of every individual student that we can possibly provide the resources for.” Stephanie noted that sometimes support comes from just purchasing additional workbooks that she thought would be helpful for her ELL students. Elsa, Jacob, Kate, and Robert thought the administration was understanding and responsive to teachers’ requests for help. Kate said the leadership was “really approachable and you know that they will listen to concerns from people who are more in the trenches than they are.” Jennifer commented that she has

never felt like they disregard [her] concerns if [she has] them. They’re really helpful and I know that they value these students just as much as my native English speaking students. I get the sense from them that they value these kids just as much as any other kids and want to help them just as much as any other kid.

James thought that when posed with potential issues with ELL students, the administration “wants to find a solution.” Jessica said the school “provides a good team for working with [their] international students, [their] ELL students. Jessica elaborated:

We have a good team although we may not be highly qualified, or we might not have all the tools and strategies that we need, but we have people who can support us and our administration is very supportive of us going out and learning and taking different classes to help us with that.

Elsa was pleased with how hard the administration worked on supplying the teachers with what they need to address their ELL student population. She stated that “the school is willing to do what it has to do to meet those needs. I don’t think we know what that looks like every single day but I think that it’s constantly evolving.” Stephanie was appreciative of the

school keeping the class sizes small so it is not overwhelming to have multiple ELL students. Robert mentioned that he's "able to order whatever resources I feel I need and "the school's willing to financially support that." Jacob mentioned that the ESL teachers on staff are available for teachers to get resources and ideas from them when they need assistance with ELLs. When asked how the school leadership responded to his concerns when he experiences difficulties instructing ELL students, James, like many of the participants responded emphatically, "Positively! Absolutely, yeah, they want to address it, they want to find a solution."

**Code: Recommendations to leadership.** During the interview process, the participants expressed overall satisfaction with the support the school's leadership offers the teachers. Additionally, the participants were complimentary of the leadership's willingness to listen to suggestions. Consequently, the participants did have some recommendations to the leadership team in how they can further support the teachers' desire to help the ELL student population.

Kate, Jacob, Jennifer, James, and Robert commented on the need to have someone on site who specialized in teaching ELL students so the teachers had someone to whom they could go for assistance and so that person can be the "go-to" person on staff. Jennifer thought "any school that has a significant portion of ELL students, needs an ELL expert in order to help the faculty at large." James noted that just like there is someone on staff who helps teachers instruct students with special needs, "there should be someone in that role for ESL students."

A reoccurring comment made by the participants was a desire to have additional professional development opportunities from an expert in the ESL field. Kate took it a little further by saying that "it would be really beneficial to have somebody who is an expert in teaching ELL students in regular classrooms, not necessarily ESL classrooms." Matt, Robert, Jessica, and Jennifer said the school should offer professional development at the outset of each

school year because it is an ongoing need and should not be touched on every now and then.

Robert said,

My advice would be if we feel that this population merits greater attention, then you know, then bringing somebody in from the outside, or setting someone up on our staff to kind of be that go to person, or just doing something more intentional to make sure that, that student group is having their needs met.

Jacob was passionate about getting someone in who could help the teachers learn the appropriate teaching methods and “phraseology of questions” when instructing ELLs. Some of the participants thought the school could do a better job testing the students as they come in so the teachers could have a better idea of the students’ actual ability. Elsa said: “I know that there has been certainly concern about the diagnostics that we do use to get an accurate picture of their language abilities coming in.” Matt was concerned the school was not getting an accurate picture of some of the students that the school enrolled and therefore sometimes students were placed in classes that were above their ability.

**Code: Support from school leadership—summer English program and bridge program for incoming students.** One way in which the school addresses international students’ barriers is by having them participate in the school’s summer program and bridge program. These programs were designed to help new students work on their English proficiency as well as to help them adjust to their new school and the American culture. Eli noted that many of the “new international students will go to our summer program which is a three-week program that will help them learn some English basics, but will also get them introduced to many things around [city] and American culture.” Then, after the summer program is complete, those students staying on for the school year participate in a two-and-a-half week long bridge program

to help the new students continue to improve their English proficiency. Kate said that the summers she spent helping with these programs helped her find ways to assist the new students acclimate to their new surroundings and find success in their classes.

### **Documents**

I analyzed the document data by using Hatch's (2002) interpretive analysis model. The documents provided by one of the school's administrator were "A Quick Primer on Adjustments for International Students" and the school's 5-year strategic accreditation plan. Additionally, I located information related to the school and, more specifically, the international program on the school's website. Table 3 includes information specific to the interpretations, emergent themes, and the supporting data from the collected documents.

#### **Theme A: The school provides a caring and supportive environment for its students with qualified teachers.**

The first theme that emerged from the collected documents was that the school provided a caring and supportive environment for its students with qualified teachers. In the quick primer provided to the teachers by the dean, teachers are directed to be supportive of students' learning needs and reminders to scaffold instruction accordingly. The school's strategic plan included objectives to improve professional growth to improve instruction. Additionally, the documents collected from the school's website mentioned the students are taught in a friendly, caring, and supportive community by highly qualified teachers where almost 70% of the teachers had a master's degree.

Table 3

*Overview of Themes and Corresponding Documents*

Emergent themes	Excerpts from documents
<p>Theme A: The school provides a caring and supportive environment for its students with qualified teachers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quick primer: “Be approachable, establish relationships”</li> <li>• Quick primer: “Be proactive, approachable and caring”</li> <li>• Quick primer: “Serve students learning needs”</li> <li>• Quick primer: “Have high standards for learning, but provide ladders for student learning progression”</li> <li>• Quick primer: “Be willing to adjust anything to accomplish the learning target”</li> <li>• School Strategic Plan (Objective 2 Strategy 1 Increase use of Data) Action Step 4) Train staff to gather ongoing data collection to improve instruction</li> <li>• School Strategic Plan (Objective 2 Strategy 2 Improve professional growth process) Action Step 1) Formalize a standard (ML) Professional Growth Plan</li> <li>• School Strategic Plan (Objective 2 Strategy 2 Improve professional growth process) Action Step 2) Implement a Professional Growth Cycle (including a review/evaluation process)</li> <li>• Website: “Friendly and safe environment”</li> <li>• Website: “Students are challenged and supported by master’s level instructors”</li> <li>• Website: “International Advisor supports all international students with day-to-day needs, communicates with parents, and assists with necessary personal needs”</li> <li>• Website: (school) “Takes great care in providing a Christ-centered, Bible-based education in a supportive community”</li> <li>• Website: ESL program is described</li> </ul>

(continued)

Emergent themes	Excerpts from documents
<p>Theme B: The school provides multiple cultural experiences in a multi-cultural environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website: “International students experience a broad interaction of cultures in daily life and through organized programming”</li> <li>• Quick primer: “Good techniques for international students are good techniques for ALL students”</li> <li>• Website: “A variety of orientation games”</li> <li>• Website: “Designed cultural experiences and a cross-cultural mentoring program”</li> <li>• Website: “Students are encouraged to participate in activities outside the classroom in cross-cultural activities”</li> <li>• Website: “International program of 125 students from across five continents”</li> <li>• Website: “A modern on-campus dormitory for long-distance and international students”</li> </ul>
<p>Theme C: The academic program is rigorous as demonstrated by the expectations of the school and the students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quick primer: “Have high standards for learning, but provide ladders for student learning progression”</li> <li>• School Strategic Plan (Objective 2 Strategy 3 Improve curricular correlation to standards) Action step 1) Form a subcommittee to formalize the state standards that will be used by each curricular department</li> <li>• School Strategic Plan (Objective 2 Strategy 3 Improve curricular correlation to standards) Action step 2) Identify or develop a common format for standard correlation (curriculum maps or some other format)</li> <li>• School Strategic Plan (Objective 2 Strategy 3 Improve curricular correlation to standards) Action step 3) Provide staff training or review</li> <li>• School Strategic Plan (Objective 2 Strategy 3 Improve curricular correlation to standards) Action step 4) Develop a peer department review cycle)</li> <li>• Website: “Students must be responsible, honest and cooperative, must demonstrate good character and citizenship, and be respectful of others”</li> <li>• Website: “Students must be self-motivated, responsible for their own success, and able to organize personal time”</li> </ul>

(continued)

Emergent themes	Excerpts from documents
Theme C: The academic program is rigorous as demonstrated by the expectations of the school and the students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website: “Because admission into (school’s) international program is competitive, not all qualified applicants will be accepted”</li> <li>• Website: “Students must have an excellent behavior record”</li> <li>• Website: “Students are challenged and supported by master’s level instructors and benefit from an average class size of 20 that offers a student-to-teacher ratio of 13 to 1. This structure enables matriculation to top universities in America.”</li> </ul>

*Note.* Four interpretations: (a) caring and supportive environment, (b) multicultural environment, (c) expectations of students, and (d) program description.

