

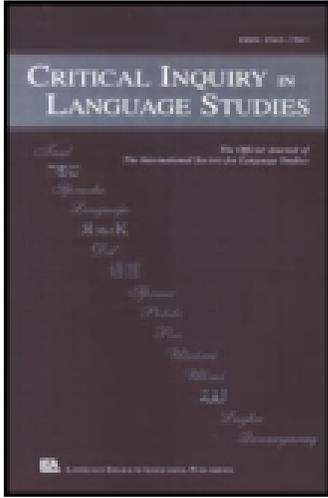
This article was downloaded by: [Temple University Libraries]

On: 25 November 2014, At: 03:10

Publisher: Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954

Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



Critical Inquiry in Language Studies

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/hcil20>

When Special Education Trumps ESL: An Investigation of Service Delivery for ELLs with Disabilities

Sara E. N. Kangas^a

^a Temple University

Published online: 21 Nov 2014.

To cite this article: Sara E. N. Kangas (2014) When Special Education Trumps ESL: An Investigation of Service Delivery for ELLs with Disabilities, *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies*, 11:4, 273-306, DOI: [10.1080/15427587.2014.968070](https://doi.org/10.1080/15427587.2014.968070)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15427587.2014.968070>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Taylor & Francis makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of all the information (the "Content") contained in the publications on our platform. However, Taylor & Francis, our agents, and our licensors make no representations or warranties whatsoever as to the accuracy, completeness, or suitability for any purpose of the Content. Any opinions and views expressed in this publication are the opinions and views of the authors, and are not the views of or endorsed by Taylor & Francis. The accuracy of the Content should not be relied upon and should be independently verified with primary sources of information. Taylor and Francis shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims, proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages, and other liabilities whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with, in relation to or arising out of the use of the Content.

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden. Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

WHEN SPECIAL EDUCATION TRUMPS ESL: AN INVESTIGATION OF SERVICE DELIVERY FOR ELLs WITH DISABILITIES

SARA E. N. KANGAS

Temple University

Through an ethnographic study of one suburban elementary school, the delivery of services to English language learners (ELLs) with disabilities was investigated. The data analysis revealed that often disability-related and English as a Second Language (ESL) services were in contention, as scheduling, teacher expertise, school culture, and ESL program models often resulted in the prioritization of services. Consequently, ELLs with disabilities were not positioned as learners with Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and disability-related learning needs. The findings of this study indicate the need to promote a more robust understanding of the legalities of ESL services for school personnel and to develop teachers' knowledge of pedagogical approaches for ELLs with disabilities from an interdisciplinary and integrative perspective.

English language learners (ELLs), individuals who are in the process of acquiring English as an additional language, are a growing and significant student population in many countries where English is the majority language. For instance, in the United States, ELLs are projected to be one-fourth of the student population by the year 2025 (U.S. Department of Education, 2006). Consequently, English language education is a profession in which well-trained practitioners and researchers are in demand to meet the needs of these linguistically and culturally diverse students. Within the ELL student population, there is a subgroup that presents profound educational challenges to practitioners—ELLs

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Sara E. N. Kangas, Doctoral Candidate, Department of Teaching and Learning, College of Education, Temple University, Ritter Hall 466, 1301 Cecil B. Moore Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19122. E-mail: snyc@temple.edu

with disabilities.¹ ELLs with disabilities constitute 8.4% of the ELLs in American public schools (Zehler et al., 2003). Yet not only are educators today struggling to disentangle second language acquisition (SLA) from various disabilities, they are also attempting to form pedagogical practices that support these students' multiple demanding needs whether linguistic, cognitive, behavioral, or social.

Recently, a growing body of research has emerged on ELLs' placement into special education, primarily focusing on rates of referral to special education (Artiles, Rueda, Salazar, & Higuera, 2005; Samson & Lesaux, 2009), the referral process (Klingner & Harry, 2006; Ortiz et al., 2011), and specific literacy interventions for these learners (Denton, Wexler, Vaughn, & Bryan, 2008; Kamps et al., 2007; Viel-Ruma, Houchins, Jolivet, Fredrick, & Gama, 2010). Ethically, researchers and educators have been invested in understanding referral processes as a matter of social justice to ensure ELLs are not disproportionately represented in special education. Yet there is an apparent critical need to consider how schools can provide services to ELLs with disabilities that adequately target both their linguistic and disability-related needs; therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate how one particular school attempts to provide individualized services to meet the educational needs of ELLs with disabilities.

Literature Review

ELLs with disabilities are an underresearched school-age population, and the limited amount of empirical research conducted on this population has been rather narrow in focus, concentrating on only two educational matters. First, extant research has primarily investigated special education referral rates and practices for ELLs, and second, recent studies have explored how specific literacy interventions can mitigate poor academic performance for these learners.

¹In this manuscript I use the term *ELLs with disabilities* instead of *ELLs with special needs*, because the former term is broader, encompassing all impairments whether physical, cognitive, or emotional, whereas the latter term typically connotes that these learners only have cognitive or learning-based impairments.

Referral Rates, Practices, and Determinations

A majority of the research that has been conducted on the population of ELLs with disabilities has focused on referral rates and processes with the underlining purpose to promote and to ensure educational equity for a vulnerable population of learners. Particularly, disproportionate representation of ELLs in special education has become an urgent concern. According to De Valenzuela, Copeland, and Qi (2006), disproportionality in representation can take two forms—underrepresentation and overrepresentation. Both are determined in comparison to the general student population, but in underrepresentation there is a lower number of a particular group of students in special education and in overrepresentation there is a higher number of a particular group receiving special education services. As extensively explored by Donovan and Cross (2002), racial minority learners have been historically disproportionately represented in special education in the United States. For those who are linguistic minorities, disproportional representation has also occurred with some distinct patterns of representation according to grade level and disability category. For instance, in recent years scholars have found disproportional representation of ELLs in special education by grade level. Specifically, Samson and Lesaux (2009) found that ELLs were underrepresented in kindergarten and first grade yet contrastingly were overrepresented in special education in third grade across all disability categories. These findings suggest that there is a pattern of waiting to refer ELLs for special education until ostensibly they had sufficient time to progress academically. This inference is corroborated by Ortiz et al. (2011), who found that ELLs suspected of having a learning disability (LD) were mostly referred in second grade and then in third grade, again suggesting that there is a notable shift in educators' expectations of ELLs' language proficiency; that is, educators surmise that by second and third grade ELLs' poor academic performance is attributed to the presence of a disability, and not English proficiency. Similarly, Artiles et al. (2005) found that in several urban Californian schools patterns of overrepresentation emerged according to grade level; ELLs in the secondary level were overrepresented in the disability categories of intellectual disability and learning disability but underrepresented in the disability category of speech and language impairment.

Together, Samson and Lesaux (2009) and Artiles et al. (2005) indicate that age may be a factor influencing the proportionality of ELLs' representation in special education. These findings lend support to Hibel and Jasper's (2012) recent study wherein educators delayed referring ELLs for special education services possibly for ELLs to develop further in their second language (L2) proficiency.

Not only do disproportional representation patterns emerge according to grade level, but also as delineated in Artiles et al. (2005), there are apparent patterns in disproportional representation according to disability category. De Valenzuela et al. (2006) in a study of one southwestern American school district found that ELLs were overrepresented in special education in the following disability categories: emotional disturbance, intellectual disability, learning disability, and speech-language impairment; however, they were underrepresented in the developmental disability category and proportionally represented in the category of "other health impairment." Similarly, ELLs in Indiana were overrepresented for intellectual disabilities and communication disorders, but despite these patterns of overrepresentation, underrepresentation was more prevalent in the remaining disability categories (Levinson et al., 2007). Underrepresentation draws attention to the reluctance educators may have in referring ELLs for special education services, a reluctance based in the possibility of misdiagnosis, inability to provide bilingual assessments for referral, reaction from and confusion of parents, and limitations of staff both in number and expertise.

Overall, disproportionality studies have been narrow in scope. Klingner et al. (2005) argue that "concern about disproportionate representation is focused on the 'judgmental' categories of special education—those disabilities usually identified after the child starts school and by school personnel rather than a medical professional" (p. 3). Although narrow in focus, research on special education representation is significant in terms of educational implications, as these studies allude to the importance of improving referral practices as a preventative measure against disproportionality.

To date there has been a preponderance of discussion, speculating about the potential causes of disproportional ELL representation yet without sufficient empirical inquiry. Klingner and Harry (2006) conducted an empirical study investigating the

causes of disproportionality. Through a qualitative study of educational and placement meetings for 19 academically struggling ELLs, Klingner and Harry found that for a majority of the ELLs no prereferral strategies were implemented prior to testing, and that ELLs were referred on the basis of limited testing evidence. Ortiz et al. (2011) likewise found that ELLs suspected of having an LD were referred for special education services with scant evidence. More specifically, for only 10 of the 44 ELLs studied there was sufficient evidence for the initial referral. Ortiz et al. argue that the implementation of the referral process in one school district as a whole was not evidence-based and could have led to erroneous special education referrals. Ultimately, these studies indicate that referral to special education should not be a result of a single measure (i.e., diagnostic assessments administered by school psychologists) but rather a multimeasure approach that includes formative assessments and ecological evaluations—an examination of the learning environment. By doing so, educators avoid immediately locating “the learning problem” within the child and instead consider how the learning environment is influential in a student’s academic performance.

In light of the educational equity that is jeopardized by special education disproportional representation, some scholars (e.g., Orosco & Klingner, 2010; Ortiz et al., 2011) recommend a prereferral intervention model known as Response to Intervention (RtI) for ELLs. Unlike the discrepancy system, wherein students are tested and referred to special education, RtI “focuses on intervening early through a multitiered approach where each tier provides interventions of increasing intensity” (Esparza Brown & Doolittle, 2008, p. 66). When a student requires additional support—more than what is provided by the classroom teacher—she will then receive targeted small group instruction aimed at her academic and even behavioral needs (National Center on Response to Intervention, 2010). For ELLs culturally responsive pedagogy may also be one approach for targeted instruction (National Center on Response to Intervention, 2010; Orosco & Klingner, 2010). Only after all feasible interventions and accommodations have been implemented will a student go through the referral process. One advantage of this model is that it is purportedly data-driven (Ortiz et al., 2011), allowing struggling learners to receive systematic, documented

interventions, thereby reducing disproportional representation in special education. For example, Kamps et al. (2007) investigated ELLs and native English speakers in first and second grade at risk of failure due to reading difficulties. Through both direct and small group instruction within the RtI model the experimental group of ELLs made significant gains on several assessments, indicating that for ELLs with reading difficulties, direct instruction may be an effective intervention and necessary preceding step before any consideration of referral for special education.

Despite accolades from scholars, RtI challenges practitioners, necessitating they provide tailored or differentiated instruction according to the learners' heterogeneous needs. Orosco and Klingner (2010) found that many teachers did not have the expertise to differentiate instruction for ELLs in particular when implementing RtI interventions, suggesting that the touted referral model can only be effective in preventing disproportional representation if educators can properly differentiate instruction and provide accommodations to ELLs.

Instructional Interventions and Strategies

With the majority of research focusing on special education referral matters, consideration of what teachers can actually do in the classroom with learners who have disability and ELL needs has been scarce. Yet some scholars have attempted to address this gap by investigating specific interventions for ELLs with disabilities. The purpose of these studies is to identify concrete interventions that can improve academic performance, in particular reading and writing for ELLs, especially given the current high-stakes standardized testing environment in American schools. Literacy interventions studies have included Denton et al. (2008) who conducted a study featuring small group direct instruction for middle school English-proficient students and ELLs with severe difficulties in reading in either special education or remedial reading classes. The results of the study revealed no statistically significant differences between the control and experimental groups in several critical aspects of reading proficiency, such as fluency, word recognition, and comprehension. From these results Denton et al. (2008) suggest that learners require more intense interventions than the daily

40-minute sessions provided to those assigned to the experimental condition. However, Viel-Ruma (2010) found that writing skills could be improved through direct instruction for ELLs with LDs. Specifically, the results of the multiple-probe across participants design (i.e., a study in which intermittent data sets of participants' performance are collected throughout the implementation of interventions) indicated that the three participating high school ELLs increased correct word sequencing and sentence length in their writing from the baseline condition.

As demonstrated, the current scope of ELL and disability research is quite limited. Despite the research conducted on referral rates and processes as well as specific literacy-based interventions, no empirical research has explored how educators holistically address the educational needs of these learners *after* referral. Specifically, it remains unknown not only to what extent but also how educators provide instruction and services that target the many complex and demanding needs of ELLs with disabilities. This study attempts to address this profound gap in literature because as a critical matter of educational equity, researchers and educators should not only care *how* ELLs are referred to special education, but *what* that education is like for the learners once they are referred. Therefore, following research questions guided the scope of this study:

1. To what extent is there confluence or conflict in providing English as Second Language (ESL) and disability-related services² to ELLs with disabilities?
2. What local institutional factors either promote or hinder confluence of services relating to disability and SLA?
3. How does the confluence or conflict of ESL and special education services position ELLs with disabilities?