**Theme B: The school provides multiple cultural experiences in a multicultural environment.** The data demonstrated that Midwest Lutheran is a multicultural school with students representing more than 40 countries and five continents. According to the school’s website, the school currently enrolls 125 international students, creating an environment that encourages conversational English among its diverse population. As such, the school plans specific cultural outings where international students can be introduced to American culture. These outings include shopping, games, dining, field trips, and other experiential learning activities. The quick primer provided by the dean also addresses scaffolding techniques the teachers need to instruct such a diverse student population.

**Theme C: The academic program is rigorous as demonstrated by the expectations of the school and the students.** The school has several expectations of international student applicants for them to be admitted. According to statements found on the school’s website, students must be responsible, honest, self-driven, demonstrate good character, participate in a phone or Skype interview, have an excellent behavior record, and be able to speak some English. The school’s website indicated only about one half of all international student applicants are admitted. Midwest Lutheran’s academic program includes multiple advanced placement as well

as STEM courses. To keep its program rigorous, the school's strategic plan submitted to their accreditation body offered clear objectives and action steps to continually improve its curriculum and provide professional development to its teachers. The quick primer from the academic dean indicated teachers were expected to have high standards for learning.

### **Themes From Across These Data**

Several patterns emerged from the collected data. The main theme was the focus the school placed on providing professional development activities to its teachers. The professional development the school provided varied depending on the evaluated needs of the school at the moment. The school leaders encouraged teachers to pursue advanced degrees and other professional development opportunities based upon their individual desires. All of the participants thought the school leadership did a good job helping the teachers at Midwest Lutheran learn about different cultures and the impact of that knowledge on their teaching and student learning. However, all 10 teachers wished the school would have provided additional professional development opportunities specifically related to helping them instruct ELLs. The participants noted that this need stemmed from their lack of undergraduate training and the diverse student population they instructed. The collected documents indicated that the school provided a caring and supportive environment to all of its students, yet the program maintained high academic and moral standards. The varied cultural experiences the school provided its diverse student population helped ELL students acclimate to American culture and the school's academic structure. The participants and review of the documents indicated that to maintain these high standards for the international students, the school leaders must expect high standards of the institution. I discussed these themes in Chapter 5.

The document data indicated that Midwest Lutheran maintained high standards of the teachers, the school, and the students. Furthermore, the documents showed Midwest Lutheran actively recruited international students. The interview data indicated the school prioritized professional development to meet the needs of the students through in-service professional development initiatives. To that end, the school recognized the need to equip the teachers with the tools to meet the educational needs of the ELL students but have not yet addressed those pedagogical needs. The themes from both the interviews and collected documents aligned, yet the missing piece was the professional development that explicitly addressed the pedagogical professional development targeting the ELL student population.

### **Summary**

In this chapter I revisited purpose of the study and the research question that drove my qualitative case study. How do a select group of MLS teachers describe how well they were prepared to teach ELL students in their in-service training at their place of employment? I included a description of each participant's background and experience in the MLS educational system. The methodology was presented in detail by a step-by-step description on how the data were collected and analyzed. The data from the interviews were organized by emergent themes, and the codes used to identify the themes were discussed using evidence from the participants. The data from the collected documents were organized by emergent themes, and excerpts from the documents were listed as well as described to support the themes. The results of the study showed that the participants received little to no undergraduate training to instruct ELLs. As a result, the participants expressed a desire for Midwest Lutheran to provide professional development opportunities to assist them in instructing their diverse student population which included many ELL students. The participants complimented the school's effort to provide

cultural awareness professional development but it was not enough to help them with their instruction to the ELL students. The participants noted that school leadership recognized the importance for teachers to continue their education so they could meet the needs of all students, and they provide the funds and opportunities for the teachers to do so. The documents suggested the school maintained high standards of their students. As a result, the school maintained high standards for themselves as well.

In this chapter I presented the data and results of the study. In Chapter 5, I provide a summary of the results, discuss my interpretation of the results, discuss the results in relation to the literature, describe the limitations of the study, discuss the implication of the results for practice, policy, and theory, make recommendations for further research, and provide a conclusion.

## **Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion**

With many of the MLS's high schools actively recruiting non-native English-speaking international students, teachers in the MLS high schools who enroll international students must have a working knowledge of how to adequately instruct ELL students who are part of the general education program. The purpose of this study was to understand how a group of MLS teachers described the preparation they received at their school to instruct ELL students. Data were collected from two semistructured interviews with 10 teachers from one MLS high school as well as from documents provided by them or collected from the school's website.

In this chapter I present the summary and discussion of the results followed by a discussion of the results in relation to the literature. Limitations of the study are discussed, followed by the implication of the results for practice, policy, and theory. Finally, recommendations for further research are presented as well as the conclusion to the study.

### **Summary of the Results**

Much of the research literature indicated multiple factors influence the education provided to culturally and linguistically diverse students. These factors include preservice teacher preparation programs, professional development provided in field, teachers' empathy and attitudes toward ELLs, which often are based upon preexisting beliefs about ELLs, as well as the support provided to teachers in the field by school leadership. To gain a better understanding of the training MLS teachers received to instruct ELL students, the central research question that guided this qualitative study was, How do a select group of MLS teachers describe how well they were prepared to teach ELL students in their in-service training at their place of employment?

MLS teachers often enter culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms underprepared to serve ELLs. Consequently, because of MLS schools and their history, MLS teachers must undertake a constructivist approach to serving this diverse population. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the conceptual framework for this case study was the constructivist theory of learning. According to constructivist theory, real-life experiences create the knowledge and meaning individuals apply to their immediate situation (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2015; Stake, 1995). MLS schools and their school leaders must provide teachers in the field with in-service training focusing on best practices specifically related to instructing their ELL student population. This research study confirmed what the research literature stated about the need for in-service training when teachers are charged with instructing ELL students.

Cummins et al. (2012) stated that teachers must be prepared to address the vast differences within the classroom. As such, preservice training programs provide an opportunity for future teachers to gain a working knowledge on how best to address ELL students' needs (Baecher, 2012a, Cammarata & Tedick, 2012; Cheatham et al., 2014; DiCerbo et al., 2014; Farrell, 2012; Hamann & Reeves, 2013; Hutchinson, 2013; Jimenez-Silva, 2012; Khong & Saito, 2014; Olson Beal & Rudolph, 2015; Polat & Mahalingappa, 2013; Roy-Campbell, 2013). However, when adequate preservice training is not provided, schools must provide the missing training to teachers of ELL students (DiCerbo et al., 2014, Elfers et al., 2013; Farrell, 2012; McGee et al., 2015). Consequently, school leaders must identify and provide the appropriate professional development that will best assist teachers of ELL students (Elfers et al., 2013; McGee et al., 2015; Sosa & Gomez, 2012).

I used a case study design to understand how a select group of MLS teachers were prepared to instruct ELL students. This research study included 10 participants who graduated

from Midwest Lutheran College and had taught at Midwest Lutheran for at least one year. Through two semistructured interviews, I collected detailed information from the participants, who described the preservice training they received to instruct ELL students, what in-service professional development opportunities the school provided the teachers, and the support the school's leadership provided the participants when they taught ELL students. Additionally, I collected documents from the participants and the school that described what intentional efforts were put forth in providing adequate instruction to non-native English learners. I analyzed the collected data using Hatch's (2002) interpretive analysis steps.

The two semistructured interviews revealed three themes: (a) there was a strong dissatisfaction with the lack of preservice ELL training provided during the participants' undergraduate program; (b) Midwest Lutheran does a good job providing professional development opportunities to the teachers to address the diversity and various cultures on campus; but the training does not include technical aspects directly related to helping teachers instruct ELL students; and (c) the school leadership is supportive of the teachers to help them meet the needs of their students. Three emergent themes developed from analyzing the collected documents: (a) the school provided a caring and supportive environment for its students with qualified teachers, (b) the school provided multiple cultural experiences in a multicultural environment, and (c) the academic program was rigorous as demonstrated by the expectations of the students.