Theoretical Framework

For the theoretical framework of this study I utilized positioning theory (Harré & van Langenhove, 1999). With origins in social

²I use the term *disability-related services* to describe services delivered through special education and services relating to the disability that are not provided within special education (e.g., speech language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy).

psychology, positioning theory pertains to how identities are constructed in dynamic spaces. A *position*, according to Harré and van Langenhove, is a combination of characteristics—or more simply, an identity—assigned to an individual either by the individual herself or other parties. This assigned identity, however, is dynamic, influencing future social experiences. *Positioning theory* is an expansion of the concept of *position* to consider the dynamic manner in which positions can collide, congeal, develop, transform, etc., as individuals continue to interact through social relationships. Positioning, more specifically, occurs through “speaking and acting,” as it is through these that “people actively produce social and psychological realities” (Davies & Harré, 1999, p. 34). That is, an individual’s actions and discourse create not only a position but also a reality.

Although Harré and van Langenhove (1999) conceptualized five pairs of positioning practices, each comprising two distinct and often opposing parts, I will employ as the theoretical lens the following two pairs: 1) self and other positioning and 2) tacit and intentional positioning. *Self* and *other positioning* can simply be understood as either the practice of positioning oneself (i.e., self positioning) or positioning another (i.e., other positioning), respectively. Second, there is the dichotomous *tacit* and *intentional positioning*. In tacit positioning the positioning discourse or action that occurs is unintentional, whereas in intentional positioning the individual performing the positioning is, in fact, deliberate in her actions. Applied to this study, I analyzed how the discourse (i.e., how school personnel talk to and about the learners) and actions (i.e., how school personnel instruct and provide services to the learners) *other position* ELLs with disabilities during service delivery and how this positioning constructs a social reality within the classroom and school.

Methods

Site Description

Williams Elementary School³ is located in a suburban town in Pennsylvania. Williams educates more than 600 students and is

³Pseudonyms are used throughout the study to protect the identities of the participants.

identified as a Title I school—a designation for schools receiving federal assistance based on the percentage of low income students per school. The Williams student body is 81% Caucasian, 8% African American, 8% Asian, and 2% Hispanic, and significantly the school district Williams belongs to, Cedar View, has doubled its enrollment in the past 10 years. As the school district is expanding, so have the needs of its students; teachers and administrators have reported increases in ELLs, bilingual learners, racial minority learners, and learners from lower socioeconomic statuses.

More recently, Williams Elementary began instructing all the elementary-age learners with autism living within the bounds of the school district, resulting in a relatively large population of learners with disabilities within just one school. In addition to students with autism, Williams also has learners with learning disabilities, speech or language impairments, and orthopedic impairments. At Williams, 12 students are identified as ELLs, two of which are identified as having a disability, while one other ELL is being monitored for special education referral. The ESL program models at Williams are both push-in, during which an ESL teacher provides support to ELLs during content instruction in the general education classroom, and pull-out, when ELLs receive English language instruction as a small group in a separate classroom. Overall, the school district administrators prefer the push-in model, believing that ethically students should not be divided into separate learning environments because of differences, whether linguistic or ability-based. However, when the general education and ESL teachers present a case wherein an ELL may perform better within a pull-out setting, the school district acquiesces.

Participants

To recruit appropriate participants in the study, the Williams ESL teacher and I identified potential practitioner participants who were currently instructing at least one ELL with a disability with no restrictions on the subject matter the practitioner instructed. In total, there were six participating focal practitioners and paraprofessionals: two mainstream teachers, one ESL teacher, and one special education teacher and two paraprofessionals

specializing in autistic support (see [Table 1](#)). Originally, when I entered the site I considered the role of the paraprofessionals distinct from the practitioners, yet after several weeks at the site I observed that the paraprofessionals in many settings bore a significant, and in some cases, primary role in teaching. For this reason, I regarded paraprofessionals and practitioners as fulfilling similar roles within the site.

In addition to the six focal practitioners and paraprofessionals, 11 additional school personnel, whom I refer to as *key school professionals*, participated in the study. These individuals—the school’s speech pathologists, occupational and physical therapists, specialist teachers (e.g., Spanish, library) principal, reading specialist, and the district level ESL administrator—were not responsible for educating the students on a daily basis but rather interacted with ELLs with disabilities frequently or could provide insight about service delivery from an administrative perspective.

In the school there were only two ELLs with *identified* disabilities. These two students were diagnosed with autism or an orthopedic impairment. In Mrs. Roberts’ first grade class there were two female ELLs from India. One learner named Marti is a L1 Urdu speaker and the other student named Lula is an L1 Bengali speaker (see [Table 2](#)). Along with her family, Lula immigrated to the United States prior to the start of primary school. Lula often baffles her teachers because of her complex learning needs; she was diagnosed with an orthopedic impairment, resulting in difficulty in her gross motor skills, such as walking, coordinating movements, and achieving balance, for which she receives physical therapy in a pull-out setting. In addition to having an orthopedic impairment, Lula is being monitored for a social and emotional disturbance. The ELLs in Mrs. Roberts’ class, including Lula, receive pull-out ESL instruction with other first grade ELLs in a separate location with Mrs. Franks.

In Mrs. Harris’ third grade classroom, there is one ELL who was diagnosed with autism. Ahmed is a native speaker of Arabic who arrived to the United States as a first grader two years prior (see [Table 2](#)). Unlike other students in the school with autism, he is considered highly functioning. For this reason Ahmed was placed in an inclusive classroom where an autistic support

TABLE 1 Practitioner and Paraprofessional Profiles

<i>Teacher</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Grade</i>	<i>Professional Role</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Years Teaching</i>	<i>Specialization</i>
Mrs. Brock	Early 60s	K-5	Paraprofessional	Reading Intervention	17	Elementary Education
Mrs. Franks	Late 40s	K-5	Practitioner	ESL	11	Early Childhood Education ESL Certification
Ms. Glass	Mid 20s	K-5	Practitioner	Reading Intervention	2	Special Education ESL Certification
Mrs. Harris	Mid 20s	3	Practitioner	General Education	2	Elementary Education
Mrs. Motts	Mid 20s	K-5	Paraprofessional	Autistic Support	2	Special Education
Mrs. Roberts	Mid 30s	1	Practitioner	General Education	13	Elementary Education

TABLE 2 Focal Students

<i>Student</i>	<i>Grade</i>	<i>L1</i>	<i>Disability</i>	<i>ACCESS English Proficiency</i>
Lula	1	Bengali	Orthopedic impairment monitored for emotional and social disturbance	5 Bridging
Ahmed	3	Arabic	Autism	4 Expanding

Note. ACCESS proficiency levels are not based on raw scores but are grounded in teachers' reports and/or observation of ACCESS test performance.

paraprofessional, Mrs. Motts, pushes into the classroom as specified by his IEP (Individualized Education Program)⁴ to support to him and Jeff, a non-ELL boy with autism. Additionally, Ahmed receives reading instruction in a pull-out setting with either Ms. Glass or Mrs. Brock and push-in ESL services with Mrs. Franks and two other ELLs with no disabilities.

All ELLs with disabilities within this study received the ELL designation after parents indicated on the home language survey that another language besides English was spoken in the home. Based on this response, ESL teachers administered the WIDA-ACCESS (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State) Placement Test (W-APT), an English language placement test commonly administered for school-age students.

Data Collection

I conducted an ethnographic case study (i.e., a case study employing ethnographic methodology) for six months in 2012 at Williams Elementary. A case study, which examines a unit or phenomenon, is useful in research for delving into the complexities of the phenomenon and its interplay with a range of contextual factors (Merriam, 2009). Further, as Merriam posits, in education it is through case studies in education that “processes,

⁴In the United States IEPs are mandated educational programs for students receiving special education services collaboratively established among school personnel, parents, and in some cases the student. IEPs specify the educational services and accommodations that each student must receive.

problems, and programs, can be examined to bring about understanding that in turn can affect and perhaps even improve practice” (p. 51). This case study included triangulated data comprised of classroom observations, interviews, informal conversations and meetings, and school artifacts.

- *Observations.* I conducted 79 observations at Williams Elementary, 43 focusing on services provided to Ahmed and 36 observations focusing on services provided to Lula. To gain a holistic view of these learners’ educational environments, I observed a range of content areas (i.e., math, science, language arts, social studies) and services (i.e., ESL, reading interventions, occupational therapy, physical therapy). I defined an observation based on the services being delivered at that time. For instance, when a learner was receiving ESL push-in services, I counted each of these times as individual observations. Observations lasted for 30–75 minutes depending on the allotted time of service delivery. Except a few instances wherein teachers requested my assistance with students, observations were nonparticipatory, during which I carefully took ethnographic notes, capturing the events in the classroom that applied to the theoretical framework of positioning theory but also extending to include other salient themes.

- *Interviews.* I conducted a total of 19 semi-structured interviews with Williams personnel during which predetermined questions were balanced with spontaneous questions that emerged in reaction to participants’ shared thoughts. Specifically, I conducted a total of eight recorded 20- to 60-minute interviews with focal practitioners and paraprofessionals. It should be noted that one focal teacher declined to be interviewed for reasons that will be explored later in the results section. I conducted 11 interviews with key school professionals, lasting 22–58 minutes. All interviews were audiorecorded and later transcribed verbatim.

- *Meetings and school artifacts.* During the study, opportunities arose for informal conversations with practitioners, paraprofessionals, and other school professionals. Following these meetings, I wrote detailed notes describing the information the participant shared. Lastly, used in triangulation with the other ethnographic data, I collected artifacts both issued formally by the school and

school district as well as instructional materials from the participating practitioners.

Data Analysis

To begin data analysis, I developed a preliminary codebook, featuring more than 20 codes I identified from both the theoretical framework and analytic memos I drafted throughout the study. For each code I developed a corresponding definition, which I utilized during the coding process to evaluate the relevance of the data against each code (see appendix for final codebook). I used deductive coding (i.e., codes derived from theory or previous research) based in the tenets of positioning theory (Harré & van Langenhove, 1999) to analyze the data during the first cycle, or initial coding. Although many codes were derived from this theoretical framework (e.g., *other positioning*, *intentional positioning*), both the coding and analysis processes influence one another, so that through the analysis I also used inductive coding (i.e., codes derived from the data); for example, the codes *professional development*, *time*, and *schedules* all emerged from the interview and observation data. During second cycle coding I reexamined the first cycle codes “to develop a coherent synthesis of the data corpus” (Saldaña, 2009, p. 149) by grouping the data into concrete themes. For instance, the codes *schedule* and *time* were grouped into the theme of *personnel and student schedules* because both codes pertained to the educational constraints due to amount of time afforded by scheduling.

As foundational for establishing trustworthiness and authenticity, I used thick description, which consists of detailed depictions and interpretations during observations (Geertz, 1973), and triangulation of data (Campbell & Fiske, 1959)—in this specific study, the examination of how different data converge to a shared reality about the service delivery at Williams Elementary. To further assure trustworthiness and authenticity of the data, during data collection and analysis, I incorporated extended engagement in the field, consideration of disconfirming evidence, and peer debriefing. Extended engagement—visiting the site for prolonged periods of time—has no specified duration, but in ethnographic fieldwork typically lasts for months, if not years (Creswell & Miller, 2000). As Guba and Lincoln (1989) indicate, extended engage-

ment in the field “overcome[s] the effects of misinformation, distortion, or presented ‘fronts’ . . . [and] establish[es] the rapport and build[s] the trust necessary to uncover constructions” (p. 237). Through extended engagement in the field I gained intimate knowledge about Williams and the service delivery practices that happened not just once or twice but continued throughout a majority of the academic year. Also during data analysis I deliberately considered disconfirming evidence to test emerging hypotheses and nuanced conceptual perspectives. Creswell and Miller (2000) assert that the “search for disconfirming evidence provides further support of the account’s credibility because reality, according to constructivists, is multiple and complex” (p. 127). In the context of this study, I sought out data that demonstrated how learners were positioned in light of all of their learning needs and how services were delivered in confluence. Finally, I engaged in peer debriefing with a more senior ethnographic scholar through frequent discussions of emerging findings, dilemmas in the field, and initial hypotheses. As a result of this process an unbiased outsider is able to question the researcher’s hypotheses, roles, methodologies, etc., to facilitate the researcher’s understanding of the phenomenon (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). For this study peer debriefing was particularly helpful in considering emerging findings from the large amount of ethnographic data I collected.

Results

The data indicate that ESL and disability-related services were in tension with one another in the following four local institutional factors: scheduling, school culture, teacher expertise, and ESL program models. These local factors contributed to differential positioning of two ELLs with disabilities, creating an educational reality wherein Ahmed and Lula were very rarely positioned as L2 learners.