The data revealed that the teachers did not receive preservice instruction during their undergraduate program that would assist them in instructing ELL students. Midwest Lutheran provided multiple in-service professional growth opportunities but not in the area of technical practices specific to helping teachers who teach ELL students. However, Midwest Lutheran

leaders understood the diverse student population they served and does address the cultural diversity through various in-service activities. Furthermore, the school's leadership supported their teachers' professional growth in a variety of ways. The consensus of the participants was that Midwest Lutheran adequately addressed the cultural diversity that exists in the school, but because of the lack of undergraduate training relative to instructing ELL students, the school and school leadership need to focus its professional development activities toward providing pedagogical techniques to its teachers specifically related to instructing ELL students.

### **Discussion of the Results**

To answer the main research question, I first needed to investigate the undergraduate training each of the teachers received related to instructing ELL students. The interviews suggested all 10 participants were satisfied with their undergraduate training insofar as they thought they were prepared to teach the average MLS student. At the same time, the participants overwhelmingly expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of training related to instructing ELL students. To one degree or another, all of the teachers stated that they could not recall any intentional efforts to help them learn techniques that would help them instruct ELL students. As Jacob stated, "I don't really recall ever being taught about how to reach English language learners." Elsa also expressed a similar sentiment: "There wasn't a lot of talk of diversity. . . . I think there was very little stress on English language learners with the curriculum that I can recall." Many of the teachers suggested they were ill-prepared to instruct ELL students right out of college. Consequently, they needed to have professional development provided to them to fill that void. However, the participants also recognized the unique purpose of Midwest Lutheran College in that its purpose is to train teachers to serve in any Lutheran school in the MLS. Eli adequately summarized this sentiment when he said

What's difficult with Midwest Lutheran College is when you are training to become a teacher, those instructors have no idea where you are going to be sent and so you are sent to, you know, an urban setting, that's one thing. You could be sent to a completely rural school where all of a sudden you are teaching four grades and, you know, everybody is coming in from the farm fields. So, your opportunities I guess, come assignment day and call day, vary so much that it's difficult for the instructors to identify and address all of the needs that are there. . . . I think if you talked to each individual instructor they would have a passion for helping people for their particular situation wherever they are at.

Because of their lack of undergraduate training, many of the participants commented that outside of professional development activities, it was experience that helped them the most when it came to finding ways to teach ELL students. In addition to raw experience, the training for ministry provided at Midwest Lutheran College helped the participants find creative ways in which to reach all of the students in their care.

All of the participants had positive comments about the professional development activities provided by Midwest Lutheran. The participants noted the administration placed a priority on back-to-school in-service activities as well as book studies, workshops, conferences, and professional learning communities. In describing the in-service activities, participants described them as "thorough and focused," "very well thought out," "applicable to our ministries," "purposeful," and "excellent." Many of the participants said that the professional development activities and in-service training provided at the school covered many topics and all were ultimately geared towards "developing learning in all students." Additionally, it was noted that the school's administration placed a high priority of advanced degrees. The participants were complimentary toward the school's administrators and their emphasis on encouraging the

teachers to be life-long learners. The school demonstrated this support by providing funding for the teachers to pursue additional classes and advanced degrees. When describing the professional growth related to instructing ELLs, the participants noted that there was a heavy focus on cultural diversity and helping the teachers become “sensitive and knowledgeable about different cultures.” One way in which the school addressed this was through a faculty reading of Lanier’s *Foreign to Familiar: A Guide to Understanding Hot–And Cold–Climate Cultures*.

Although all of the participants recognized that the school did a good job equipping the teachers to address the diverse cultures in the school, they wanted the school to offer more professional development specifically related to the pedagogy needed to effectively instruct ELL students. Kate commented that the teaching staff had not “been trained in a lot of this different stuff” and James stated that the school was “not really focused on English as a second language necessarily.” Many of the participants commented that they wished the school would specifically address the different strategies that would help teachers instruct ELL students. Some of the teachers suggested that the school should regularly bring in guest speakers on the topic or provide various workshops or find online webinars related to helping teachers learn and develop their ELL teaching skills. Robert spoke highly of his colleagues’ ability to teach students but said as a school they need to move forward and to focus on practice in the classroom. Jennifer best summarized the overall sentiment of the participants:

I would like to see more professional development on the actual pedagogy of teaching ELL students. I think we focus on culture. Culture’s great, culture’s wonderful and it takes us far. But fundamentally, how kids learn their second language is completely different than how kids learn their first language. So, I would like to see more education

on how second language is acquired among the whole faculty so that we know what to expect fundamentally from these kids and when to expect it.

The participants noted that the school leadership was supportive of the teachers to help them meet the needs of their students. Assistance from the administration came through in a variety of ways. Many of the teachers noted that the school's leadership was responsive to requests for assistance and made a point of providing professional development that met identified needs. However, all of the participants thought the leadership could have done a better job offering specific training that met the needs of their ELL students. Nine of the participants commented that the school's leadership did a good job of addressing the cultural differences in the school, vetting new teachers as they come on staff, and helping them transition from their previous school to their school's diverse environment. In addition to offering pedagogy courses that address the academic needs of the ELL student population, some of the participants thought the school could have placed ELL students in more appropriate classes based on the students' actual English ability level. Additionally, the majority of the participants wanted to see a dedicated person on staff who would be the "go-to" expert on ELL students.

My analysis of the collected documents suggested the school provided a caring and supportive environment for its students with qualified teachers. This observation was supported during the interview process as the participants demonstrated knowledge in the field of education. Additionally, written plans and online materials showed Midwest Lutheran provided a rigorous educational program to all its students from qualified and caring teachers.

These findings suggested that Midwest Lutheran was consciously aware of its diverse student population and the varying cultures within the school. To that end, the research suggested that the school did a good job helping the teachers develop their knowledge of

instructing students with different cultures and emphasizing professional development among its teachers. However, the research findings also suggested that the school leadership needs to focus its in-service professional development around equipping the teachers with the technical skills required to instruct ELLs. Because the teachers who graduated from MLC at Midwest Lutheran did not receive any undergraduate training specific to ELL students, the school and its leadership must provide the teachers with professional development opportunities that filled that vacancy. Although experience is a component that cannot be taught, schools cannot rely on that alone to help teachers develop the skills necessary to meet ELLs' needs. Consequently, providing in-service and professional development to teachers that specifically address ELL students' needs must become a primary focus of the school's strategic professional growth plan. This will ultimately help Midwest Lutheran's teachers understand how to meet the academic needs of their international student population.

### **Discussion of the Results in Relation to the Literature**

The current literature related to teachers developing the necessary skills to instruct ELL students has revolved mostly around preservice training, in-service professional development, teacher empathy/attitudes towards ELLs, and the role school leadership plays in developing teachers' ability to teach ELLs. The literature review demonstrated that helping teachers develop the necessary pedagogy for ELLs is much more complex than one component. This study supported the literature in three aspects: (a) preservice teachers are not receiving the training necessary to instruct ELL students, (b) they are in need of in-service training to assist them as they instruct ELL students, and (c) a school's leadership is paramount in helping teachers develop the skills they need to instruct ELL students in the classroom.

Faez (2012), Farrell (2012), Hamann and Reeves (2013), Islam and Park (2015), and Johnson et al. (2016) noted that most novice teachers have not received the proper training to meet the needs of ELL students and therefore lacked the necessary skills to adequately teach them. The participants in this study did not receive the preservice training needed to instruct ELL students; in fact, they could remember no training at all. Consequently, without any additional assistance, all of the participants said they were unprepared to meet the diverse needs in their classrooms. Many participants commented that their preservice training sufficiently prepared them to differentiate their instruction enough that they could transfer those skills to instructing ELL students. The participants purported that their training at Midwest Lutheran College to do ministry for the sake of the Gospel assisted them in bridging the gap between what they were not taught and what they needed to do to meet the needs of all students regardless of the students' academic, cultural, or linguistic abilities. The participants noted they wished their undergraduate training would have included strategies that addressed the international student population they currently serve. As such, the participants mentioned that being prepared to serve with a servant's mindset was a key component in helping them put into practice the teaching skills they learned, albeit they were not directly related to instructing ELL students. These findings were consistent with the literature in Chapter 2. As noted by Faez (2012), when teachers are ill-equipped or underprepared to meet the needs of ELL students, teachers will often rely on their own limited knowledge of ELLs and how best to reach them.