Positioning through Personnel and Student Schedules

A practical constraint that created a tension in the delivery of services at Williams was the schedules of both the ESL teacher and

TABLE 3 Basic Education Circulars (BEC) Guidelines

<i>English Language Proficiency</i>	<i>Amount of Daily ESL Instruction</i>
Entering (Level 1)	2 hours
Beginning (Level 2)	2 hours
Developing (Level 3)	1–2 hours
Expanding (Level 4)	1 hour
Bridging (Level 5)	Up to 1 hour of instruction or support

ELLs with disabilities. At the time of this study the Cedar View School District adhered to Pennsylvania’s Basic Education Circulars (BEC), state issued recommendations for the interpretation and implementation of educational law (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2001). According to these recommendations, as shown in Table 3, ELLs are to receive a certain amount of daily planned ESL instruction depending on each student’s language proficiency determined by the ACCESS proficiency test, an assessment used in numerous states throughout the U.S. to determine English proficiency.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education states “exact hours of direct language instruction by proficiency level must be determined based on student need and program/instructional delivery model” (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2001, para. 12). Through these suggested guidelines, the Cedar View School District created a schedule for ESL instruction wherein the ELLs received approximately one hour of instruction every other day on a rotating schedule, regardless of English proficiency. Part of the rationale for this schedule was that it allowed the ESL teachers to work at more than one school within the district. Although travelling was a necessary component of the job, as the Williams ESL teacher, Mrs. Franks reported, it detracted from instructional time: “So, it’s just scheduling is the biggest frustration and not getting in there enough, like and digging in.” Specifically, in reaction to the current schedule Mrs. Franks stated that she feels ESL “is coming up short” within the district. Mrs. Franks made this comparison after talking to teachers in a neighboring school district with similar demographics, learning that ELLs receive 1.5–2 hours of ESL instruction daily. The current amount of ESL instruction at Williams was significantly lower than the state recommended guidelines as a consequence of the district created

schedule, making the provision of ESL services difficult for all ELLs, not just those with disabilities. Yet, ELL Coordinator Mrs. Shaw, who also served as a high-level district administrator, explained that the district satisfied the recommendations of the BEC guidelines because the general education teachers also delivered ESL services throughout the day.

ELLs with disabilities, too, had complex schedules that made the delivery of ESL services difficult; for instance, Ahmed received pull-out instruction in reading, speech therapy, occupational therapy, and extracurricular orchestra lessons in addition to his other general education and ESL classes (see Table 4). As I observed, the demands of Ahmed's schedule resulted in missing ESL several times when services were scheduled at the same time, reducing ESL instruction to only 1 to 2 hours those particular weeks. Mrs. Franks described the difficulty of trying to provide ESL services with the competing demands in the student's schedule:

But, it's frustrating to be flexible when I want to be like, "No, ESL's more important. I don't see him enough. Get him in here." ... And with scheduling, like especially the end of the year, you see what it's like with field trips, field days. And it's not possible for me to reschedule all the time, so they miss their time completely.

Similarly, Lula's schedule of weekly physical therapy unfortunately often overlapped with her ESL schedule, resulting in reduced ESL

TABLE 4 Service Schedule According to Student

<i>Student</i>	<i>Service</i>	<i>Service Setting</i>	<i>Frequency of Service</i>	<i>Duration of Service</i>
Lula	ESL	Pull-out	3 times per cycle	1 hour
	Physical Therapy	Pull-out	1 time per week	30 minutes
Ahmed	ESL	Push-in	3 times per cycle	1 hour
	Autistic Support	Push-in	6 times per cycle	3–4 hours
	Occupational Therapy	Pull-out	1 time biweekly	30 minutes
	Reading Intervention I	Pull-out	6 times per cycle	30 minutes
	Reading Intervention II	Pull-out	6 times per cycle	30 minutes
	Speech Therapy	Pull-out	2 times per cycle	30 minutes
	Social Skills	Pull-out	1 time per cycle	30 minutes
	String Lessons	Pull-out	1 time per cycle	30 minutes

Note. At Williams Elementary a cycle consists of six school days. Physical and occupational therapy schedules operated on a traditional school week schedule.

pull-out instruction on a biweekly basis, which became evident through both observation of ESL and discussions with Mrs. Franks. When asked why in such scenarios disability-related services were prioritized over ESL, Mrs. Franks explained a possible reason:

Special ed is a legal issue. And so, for the district and for the teachers, there's IEPs that they legally have to do. They legally have to get it done. They legally have to meet. ESL, it's, "What do I think they need?" and "Oh, let's try to follow this." It's a much looser set of demands.

Ultimately, she argued that there is room for interpretation of the BEC guidelines; therefore, ESL services at the school were not prioritized in the same manner as special education services. A former ESL teacher, Mrs. Avery, who now assists students receiving learning support at Williams made a similar assertion: "I don't know how much on the radar it [ESL] is because of you can play around with, I mean, they have *recommended* [emphasis added] times that you should be with these kids."

At Williams ESL services were in contention with both disability-related services and general education curricula activities. In these instances general education activities took precedence over ESL instruction. During several ESL push-in observations, Mrs. Harris scheduled a "Mystery Reader"—a parent of one of the students—to come to the classroom and read a few stories to the students, reducing the ESL instruction by 25–30 minutes out of the total 60-minute class on a biweekly basis for Ahmed and two other ELLs. Overall, general education and extracurricular activities resulted in at times weekly disruptions to ESL instructional time. Ultimately, the limited amount of instructional time ESL was allotted can be interpreted as tacit positioning (Harré & van Langenhove, 1999), as the creation of staff, learner, and general education schedules, unknown to the teachers and administrators at Williams, positioned these learners as having disability needs that take precedence over L2 needs.

Positioning through School Culture

Ingrained in the fabric of the school was a deep understanding of disabilities, as Williams educated the entire population of elementary learners with autism for the district. From this large

population of students receiving autistic support (AS), Mrs. Motts purported that the school has grown to accommodate disabilities:

So, it's a learning curve. But, looking back two years ago on what they expected to see in a hallway when things were if someone was having a tantrum and what they expect now, they've adjusted to it. And they're a lot more welcoming of our students [with autism].

This understanding culture was fostered through special events, such as assemblies, aimed to build understanding about autism; in fact, Williams held an "Autism Day" to build awareness, which Mrs. Motts described in an interview: "And the kids didn't realize that they're very sensitive to light, and they're very sensitive to sound. And this what, what it would be like if you had autism and then we made things super bright or we made things really strong in smell. And they kinda got a sense of what it was like." Mrs. Motts posited that the events had positively influenced the student body's understanding of disabilities. This understanding and appreciation manifested in several observations when fellow students cheered for Ahmed and Jeff—a non-ELL boy with autism—when they successfully answered math questions in a class game or completed a science project, such as hand-made flashlight. In regards to Lula, Mrs. Roberts observed: "I know they think she's different. You know, I think some of them are more accepting of her as the year's gone on." Mrs. Martin, the Williams Spanish teacher corroborated this acceptance from the student body: "And I think it's a learning experience for regular ed kids. They can teach and learn from that. They can definitely become more open-minded, more sympathetic, less egocentric. The world does not revolve around them."

In contrast to the cultural acceptance and understanding of disabilities at Williams, the understanding of the ELL population and ESL was more limited, possibly a consequence of the ESL population being somewhat new to the district. Notably, the creation of Mrs. Franks' position as an ESL teacher occurred just three years before the study. Despite the gradual population increase, understanding about ESL pedagogy remained quite limited. Mrs. Motts who supported Ahmed for a majority of the day and even was present during ESL push-in instruction identified her own limited understanding of ESL. When asked

about her familiarity with ESL, she answered, “Not very familiar at all.” Mrs. Roberts, although an experienced teacher, did not know about the instructional approaches and content of ESL until a few months ago. These reflections were corroborated by observations of Mrs. Roberts who differentiated instruction for learners according to reading level but not by language or cultural background. Yet, there were times during instruction when the ELLs, including Lula, required differentiated instruction based on their cultural knowledge. For example, in an activity focusing on identifying the main idea based on a series of clues, a culturally biased example was utilized:

“My main idea is baseball,” she [Mrs. Roberts] said. The students start listing the details: “bat,” “catcher,” “bull,” “spring,” “bases,” “pitcher,” “team,” “positions.” The ELLs were not participating although the girls [Lula and Marti] frequently do. Lula offers a detail; she describes the net and the ball going inside of it. Mrs. Roberts corrects her and explains that she must have been talking about soccer.

In this example, Lula misunderstood the main idea in this particular activity quite possibly because this topic is culturally biased. Knowledge of ESL pedagogy, however, may have led Mrs. Roberts to use an example that was less culturally-bound. Additionally, Mrs. Roberts utilized more linguistically advanced material without providing differentiation for Lula or Marti, for example, through playing an informative video on the defense practices of butterflies for first grade science. Although the video quite obviously incorporated visuals, the vocabulary was far too advanced for first graders, not to mention ELLs, as exemplified in the following: *beguiling*, *endowed*, *prelude*, *courtship*, *binge*, and *severity*. The lexical difficulty of the video demonstrated inaccessible, unmodified instruction for ELLs.

Significantly, this lack of awareness of ESL created a dilemma within Williams Elementary: Although practitioners were expected to provide ESL services through accommodations in the general education classroom, many practitioners did not possess adequate knowledge of ESL to do so. Mrs. Shaw, a district-level administrator, explained that the district provided ESL support within the general education classroom to satisfy the BEC guidelines: “While the guidelines indicate they should be seen everyday by an ESL or ELL person at the elementary

level, we don't necessarily use an ESL person to support them in the area of language arts; we use the classroom teacher." Yet at Williams, the practitioners and paraprofessionals spending the most time with the ELLs with disabilities were not familiar with ESL pedagogy, indicating that services are not delivered during this time.

In addition to the lack of knowledge of ESL, culturally within the school a lack of awareness of the importance of ESL education was prevalent. Throughout the observations, pull-out ESL was relocated from its current room—a television studio—to alternative spaces burdened with distractions often occurring as a result of testing accommodations for students with disabilities. Relocating to the hallway proved distracting, which Mrs. Franks corroborated: "So, here [Williams] and I sit in the hallway or a TV studio. Or, yeah, or I grab a planning center or something. And that's got copiers in it and people are in and out with the copiers. It's not conducive." Moreover, the lack of prioritization of ESL education resulted in the destruction and misplacement of ESL materials; for example, one day some of the student-made materials were disheveled and even missing, resulting in Mrs. Franks saying, "We're just gonna give it up. We'll just jump to the next thing." The physical displacement of the ESL pull-out location and resources hindered the delivery of L2 services. This, I argue, intentionally positioned (Harré & van Langenhove, 1999) the ELLs primarily as learners with disabilities because ESL not only suffered from unequipped, distracting locations, but there was a lack of awareness of and respect for ESL culturally within the school.

Positioning through Expertise and Training

Although many of the participating practitioners possessed advanced degrees in education, they had not received formal training in ESL with the exception of Mrs. Franks and Ms. Glass, who earned ESL certifications. Interestingly, Ms. Glass was not an ESL teacher for the district but rather held a bachelor's degree in special education. Ms. Glass, utilized her knowledge of both ESL and AS to teach Ahmed about the concept of wingspan during an observation of a reading intervention class:

Ms. Glass then grabbed a meter-long wooden ruler. She used the ruler to show the length of the wingspan. She used an area rug on the floor to help show the distance. The wingspan was apparently 7–8 feet. At this point Ms. Glass was crawling around the floor demonstrating the size of the wingspan, while Ahmed hunched over the ruler and area, quietly looking at its mammoth size.

In this example, Ms. Glass used a concrete example of mapping out the size of the eagle's wingspan to facilitate Ahmed's understanding of the concept, targeting his SLA needs by providing comprehensible input (Krashen, 1982) and capitalizing on the strengths of the learner—unimpaired visual processing (Gill, 1997). With Ms. Glass' knowledge of both ESL and special education a confluence of services occurred—a notable exception in service delivery and a datum of disconfirming evidence—achieved by intentionally positioning (Harré & van Langenhove, 1999) Ahmed according to both his AS and L2 needs through instruction.⁵

Despite a lack of knowledge and training of educators at Williams in ESL, both practitioners and paraprofessionals received professional development in disability-related topics. Prior to bringing the AS program to Williams, all teachers were required to complete professional development relating to AS. Moreover, the participants at Williams each have been afforded additional professional development opportunities, and as described by some of the participants, this training was in areas of greatest need. For instance, Ms. Glass identified “behavior and social skills training” as the highest priority for professional development. She rationalized, “There are many more kids on my caseload that would benefit from my having more knowledge in those areas.” Likewise, Mrs. Roberts stated, “There's other things I need to focus on. You know, and that's [ESL] just such a small piece of it.” These priorities though logical, resulted in positioning of the ELLs with disabilities as learners who only have disabilities, because without further professional development in ESL pedagogical approaches, the practitioners and

⁵It is significant to note that Ms. Glass, who has an ESL certification, did not remain Ahmed's teacher for reading invention. Instead, Mrs. Brock was selected by Ms. Glass to replace her because “She was the easiest person to schedule to work with Ahmed during that time.”

paraprofessionals were unable to provide services in an integrated manner. Instead, each practitioner or paraprofessional primarily delivered instruction and services from her own perceived role, creating strict service boundaries. Mrs. Motts identified this boundary in service delivery: “The reason we’re being pushed into these classrooms is to take things slower . . . however, we’re not in there for ESL. That’s what Mrs. Franks in there for.” Moreover, Mrs. Harris, Ahmed’s general education teacher, declined to participate in the interviews, saying, “I don’t really work with him [Ahmed].” This statement demonstrated a rigid divide in providing services, which Mrs. Motts echoed:

Well, it’s kind of like we have to take a step back and focus on what our role is in the room. Mrs. Harris’ job is to basically educate everyone in the classroom so, she’s not going to worry about anyone specifically. She will come over and help our students, but she’s not going to specialize and stay there with them like we would And then my job is to take care of their special ed needs, so I need to worry about things that are going to come from their autism.

Since pedagogy did not accommodate ELLs in the inclusive classroom, the result was the intentional positioning (Harré & van Langenhove, 1999) of these ELLs with disabilities only as ELLs when Mrs. Franks was present (i.e., every other day for one hour at most). The intentional nature of positioning manifested in both Mrs. Harris’ and Mrs. Motts’ comments regarding the interaction with Ahmed—they knowingly taught from not only their knowledge but from their perceived role within the inclusive classroom.