Cammarata and Tedick (2012) and Farrell (2012) noted that a gap exists between teacher preservice training and in-service professional development related to instructing ELL students. Consequently, it is the responsibility of individual schools to provide the appropriate professional development to their teachers that specifically addresses ELLs' needs (Cammarata

& Tedick, 2012; Johnson et al., 2016; Roy-Campbell, 2013; Téllez & Manthey, 2015). Elfers et al. (2013) suggested that PLCs are one way in which teachers can develop their teaching skills. Roy-Campbell (2013) highlighted reading academic journals as an important part of a teacher's professional growth. Hamann and Reeves (2013) suggested that a coaching model can assist mainstream teachers instruct ELLs. Regardless of the method, more attention needs to be given to providing teachers with the appropriate skills to meet the needs of ELL students (Elfers et al., 2013). The participants were satisfied with the amount of professional development provided at Midwest Lutheran, but no such learning was directed specifically to instructing ELL students. Rather, the in-service activities were geared toward general education practices that impact learning of all students.

Many of the participants referred to books the faculty read each year; one in particular focused on cultural diversity, what individual students might need as they acclimate to an American school system, and how teachers can meet those needs. The participants also regularly referred to the PLCs the teachers use to collaborate on best practices. Additionally, many of the participants mentioned that the school created a culture of advanced learning. However, almost all of the teachers mentioned that the school could have done a better job of providing professional development opportunities specifically related to developing pedagogical skills that address ELL students' needs. As Harris (2012) mentioned, if schools can structure themselves in such a way that every stakeholder participates in developing ways in which the school can improve, there is a greater likelihood that schools will see tangible school improvements.

Many of the participants expressed satisfaction with the school's leadership and their approach to assisting teachers in their efforts to reach the needs of the ELL student population. McGee et al. (2015) commented that school leaders are instrumental in preparing teachers to

meet the needs of ELL students and making sure teachers understand that the needs of ELL students are different from native English speakers. To that end, Hamann and Reeves (2013) suggested that when employed effectively, school leadership can have a major influence on ELL student outcomes. Elfers et al. (2013) noted that school leadership is responsible for providing the appropriate professional development and classroom support for ELL students. Midwest Lutheran's leadership provided some tools teachers need to instruct ELL students but there was a desire for more. The participants commented that the leadership took a proactive approach to helping the teachers address the needs of their ELL student population—particularly with regard to the varying cultures within the school. Additionally, the school leadership created a culture of advanced learning in that they encourage all of the teachers to pursue their education through various means; whether that is through conferences, seminars, or advanced degrees. Because the school's leadership emphasized continuing education, understanding culture, providing the best practices for all students, and encouraged teachers to meet ELL students' needs, in-service professional development activities should be provided to specifically address pedagogy related to instructing ELL students.

This case study focused on how well prepared MLS teachers are to instruct ELLs in the professional development they receive when employed in a MLS high school. This study consisted of two in-depth interviews of teachers at one MLS high school that actively enrolls international students from many countries. The participants provided qualitative data to help understand the importance of in-service professional development specifically related to instructing ELL students in MLS schools. Like most of the current research in Chapter 2, the findings indicated that MLS teachers are underprepared in their preservice training to serve an ELL student population.

As such, MLS schools must provide the necessary in-service training or professional development to help bridge the gap of what was taught and what is missing to teach students learning English. MLS teachers desired to serve all students but the qualitative data revealed a desire to learn more specific technical aspects specifically related to instructing ELL students. Additionally, the study revealed that school leadership was essential to providing teachers with the professional growth opportunities and educational tools necessary to address the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse learners. The study also revealed through the collected documents that the school not only had high expectations of the students but of themselves as well. Consequently, this study aided in the understanding of recent literature indicating teachers must be provided professional development activities specifically related to teaching ELL students and preservice undergraduate programs must address the growing number of non-native English speaking students in America's classrooms.

### **Limitations**

Limitations are the outside conditions the researcher might not be able to control and thereby weaken the study (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). This study was limited to the experiences of a small sample of teachers at just one high school in the MLS. As such, I identified four limitations of this study: (a) the study design was a qualitative case study design that was limited by the interview questions I asked and the documents the participants were willing to share with me, (b) the study sample included only 10 participants in one area Lutheran high school in the MLS, (c) the research method was limited to a qualitative case study, and (d) the data collection relied on only two interviews with each of the 10 participants and the documents collected.

## **Study Design**

A qualitative case study was used to conduct this study. Consequently, the information I collected was limited by the questions I asked during the interviews. Documents were limited to those I collected from the participants and other documents I was able to obtain about Midwest Lutheran's international student population.

## **Participants**

All 10 participants had graduated from Midwest Lutheran College and had taught for at least one year at Midwest Lutheran. Purposeful sampling was used to meet these set criteria because they could speak directly to their real-life learned experiences at the school (Creswell, 2013). The information gathered from the participants revealed unique information specific to their school. As such, the purposeful sampling from one high school is a limitation because it does not allow for generalizable information related to other high schools in the MLS who enroll ELLs (Hatch, 2002). The participants reflected on their in-service and professional development training provided by their particular school. The interviews revealed professional growth experiences specific to teaching ELLs particular to Midwest Lutheran and not of the professional growth experiences of other teachers in high schools in the MLS. Sampling teachers from other high schools in the MLS would help improve the generalization of the results if this study were to be replicated.

## **Research Method**

The research method used for this study was a qualitative case study. The purpose of a qualitative case study is to investigate a real-life phenomenon in a contemporary setting (Creswell, 2013; Hatch, 2002; Yin, 2003). This purpose of this study was to investigate how well a select group of teachers were prepared to instruct ELL students through the in-service

training they received at Midwest Lutheran, one high school in the MLS. The perceptions of the teachers involved were unique to Midwest Lutheran. Therefore, the findings from this study are not generalizable to the perceptions of all MLS high school teachers and the in-service training provided at their schools to instruct ELLs.

### **Data Collection**

The data consisted of information provided from two sets of 10 interviews and documents collected from the participants. Consequently, the data were limited in scope. The interviews provided the bulk of the data collected but was limited by the sample size. Moreover, I conducted one face-to-face interview and one phone interview over the course of seven weeks with both interviews totaling approximately 70–90 minutes. The phone interview limited my ability to see visual reactions to my questions, and the tendency was to conduct a shorter interview than the first. Additionally, the amount of time between interviews limited the participants' ability to recall details of the first interview.

An additional limitation was the number of documents. Even though I provided each participant with a requested list of documents a week prior to the first interview and asked for documents after the first interview, the participants were either unable to produce samples of the requested documents or were unwilling to provide samples. Consequently, I had to collect additional documents from printed material found on the school's website. Aside from a few documents provided by the participants and the administration specifically addressing in-service professional development, I was unable to substantiate claims from the interviews that the teachers were provided with training specifically related to helping them teach ELL students. This led to a limitation for data analysis; therefore, I had to rely on Hatch's (2002) inductive and

interpretive analysis of the collected data. However, with more time, additional documents might be collected to help support the claims made by the participants during the interviews.

### **Implications of the Results for Practice, Policy, and Theory**

The conceptual framework that drove this study was the constructivist theory of learning. Constructivism is a theory of learning in which individuals develop knowledge and understanding based upon previous experiences (Creswell, 2013). In this section I discuss the implications of the findings as related to the practice, policy, and theory of preparing MLS teachers to instruct their ELL student population.

#### **Practice**

To adequately meet the needs of today's diverse classrooms, teacher preparation programs must address the growing need to adequately prepare teachers to instruct ELLs (Hallman & Meineke, 2016). Teachers of ELLs need the pedagogical and classroom management training that supports the various linguistic and cultural backgrounds found in today's classrooms (Farrell, 2012; Gan, 2013; Jimenez-Silva et al., 2012; Short, 2013). However, most teachers have not received the proper preservice training on how to meet the educational needs of ELL students (Islam & Park, 2015; Johnson et al., 2016). As such, when teachers are inadequately trained to meet ELL needs in their undergraduate training, teachers are often left to rely on their own limited knowledge of how best to instruct ELLs (Faez, 2012). Consequently, it becomes the responsibility of schools and school leadership to provide the necessary in-services and professional development to bridge the gap between what teachers do not know and the skills they need to have in order to effectively instruct ELL students (Elfers et al., 2013; Roy-Campbell, 2013). The results of this study indicate that although MLS teachers receive undergraduate training that addresses the needs of the average student, no preservice

training addresses the growing ELL student population in MLS high schools. As a result, MLS high schools are left to provide teachers with the appropriate professional development that meets the needs of a diverse group of learners, which includes ELLs.