Positioning through Program Models

Williams utilized both ESL push-in and pull-out, depending on the educational needs of the students, although the preferred model was push-in.⁶ Yet at Williams, push-in ESL provided little

⁶Lula and other first grade ELLs together received pull-out ESL instruction due to the lower English proficiency of one of the ELLs within this group. After numerous attempts to push into the general education classroom with the group of ELLs, Mrs. Roberts and Mrs. Franks decided that this program model was ineffective, so they advocated for pull-out.

opportunity for ESL instruction for students who are receiving both ESL and special education services, ultimately creating a conflict in service delivery in the school. Ahmed not only had an AS paraprofessional, Mrs. Motts, pushing into his general education class, but also an ESL teacher, Mrs. Franks. During these times, Mrs. Franks had abrupt interactions with Ahmed only asking him a few questions or encouraging him to continue in his work because he was already working alongside of Mrs. Motts—a common occurrence in Ahmed’s ESL push-in classes. Instances wherein the ESL teacher barely interacted with Ahmed were quite common in push-in and were corroborated in an interview with Mrs. Franks: “Now with the coteaching, I feel like I’m not getting meaty ESL instruction anymore.” Further, she explicated, “But, I’m like pitching in two seconds here, whereas if I had them for 45 minutes, we could really dig in more, I guess, and get more specific to that kid’s needs or those children.” Mrs. Franks’ concern was substantiated throughout the observations of push-in ESL, when most days Mrs. Franks provided ESL support for Ahmed from 5 to at most 15 minutes. Although Mrs. Franks felt that she could not provide “meaty instruction” to Ahmed in push-in, Mrs. Motts posited that the negotiation of services in the push-in model was not challenging:

However, when Mrs. Franks is in the room there’s a student with ESL needs, I’m gonna step back from that student a little bit. But, she’s not there everyday. And everyday, every period I’m addressing their special ed. needs . . . So, during that time I’m going to step back a little more and let her handle that particular student because that need isn’t getting addressed as much my needs are.

Despite this “stepping back” Mrs. Motts reported, only one observation revealed an instructional practice wherein Mrs. Motts primarily worked with another student while Mrs. Franks worked with Ahmed. Mrs. Franks corroborated this pattern by discussing the difficulty of providing ESL services in push-in when there are multiple specialists present: “It’s very much a challenge because a lot of times she’s [Mrs. Motts] got Ahmed and I’ll just kind of eye-ball him and focus on the other two.”

In addition to the conflict of providing services with multiple push-in specialists, another reason why Mrs. Franks was only able to “pitch in” sporadically can be practically attributed to the

amount of time she and Mrs. Harris could coplan. When asked to describe and quantify their coplanning sessions, Mrs. Franks responded, “I would say if I’m lucky, 15 minutes” per six-day cycle. Further Mrs. Roberts explained that finding a time for coplanning was difficult because of scheduling, especially with the travel the ESL teachers in Cedar View completed each day. Consequently, during some observations coplanning occurred upon Mrs. Franks’ arrival to class. For instance, during social studies Mrs. Frank and Mrs. Harris were co-planning during the showing of video on the differences between democrats and republicans. While the video played, the teachers discussed the upcoming content and the particular details of the poster project the students would start during that very class.

The provision of ESL services for Ahmed was not only challenging in the push-in model, but special education and ESL services were competing. As a consequence of the school district’s decision to adopt the push-in model, instructional and coplanning time for ESL was limited. These constraints, in addition to Ahmed’s physical position within the general education classroom—next to another learner with autism, not near the ELLs—both tacitly and intentionally positioned (Harré & van Langenhove, 1999) Ahmed as a learner with autism.

In examining ESL program models, I identified prominent disconfirming evidence. Unlike for Ahmed, there was a greater quantity and quality of ESL instruction for Lula in pull-out ESL. During a majority of the observations when Mrs. Franks pulled out Lula, Marti, and Fredo, the students received roughly 1 hour to 1 hour and 15 minutes of ESL support every other day. This was in stark contrast to the amount of ESL instruction Ahmed received in the push-in model. In pull-out Mrs. Franks was able to target the students’ linguistic needs, for example, by taking note of the errors they are making and using those errors as topics of instruction they will explore in upcoming classes. Also, Mrs. Franks was able to develop their language skills through intensive times of oral and written language production. This was illustrated in an ESL lesson wherein Lula and her ELL classmates received direct instruction on lexical knowledge pertaining to giving directions, practiced delivering directions using a map, and then took turns providing directions through the hallways of the school. This activity allowed for extensive speaking as well as

organization of thought, which according to Mrs. Franks was an important skill Lula needed to develop. Although Lula did not receive ESL services everyday, the amount of instructional time as well as the depth of language instruction afforded through the pull-out model tacitly positioned (Harré & van Langenhove, 1999) her as an ELL more so than Ahmed despite her higher L2 proficiency. This positioning can be classified as tacit because Lula's differential positioning occurred unknowingly as a result of the program model.

Discussion

Harré and van Langenhove (1999) argue that positioning in its various forms through discourse and action can create a new social reality. In the case of Lula and Ahmed, new social realities were created through discourse and action whereby they were not learners with complex SLA and disability needs but rather primarily learners with disabilities. Specifically, Ahmed and Lula were *other positioned* within their educational environment both intentionally and tacitly, and the consequence was a new social reality in which Ahmed's and Lula's ELL identities are not acknowledged and where ESL is not prioritized in the educational agenda.

With regards to the identities of Ahmed and Lula, the new social reality created through the tension of services acknowledges the disabilities of the learners; yet this is merely one aspect of each learner's identity. Specifically, most of the pedagogical practices of the teachers at Williams were not intended for the whole child but just a singular facet of the learner's identity. Yet Norton Peirce (1995) argues that ELLs' identities are not composed of a singular dimension but embody complexity and multidimensionality, which is certainly true of Ahmed and Lula. Moreover, acknowledging just a part of learners' needs ignores their fuller identities, and this unidimensional view of learners, such as ELLs with disabilities, defies the very spirit of inclusion education whereby the *whole* learner is accepted and is included in the general education classroom. If the multidimensions of the learner's identity are not acknowledged through the delivery of services, inclusion is in jeopardy, because inclusive practices

depend on addressing students' educational needs through instructional supports and accommodations and fostering acceptance for all individuals, as they are (Wisconsin Education Association Council, 2014). Further, without planned and differentiated L2 instruction while in the general education classroom, ELLs' language skills may preclude them from full inclusion.