The participants expressed overall satisfaction with their undergraduate training to meet the academic needs of most students. The participants were satisfied with the professional development provided at Midwest Lutheran insofar as it addressed a variety of educational topics. Additionally, they were supportive of the cultural training they received that assisted them acknowledge the diversity within the school. However, the participants commented that they were underprepared to meet the academic needs of the ELL student population in their high school. As a result, the participants expressed a desire for professional development opportunities that specifically addresses the technical components. Because Midwest Lutheran actively recruits international students, most of whom are not native English-speaking students, the school's leadership should provide regular professional development specifically addressing this student population.

Because the participants expressed strong dissatisfaction with the lack of undergraduate training related to teaching ELLs, and the literature shows a need for strong preservice ELL training, it would behoove Midwest Lutheran College to look closely at its preservice training curriculum and add ELL courses specifically addressing the pedagogy related to teaching ELLs. The trend in the MLS indicates that the high schools will continue to grow their international programs; therefore, the high schools will need to employ teachers who have the skills to instruct this student population. If the teachers in the high schools lack the preservice training to meet this growing need, it will fall on the shoulders of the MLS high schools to provide the necessary training in order to meet the educational needs of their culturally diverse student population.

Midwest Lutheran has the structures in place to address this training but are still lacking in the technical pedagogy associated with training teachers to teach ELLs. Since it cannot be assumed that other MLS high schools have in-service structures in place similar to Midwest Lutheran, it would be worthwhile for Midwest Lutheran College to look more closely at emphasizing the constructivist learning theory in order to best equip future graduates to address the student populations in MLS schools that enroll international students.

### **Policy**

The results of this case study do not represent all MLS high schools that recruit international students. However, this sample of MLS teachers in one high school—which has a large international student population—indicated a need to receive in-service professional development specifically related to instructing ELL students. Many MLS high schools continue to recruit and enroll international students as well as local students who might not be native English speakers. From a policy perspective it would be in the best interest of MLS high schools that enroll ELL students for their school’s leadership to provide professional development that specifically addresses instructing ELL students.

The enrollment trends of MLS high schools indicate that high schools will continue to actively recruit international students as well as enroll local students who may be ELLs. As such, particular attention should be made to addressing the gap between the lack of preservice training related to instructing ELL students and the actual teaching of ELL students in MLS high schools. Midwest Lutheran and other MLS high schools that enroll international students should consider some sort of culturally responsive pre-assessment for all new teachers who come to the school to measure their cultural responsiveness to ELLs. The participants discussed several areas of improvement needed at Midwest Lutheran, most notably surrounding the need for

technical skills that would assist them in teaching their ELL student population. With Midwest Lutheran having such an extensive history with enrolling international students and setting international student enrollment trends within the MLS' high schools, the demand for providing technical skills to teachers of ELL students in other MLS high schools might exist.

Therefore, it would be in the best interest of the MLS's Commission on Lutheran Schools (CLS) to take a serious look at both the preservice and in-service training of teachers specifically related to ELLs. Because the MLS Commission on Lutheran Schools is responsible for tracking and monitoring the teachers' professional growth within the synod, work will need to be done to assess the extent to which the teachers are prepared to reach a culturally diverse student population that includes ELLs. To that end, the CLS should make in-service professional development recommendations to the high schools that enroll students who do not speak English as their native language. Otherwise, the CLS might be recommending individual high schools to hire teachers who are not adequately prepared to instruct the ELL population.

## **Theory**

The results of this study suggest that the participants are satisfied with their undergraduate training in terms of instructing the average native English-speaking student. The participants said their desire to do ministry in an educational setting drove them to reach every student regardless of their linguistic ability. Because the participants understood the reality of their workplace, they knew they need the skills that address the needs of their ELL student population. In social constructivism, the individual "seek understanding of the world in which they live and work" (Creswell, 2013, p. 24). As the results of this study demonstrated, the participants developed meaning of their particular situation and realize the need for professional development related to teach ELL students.

The participants reflected on their undergraduate training and realized there was a gap in their preservice preparation program and what is required to teach the ELL students they serve. They believed the school's leadership did a good job providing general in-service professional development, and they received adequate training to address the various cultures in the school. But they were lacking in the appropriate knowledge specifically related to teaching ELL students. Consequently, they had to construct their own knowledge on how best to meet the needs of their ELL student population based upon their previous experience. Because the desire exists among the participants to reach all students ministerially, the participants took it upon themselves to find ways to instruct all their students. However, the participants understood that constructing their own knowledge is not sufficient enough when it comes to educating a population they were not trained to teach. Therefore, the participants recognized the need to develop their technical skills specific to their ELL student population. Experiences within their in-service professional development activities must be meaningful, relevant, and address the reality that their classrooms included a diverse student population of both native and non-native English speakers. Because constructivism is a theory of learning in which individuals develop knowledge and meaning based upon previous experiences, Midwest Lutheran should mitigate the void between teachers having to develop their own knowledge on how best to instruct ELL students and providing them the appropriate professional development that assists them in instructing this population of students.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

In this study I analyzed data from the interviews from 10 teachers in one high school in the MLS. Based upon the results, this study can be expanded to include a larger number of participants that teach in other high schools in the MLS that actively recruit international

students and enroll ELLs. Research can also be conducted on how the leadership in various MLS high schools address the diversity within their schools. Additionally, researchers should explore how Midwest Lutheran College can effectively prepare its secondary undergraduate students to meet the needs of ELL students in the synod's high schools. Other researchers could compare the effectiveness of in-service professional development programs that address a general educational setting versus in-service professional development programs that address a diverse student population that includes ELL students.

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to understand how a select group of MLS teachers described how well prepared they were to teach ELL students. Specifically, I explored how the teachers' in-service professional development helped them address the needs of the ELL students they taught at Midwest Lutheran high school. The literature I reviewed showed a need for preservice undergraduate programs to address the growing ELL student population in U.S. schools as well as how in-service programs need to improve to address what is missing from preservice programs. Additionally, the literature demonstrated that teachers' empathy and attitudes can have an impact on how a teacher instructs ELL students. The literature also showed a need for strong school leadership when addressing the diverse learning needs in schools relative to English-speaking ability.

I interviewed 10 teachers in one MLS high school two times each and examined relevant documents to understand how well they were prepared by their school to instruct their ELL student population. The participants said they did not receive training during their undergraduate training to help them instruct ELLs. Consequently, the participants recognized a need for Midwest Lutheran to supplement what they were not taught during their undergraduate training

to help them in their current place of employment. The participants recognized that their school's leadership adequately provides ample in-service professional growth opportunities and prepares them to address the varying cultures at their school. However, the participants also realized that the school needs provide additional professional growth opportunities that specifically address the technical aspects related to teaching ELL students.

By all indications, the number of ELLs in MLS high schools will continue to increase. Therefore, there is a need to address the undergraduate training of future MLS teachers and provide appropriate professional growth opportunities in the MLS high schools that address this specific student population. Specifically, MLS high school leadership needs to intentionalize professional development that addresses the pedagogy teachers need to adequately address the needs of their ELL student population.

This research study serves as an introduction to assessing how well prepared MLS teachers are to instruct ELL students. The data revealed that the undergraduate training of MLS teachers does not adequately address the needs of ELL students. Consequently, the bulk of the responsibility of training MLS teachers to instruct ELL students falls on the shoulders of the leadership of the schools that enroll ELLs. The participants in this study thought Midwest Lutheran did a good job addressing the diverse cultural aspects of the school but fell short in providing the appropriate pedagogical training they needed for their student population.

If the MLS is all about the Great Commission—to go into all the world and preach the Good News to all creation—then it is important that teachers and administrators meet their school's student population needs. Thus, the practices and preparation in the preservice, in-service, and other educational efforts within the synod's schools need to address the growing

ELL student population. Every level of education in the MLS is responsible for this important part of the synod's ministry to the world.

## References

- Baecher, L. (2012a). Feedback from the field: What novice pre-K12 ESL teachers want to tell TESOL teacher educators. *TESOL Quarterly*, *46*(3), 578–588. doi:10.1002/tesq.43
- Baecher, L. (2012b). Pathways to teacher leadership among English-as-a-second-language teachers: Professional development by and for emerging teacher leaders. *Professional Development in Education*, *38*(2), 317–330. doi:10.1080/19415257.2012.657877
- Berg, M., & Huang, A. (2015). Improving in-service teachers' effectiveness: K–12 academic literacy for the linguistically diverse. *Functional Linguistics*, *2*(1), 1–21. doi:10.1186/s40554-015-00176
- Bloomberg, L. D., & Volpe, M. (2012). *Completing your qualitative dissertation: A road map from beginning to end*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Bostock, J. (2019). Exploring in-service trainee teacher expertise and practice: Developing pedagogical content knowledge. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*. doi:10.1080/14703297.2018.1562358
- Cammarata, L., & Tedick, D. J. (2012). Balancing content and language in instruction: The experience of immersion teachers. *Modern Language Journal*, *96*(2), 251–269. doi:10.1111/j.1540-4781.2012.01330.x
- Cheatham, G., Jimenez-Silva, M., Wodrich, D., & Kasai, M. (2014). Disclosure of information about English proficiency. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *65*(1), 53–62. doi:10.1177/0022487113503687
- Cho, J., Rios, F., Trent, A., & Mayfield, K. K. (2012). Integrating language diversity into teacher education curricula in a rural context: Candidates' developmental perspectives and understandings. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, *39*(2), 63–85. Retrieved from

<http://link.galegroup.com.cupdx.idm.oclc.org/apps/doc/A318999938/AONE?u=conu&sid=AONE&xid=7ccdd55f>

Creswell, J. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry & research design*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Crowson, H., & Brandes, M. (2014). Predicting pre-service teachers' opposition to inclusion of students with disabilities: A path analytic study. *Social Psychology of Education, 17*(1), 161–178. doi:10.1007/s11218-013-9238-2

Cummins, J., Mirza, R., & Stille, S. (2012). English language learners in Canadian schools: emerging directions for school-based policies. *TESL Canada Journal, 29*(1), 25–47.

Retrieved from

<http://go.galegroup.com.cupdx.idm.oclc.org/ps/i.do?ty=as&v=2.1&u=conu&it=DIourl&=RELEVANCE&p=AONE&qt=SN~0826-435X~~TI~%22English%20Language%20Learners%20in%22~~VO~29~~SP~ec&lm=DA~120120000&sw=w&authCount=1>

Darling-Hammond, L. (2006). *Powerful teacher education: Lessons from exemplary programs*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

de Jong, E.,J., & Harper, C. A. (2005). Preparing mainstream teachers for English-language learners: Is being a good teacher good enough? *Teacher Education Quarterly, 32*(2), 101–124. Retrieved from <http://cupdx.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.cupdx.idm.oclc.org/docview/222855784?accountid=10248>

- DiCerbo, P., Anstrom, K., Baker, & Rivera, C. (2014). A review of the literature on teaching academic English to English language learners. *Review of Educational Research, 84*(3), 446–482. doi:10.3102/0034654314532695
- Elfers, A., Lucero, A., Stritikus, T., & Knapp, M. (2013). Building systems of support for classroom teachers working with English language learners. *International Multilingual Research Journal, 7*(2), 155–174. doi:10.1080/193131152.2012.665824
- Faez, F. (2012). Diverse teachers for diverse students: Internationally educated and Canadian-born teachers' preparedness to teach English language learners. *Canadian Journal of Education, 35*(3), 64–84. Retrieved from <http://journals.sfu.ca/cje/index.php/cje-rce/article/view/967>
- Farrell, T. (2012). Novice-service language teacher development: Bridging the gap between preservice and in-service education and development. *TESOL Quarterly, 46*(3), 435–449. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org.cupdx.idm.oclc.org/stable/41576062>
- Gan, Z. (2013). Learning to teach English language in the practicum: What challenges do non-native ESL student teachers face? *Australian Journal of Teacher Education, 38*(3), 92–108. Retrieved from <http://ro.ecu.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1972&context=ajte>
- Hallman, H., & Meineke, H. (2016). Addressing the teaching of English language learners in the United States: A case study of teacher educators' response. *Brock Education Journal, 26*(1), 68–82. Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1148304.pdf>
- Hamann, E., & Reeves, J. (2013). Interrupting the professional schism that allows less successful educational practices with ELLs to persist. *Theory Into Practice, 52*(2), 81–88. doi:10.1080/00405841.2013.770325

- Harris, A. (2012). Distributed leadership: implications for the role of the principal. *Journal of Management Development*, 31(1), 7–17. doi:10.1108/02621711121190961
- Hatch, J. A. (2002). *Doing qualitative research in education settings*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Hutchinson, M. (2013). Bridging the gap: Preservice teachers and their knowledge of working with English language learners. *TESOL Journal*, 4(1), 25–54. doi:0.1002/tesj.51
- Islam, C., & Park, M. (2015). Preparing teachers to promote culturally relevant teaching: Helping English language learners in the classroom. *Multicultural Education*, 23(1), 38–44. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1090370>
- Jimenez-Silva, M., Olson, K., & Jimenez Hernandez, N. (2012). The confidence to teach English language learners: Exploring coursework's role in developing preservice teachers' efficacy. *The Teacher Educator*, 47(1), 9–28. doi:10.1080/08878730.2011.632471
- Johnson, C., Bolshakova, V., & Waldron, T. (2016). When good intentions and reality meet. *Urban Education*, 51(5), 476–513. doi:10.1177/0042085914543114
- Khong, T., & Saito, E. (2014). Challenges confronting teachers of English language learners. *Educational Review*, 66(2), 210–225. doi:10.1080/00131911.2013.769425
- Koelsch, L. E. (2013). Reconceptualizing the member check interview. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 168–179. <https://doi.org/10.1177/160940691301200105>
- Lai, E., & Cheung, D. (2015). Enacting teacher leadership: The role of teachers in bringing about change. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 43(5), 673–692. doi:10.1177/1741143214535742

- Lambersky, J. (2016). Understanding the human side of school leadership: Principal's impact on teachers' morale, self-efficacy, stress, and commitment. *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 15(4), 379–405. doi:10.1080/15700763.2016.1181188
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. A. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- López, F., Scanlan, M., & Gundrum, B. (2013). Preparing teachers of English language learners: Empirical evidence and policy implications. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 21(20), 1–31. Retrieved from <https://epaa.asu.edu/ojs/>
- Machi, L., & McEvoy, B. (2016). *The literature review: Six steps to success*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
- McGee, A., Haworth, P., & MacIntyre, L. (2015). Leadership practices to support teaching and learning for English language learners. *TESOL Quarterly: A Journal for Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages and of Standard English as a Second Dialect*, 49(1), 92–114. Retrieved from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com.cupdx.idm.oclc.org/doi/10.1002/tesq.162/epdf>
- Molle, D. (2013). Facilitating professional development for teachers of English language learners. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 29, 197–207. Retrieved from <http://www.sciencedirect.com.cupdx.idm.oclc.org/science/article/pii/S0742051X12001485?via%3Dihub>
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2017). *English language learners in public schools*. Retrieved from [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator\\_cgf.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cgf.asp)
- National Kids Count. (2017). *Children who speak a language other than English at home*. Retrieved from <https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/81-children-who-speak-a->

language-other-than-english-

athome#detailed/1/any/false/870,573,869,36,868,867,133,38,17,11/any/396,397

Olson Beal, H. K., & Rudolph, A. M. (2015). Preparing teachers to meet the needs of Latino and ELL students: A case study of a federal grant. *Planning and Changing*, 46(1), 42–55.

Retrieved from

<http://search.ebscohost.com.cupdx.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eue&AN=110937911&site=ehost-live&scope=site>

Patton, M. (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Penner-Williams, J., Diaz, E., & Gonzales Worthen, D. (2017). PLCs: Key PD component in learning transfer for teachers of English learners. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 65,

215–229. Retrieved from [https://www.sciencedirect-](https://www.sciencedirect-com.cupdx.idm.oclc.org/science/article/pii/S0742051X17304729)

[com.cupdx.idm.oclc.org/science/article/pii/S0742051X17304729](https://www.sciencedirect-com.cupdx.idm.oclc.org/science/article/pii/S0742051X17304729)

Polat, N., & Mahalingappa, L. (2013). Pre- and in-service teachers' beliefs about ELLs in content area classes: A case for inclusion, responsibility, and instructional support.

*Teaching Education*, 24(1), 58–83. doi:10.1080/10476210.2012.713930

Protheroe, N. (2008). Teacher efficacy: What is it and does it matter? *Principal*, 87(5), 42–45.

Retrieved from <http://web.b.ebscohost.com.cupdx.idm.oclc.org/ehost/pdfviewer>

[/pdfviewer?vid=2&sid=c2a5ec3c-d033-4ee6-9ace-fb25901c59a4%40sessionmgr102](http://web.b.ebscohost.com.cupdx.idm.oclc.org/ehost/pdfviewer?vid=2&sid=c2a5ec3c-d033-4ee6-9ace-fb25901c59a4%40sessionmgr102)

Rademan, J. (2018). *Utilizing our schools for outreach*. Retrieved from <https://wels.net/utilizing-schools-for-outreach/>

Ravitch, S., & Riggan, M. (2017). *Reason & rigor: How conceptual frameworks guide research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Reeves, D. (2010). *Transforming professional development into student results*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Rizzuto, K. (2017). Teachers' perceptions of ELL students: Do their attitudes shape their instruction? *The Teacher Educator*, 52(3), 182–202.  
doi:10.1080/08878730.2017.1296912
- Roy-Campbell, Z. M. (2013). Who educates teacher educators about English language learners? *Reading Horizons*, 52(3), 255–280. Retrieved from  
<http://search.ebscohost.com.cupdx.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eue&AN=93738789&site=ehost-live&scope=site>
- Russell, M., & Russell, J. (2014). Preservice science teachers and cultural diversity awareness. *Electronic Journal of Science Education*, 18(3), 1–20. Retrieved from  
<http://ejse.southwestern.edu/article/view/12813/8792>
- Saldaña, J. (2016). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Sarafidou, J., & Chatziioannidis, G. (2013). Teacher participation in decision making and its impact on school and teachers. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 27(2), 170–183. doi:10.1108/09513541311297586
- Sebastian, J., & Allensworth, E. (2012). The influence of principal leadership on classroom instruction and student learning: A study of mediated pathways to learning. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 48(4), 626–663. doi:10.1177/001316X11436273
- Seidman, R. (2013). *Interviewing as qualitative research*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

- Schachner, M. (2019). From equality and inclusion to cultural pluralism – Evolution and effects of cultural diversity perspectives in schools. *European Journal of Developmental Psychology, 16*(1), 1–17. doi:10.1080/17405629.2017.1326378
- Short, D. (2013). Training and sustaining effective teachers of sheltered instruction. *Theory Into Practice, 52*(2), 118–127. doi:10.1080/00405841.2013.770329
- Sosa, T., & Gomez, K. (2012). Connecting teacher efficacy beliefs in promoting resilience to support of Latino students. *Urban Education, 47*(5), 876–909. doi:10.1177/0042085912446033
- Stake, R. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage
- Téllez, K., & Manthey, G. (2015). Teachers' perceptions of effective school-wide programs and strategies for English language learners. *Learning Environments Research, 18*(1), 111–127. doi:10.1007/s10984-015-9173-6
- Trimmer, K. (2013). Independent public schools: A move to increased autonomy and devolution of decision-making in western Australian public schools. *Childhood Education, 89*(3), 178–184. doi:10.1080/0094056.2013.792703
- U.S. Department of Education. (2015). *Developing programs for English language learners: glossary*. Retrieved from <https://www2.ed.gov/print/about/offices/list/ocr/ell/glossary.html>
- U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2018). *The condition of education* (NCES 2018–144). Retrieved from <https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=208144>
- Wadesango, N. (2012a). The influence of teacher participation in decision-making on their occupational morale. *Journal of Social Science, 31*(3), 361–369. Retrieved

from <http://www.krepublishers.com/02-Journals/JSS/JSS-31-0-000-12-Web/JSS-31-3-000-12-Abst-PDF/JSS-31-3-337-12-1342-Wadesango-N/JSS-31-3-337-344-12-1342-Wadesango-N-Tx%5B10%5D.pdf>

Wadesango, N. (2012b). The relationship between teacher participation in decision-making and organisational commitment. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 31(3), 337–344. Retrieved from <http://www.krepublishers.com/02-Journals/JSS/JSS-31-0-000-12-Web/JSS-31-3-000-12-Abst-PDF/JSS-31-3-337-12-1342-Wadesango-N/JSS-31-3-337-344-12-1342-Wadesango-N-Tx%5B10%5D.pdf>

Yin, R. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Yoon, S. Y. (2016). Principals' data-driven practice and its influences on teacher buy-in and student achievement in comprehensive school reform models. *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 15(4), 500–523. doi:10.1080/15700763.2016.1181187

Zhang, J., & Pelttari, C. (2014). Exploring the emotions and needs of English language learners: Facilitating pre-service and in-service teachers' recognition of the tasks facing language learners. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 35(2), 1–16. doi:10.1080/01434632.2013.822505

## Appendix A: Consent Form

Concordia University – Portland Institutional Review Board  
Approved: September 20, 2018; will Expire: August 3, 2019

**Research Study Title:** The Preparedness of Teachers in the Midwest  
Lutheran Synod to Teach English Language Learners: A Case  
Study in One High School  
**Principal Investigator:** Benjamin Troge  
**Research Institution:** Concordia University–Portland  
**Faculty Advisor:** Dr. Edward Kim

**Purpose and what you will be doing:** The purpose of this survey is to investigate how well prepared teachers are to teach English Language Learners. I expect approximately 10 volunteers. No one will be paid to be in the study. We will begin enrollment in September, 2018 and end enrollment in October, 2018. To be in the study, you will be asked to participate in two 60 minute interviews and supply requested documents.

Doing these things should take less than three hours of your time.

**Risks:** There are no risks to participating in this study other than providing your information. However, I will protect your information. Any personal information you provide will be coded so it cannot be linked to you. Any name or identifying information you give will be kept securely via electronic encryption or locked within my personal office. When I look at the data, none of the data will have your name or identifying information. I will only use a secret code to analyze the data. I will not identify you in any publication or report. The interviews will be audio recorded. After the interviews have been transcribed by me and checked by you for accuracy, the audio recordings of the interviews will be deleted. Your information will be kept private at all times. The recordings will be deleted as soon as possible; all other study documents will be destroyed 3 years after I conclude this study.

**Benefits:** Information you provide will help me identify how well prepared teachers are to meet the growing international student population in its high schools. Furthermore, by helping me conduct this research, I hope to use this information to raise awareness within the MLS about the growing need for professional development activities which specifically addresses the importance of training teachers to meet the needs of ELL students.

**Confidentiality:** This information will not be distributed to any other agency and will be kept private and confidential. The only exception to this is if you tell me about abuse or neglect that makes me seriously concerned for your immediate health and safety.

**Right to Withdraw:** Your participation is greatly appreciated, but I acknowledge that the questions I am asking are personal in nature. You are free at any point to choose not to engage with or stop the study. You may skip any questions you do not wish to answer. This study is not required and there is no penalty for not participating. If at any time you experience a negative emotion from answering the questions, I will stop asking you questions.

**Contact Information:**

You will receive a copy of this consent form. If you have questions you can talk to or write the principal investigator, Benjamin Troge at email: [redacted]. If you want to talk with a participant advocate other than the investigator, you can write or call the director of our institutional review board, Dr. OraLee Branch (email obranch@cu-portland.edu or call 503- 493-6390).

**Your Statement of Consent:**

I have read the above information. I asked questions if I had them, and my questions were answered. I volunteer my consent for this study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Name Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Investigator Name Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Investigator Signature Date

Investigator: Benjamin Troge email: [redacted]  
c/o: Professor Dr. Edward Kim  
Concordia University–Portland  
2811 NE Holman Street  
Portland, Oregon 97221



## **Appendix B: Interview Guide, Part I**

### **Interview Guide Part I**

Time of Interview:

Date:

Place:

Interviewer:

Interviewee:

Position of interviewee:

Questions:

**A: What undergraduate training did you receive at Midwest Lutheran College to adequately prepare you to teach the English Language Learners Midwest Lutheran High School enrolls as part of their international student program?**

1. Think back to your undergraduate training at Midwest Lutheran College. How well were you prepared to teach English Language Learners?
2. While you were taking your pedagogy courses at Midwest Lutheran College, how did the course content explore the skills needed to teach English Language Learners?
3. Since Midwest Lutheran College exists to train teachers to teach in the Midwest Lutheran Synod, which includes high schools like Midwest Lutheran, how did the professors address the growing number of international students being enrolled in the synod's area Lutheran high schools?
4. How did the college professors ensure you were prepared to teach all of the students in your field of expertise at any of the high schools in the MLS?

**B: What professional development learning opportunities have been provided to you at your school to assist you in instructing the ELL students in your classroom?**

1. What professional development activities does Midwest Lutheran provide for you to grow as an educator?
2. How does Midwest Lutheran prepare you to teach students who are English Language Learners?
3. Professional development can take on many forms. These include in-service presentations, professional learning communities, college classes taken for credit and the like. How do the professional development activities at Midwest Lutheran address the needs of your student population?

**C: How has your school leadership additionally helped prepare you to adequately provide instruction to ELL students?**

1. As you begin each new school year, how does the school leadership specifically address the diverse international student population during your in-service meetings?
2. What tools does Midwest Lutheran's leadership provide teachers in order to effectively instruct ELL students?
3. When you experience difficulties instructing ELL students, how does the school leadership respond to your concerns?
4. What other tools, techniques, technologies, or mentor tutoring might provide individual strategies to support teachers of ELL students at Midwest Lutheran?

## Appendix C: Interview Guide, Part II

### Interview Guide Part II

Time of Interview:

Date:

Place:

Interviewer:

Interviewee:

Position of interviewee:

Questions:

1. How would you best describe the PD activities provided at Midwest Lutheran (ML)?
2. During your time at ML, what PD activities have helped you the most to instruct the ELL students you teach?
3. It appears a lot of your PD focuses on culture and diversity. What PD activities do you think would help you the most to instruct ELL students?
4. How does Midwest Lutheran's leadership equip you to teach the international students you instruct?
5. There are multiple challenges when it comes to teaching ELL students. How does the school's leadership respond when you bring those challenges to their attention?
6. What ideas or suggestions would you offer your school leadership to improve instruction to the ELL students in your classroom?

## **Appendix D: Document Request**

### **Documents Requested**

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this study on the preparedness of MLS teachers to teach ELL students. As part of my study I need to collect documents from you that indicate to what extent you have been equipped to instruct all students; particularly those who do not speak English as their primary language. Any documents you are willing to share would be of great assistance to me. These documents need to reflect examples of how instructing ELL students have been addressed in your past or in your current setting. Examples of the document types I would like to collect include, but are not limited to:

- Your school's self-improvement plan,
- Minutes of faculty meetings,
- Principal/Vice principal observations, notes, and improvement objectives,
- E-mail correspondence,
- Teacher mentor notes, comments, or recommendations,
- Calendar notifications,
- Personal journal entries,
- General announcements,
- Newsletters,
- Written reports,
- Registration acknowledgements for attending a seminar or class specific to teaching ELL students,
- Formal study records,
- Personal self-improvement plans.

## **Appendix E: Recruitment Email**

Doctoral Studies Program Study: The Preparedness of Teachers in the Midwest Lutheran Synod to Teach English Language Learners: A Case Study in One High School

Dear <<insert name>>:

My name is Ben Troge, the high school principal at Southern Savior Academy and I am a doctoral student at Concordia University–Portland. I am recruiting teachers to participate in a case study that will explore how well prepared MLS high school teachers are to instruct ELL students; specifically through the professional development they receive at their place of employment. Your participation is very valuable to the study and will help identify the importance of in-service professional development that addresses ELL students' needs. You have been specifically invited to participate because of your current employment in a MLS high school that enrolls international students and because you are a graduate of MLC. The insights that you can provide will assist in developing a thorough understanding of how well prepared MLS teachers are to instruct ELL students. By sharing your experiences, you will also have the opportunity to reflect on the in-service training at your school.

Two individual interviews will be conducted and I will ask for some documents in-between interviews that will help indicate to what extent you have been equipped to instruct all students; particularly those who do not speak English as their primary language. Responses from the interviews, as well as the documents collected, will be used as part of my research project; however, your participation in the study and responses to the questions will be kept anonymous. Your identity and involvement in the study will not be revealed at any time. Each participant and the name of the school will be assigned a pseudo name for the purpose of this research. This will allow you to share your honest feelings about the training you have received. Your candid responses are essential to this study.

I intend on visiting your school for a week; during which time I intend to conduct my interviews. Individual interviews will be held at a time that is convenient for you and your schedule. The interview sessions will last no longer than 60 minutes. During the interviews, I will ask a set of general questions about your undergraduate training at MLC, your professional development activities at your school, and how your school leadership has assisted you in providing adequate instruction to ELL students. For documentation purposes, I will record the conversations and take notes during the interviews. The recording will allow me to accurately capture the conversations. After I transcribe the interviews, I will give you the opportunity to check them over for accuracy.

There are no right or wrong answers to the questions that will be asked. Your impressions, reflections, and thoughtful answers are very important to the study. I want to gain and in-depth

understanding of how well prepared MLS high school teachers are to instruct ELL students and how this might impact the other high schools in the MLS.

Your participation is valuable; however, you can decide to withdraw from the study at any time and I will respect your decision. I truly appreciate your willingness to consider being a participant in this study and how this might impact our MLS high school ministries.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please respond with the following information: Your name, the subject(s) you teach, the position you hold at the school, the number of years of experience you have at the school, and the total number of years teaching you have in the MLS. This information will be kept confidential on my password protected personal computer, on a password protected external hard drive, and in my password protected Google Drive account. Your email responses will be deleted immediately after this information is transferred accordingly. After you indicate your willingness to participate, I will send you a consent form. After signing and returning the informed consent, additional information on the process of the study will be shared with you. All information will be kept on the previously mentioned devices and all emails will be deleted immediately.

I cannot thank you enough for your willingness to consider participating in this study as I believe it will help all of the MLS high schools who enroll ELL students down the road. Please feel free to call or email me if you have any questions that need clarification.

In Christ,

Ben Troge

## **Appendix F: Inductive Analysis Steps**

1. Read the data and identify frames of analysis
2. Create domains based on semantic relationships discovered within frames of analysis
3. Identify salient domains, assign them a code, and put others aside
4. Reread data, refining salient domains and keeping a record of where relationships are found in the data
5. Decide if your domains are supported by the data and search data for examples that do not fit with or run counter to the relationships in your domains
6. Complete an analysis within domains
7. Search for themes across domains
8. Create a master outline expressing relationships within and among domains
9. Select data excerpts to support the elements of your domain

## **Appendix G: Interpretive Analysis Steps**

1. Read data for a sense of the whole
2. Review impressions previously recorded in research journals and/or bracketed in protocols and record these in memos
3. Read the data, identify impressions, and record impressions in memos
4. Study memos for salient interpretations
5. Reread data, coding places where interpretations are supported or challenged
6. Write a draft summary
7. Review interpretations with participants
8. Write a revised summary and identify excerpts that support interpretations

## **Appendix H: Statement of Original Work**

The Concordia University Doctorate of Education Program is a collaborative community of scholar-practitioners, who seek to transform society by pursuing ethically-informed, rigorously-researched, inquiry-based projects that benefit professional, institutional, and local educational contexts. Each member of the community affirms throughout their program of study, adherence to the principles and standards outlined in the Concordia University Academic Integrity Policy. This policy states the following:

### **Statement of academic integrity.**

As a member of the Concordia University community, I will neither engage in fraudulent or unauthorized behaviors in the presentation and completion of my work, nor will I provide unauthorized assistance to others.

### **Explanations:**

#### ***What does “fraudulent” mean?***

“Fraudulent” work is any material submitted for evaluation that is falsely or improperly presented as one’s own. This includes, but is not limited to texts, graphics and other multi-media files appropriated from any source, including another individual, that are intentionally presented as all or part of a candidate’s final work without full and complete documentation.

#### ***What is “unauthorized” assistance?***

“Unauthorized assistance” refers to any support candidates solicit in the completion of their work, that has not been either explicitly specified as appropriate by the instructor, or any assistance that is understood in the class context as inappropriate. This can include, but is not limited to:

- Use of unauthorized notes or another’s work during an online test
- Use of unauthorized notes or personal assistance in an online exam setting
- Inappropriate collaboration in preparation and/or completion of a project
- Unauthorized solicitation of professional resources for the completion of the work.

**Statement of Original Work (Continued)**

I attest that:

1. I have read, understood, and complied with all aspects of the Concordia University–Portland Academic Integrity Policy during the development and writing of this dissertation.
2. Where information and/or materials from outside sources has been used in the production of this dissertation, all information and/or materials from outside sources has been properly referenced and all permissions required for use of the information and/or materials have been obtained, in accordance with research standards outlined in the *Publication Manual of The American Psychological Association*.

*Benjamin K. Troge*

---

Digital Signature

Benjamin K. Troge

---

Name (Typed)

May 21, 2019

---

Date