Second, tacit and intentional positioning of the ELLs with disabilities in this study, I argue, reflects the sentiment that ESL services are somehow less legally significant when compared to special education; that is, when ESL and special education are in conflict, special education legislation apparently trumps ESL legislation. Despite the perceptions that may exist about ESL services, legislation has been passed in the United States ensuring the delivery of language services to ELLs. For instance, *Lau v. Nichols* (1974) resulted in the ruling that failure to provide ELLs with language related services "denies them a meaningful opportunity to participate in the public educational program" and therefore violates the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Office of Civil Rights, 2005a, para. 1). Several years later *Castañeda v. Pickard* (1981) established a measure of adequate services provided for ELLs, comprising three significant components: 1) connection of the school programs and practices to language learning theory, 2) feasibility to effectively implement the theory-based programs and practices with the amount of resources, including staff, and 3) evaluative procedures districts have in place to monitor and alter practices to increase effectiveness (Office of Civil Rights, 2005b). It is through *Castañeda v. Pickard* that schools, like Williams Elementary, can interpret how and when services should be provided. Although this flexibility can foster the implementation of language programs that best suit the population and resources of each school, it should not be mistaken for legal lenience in the implementation and delivery of ESL or bilingual services.

Despite the presence of ELL-related legislation, at Williams the perception exists that special education law is somehow more legally significant. The United States' Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) first passed in 1975 ensures the free appropriate public education (FAPE) of learners with disabilities. An individual level of accountability for IDEA occurs through such documents like IEPs (National Dissemination Center for

Children with Disabilities, 2012). At Williams IEPs were regarded by the staff as powerful binding legal contracts, as evidenced through their rigorous delivery of disability-related services. Significantly, it should be noted that IEPs for ELLs with disabilities must not only include disability-related services for the learner but also consider the L2 goals and skills necessary for the learner's academic progress (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2001). Ultimately, this important stipulation demonstrates ESL services are both significant to the learner's progress and legally required to be implemented fully, not selectively. Further, the implementation of services may be connected to the perception of parents—that English proficient parents are more likely to advocate for their children than ELL parents. In fact, De Gaetano (2007) found that ELLs' parents do not possess the requisite linguistic skills and knowledge of the school system for parental involvement, let alone advocacy.

Conclusion

The findings of this study shed light on the importance of instruction that addresses both disability and L2 educational needs of ELLs with disabilities. When one service is prioritized over the other—regardless of the service—ELLs with disabilities' needs are not being fully met. One possible solution for services that are competing is to develop a confluence in the delivery of services through integrating pedagogical approaches that facilitate learning for learners with disabilities and ELLs. For instance, Ms. Glass provided integrated services through pedagogical approaches that targeted Ahmed's needs stemming from autism *and* the L1. By doing so, her instruction was not solely targeting his disability. Yet integrated service delivery will certainly require teacher education programs to better equip preservice practitioners and paraprofessionals (whether special education, ESL, or general education teachers) by developing their differentiated instruction skills for diverse learners. This implication corroborates the findings of several studies (e.g., Hansen-Thomas & Caragnetto, 2010; Meskill, 2005; Orosco & Klingner, 2010): Although many general education teachers are charged with providing support to the ELLs within their

classrooms, they are often grossly underprepared for the endeavor. To avoid competing services, the onus is also on schools to foster interdisciplinary professional development wherein educators are able to augment their own disciplinary expertise with knowledge of other content (e.g., ESL, special education, etc.). Shared interdisciplinary knowledge may avoid what Yoon (2008) discovered—that as practitioners position themselves, they in turn, position their students accordingly (i.e., I am a special education teacher, so you are a special education student). Instead, through the cultivation of interdisciplinarity, school personnel will position learners with more identity dimensions in mind as integrative services—like those delivered by Ms. Glass—are provided. Such professional development opportunities can range from formal events (e.g., workshops and conferences) to informal events, for example, in which practitioners and paraprofessionals are the source of expert knowledge, developing opportunities for their colleagues to grow in their understanding of other disciplines' pedagogies, instructional approaches, as well as teaching and learning theories. Even more simply, providing practitioners with scheduled, consistent coplanning time can cultivate interdisciplinary knowledge that can later be applied during instruction. Significantly, before initiatives can be undertaken to move to an integrated view and practice of services, there is the essential first step of disabusing the education community of the notion that ESL services are *not legal* or *not as legal*. Surely, when one service is perceived as negotiable or less significant in terms of the law, there will hardly be an effort to provide that service in the face of other pressing educational needs.

Although this study has important implications for educating diverse learners, there are some notable limitations that must be acknowledged. First, Mrs. Harris, as earlier mentioned, declined to participate in the interviews. Although all the other participants were able to share their perspectives on the complexities of providing language and disability-related services to ELLs with disabilities, Mrs. Harris' perspective cannot be entirely represented in the data. Additionally, since the population of learners featured in this study is particularly vulnerable, a Cedar View district administrator requested that I refrain from both interviewing the ELLs and accessing their

records. Without the ability to interview the ELLs, this study explored how the ELLs with disabilities were other positioned (Harré & van Langenhove, 1999) as a result of the delivery of services; however, what remains unknown is what extent the ELLs are cognizant of this positioning (i.e., tacit positioning) and how these students may position themselves (i.e., self positioning). Further, and significantly, these findings are based on a case study approach. One particular value of case study research is the close attention given to a specific context (Stake, 2006), not in the generalizability of the case to other cases. Also, Merriam (2009) posits “a single case or small nonrandom sample is selected precisely because the researcher wishes to understand the particular in depth, not to find out what is generally true of many” (p. 224). Therefore, the findings of this particular case are not generalizable but rather illuminate the educational reality within a particular educational context.

This study explored the local institutional factors that either promoted or hindered the confluence of services of ELLs with disabilities, yet certainly there are larger educational factors that are influential in this process, such as preservice teacher education and the legal imperatives of IEPs. Therefore, future research should expand to investigate the role of larger educational factors in the positioning of ELLs with disabilities as learners with disabilities. Moreover, this study included practitioners and paraprofessionals who were instructing either an ELL with autism or an ELL with orthopedic impairment receiving emotional, social, and attention monitoring and interventions; however, this study did not include educators instructing ELLs with an LD, which is a higher incidence disability category. Thus, more research is needed to examine how services are delivered to ELLs with higher incidence disabilities. The site of this study, although a Title I school, is somewhat unlike many American schools with ELLs in that it has a smaller percentage students receiving ESL services. Future studies should be conducted in schools with higher percentages of ELLs to understand how service delivery is enacted in these settings as well. Finally, with the cross-section of ELL and disability research still in its infancy and with a majority of research conducted within the United States, research and teaching communities alike can benefit from conducting studies in international contexts to build

better understanding of educating L2 learners with disabilities from a more global perspective.

References

- Artiles, A. J., Rueda, R., Salazar, J. J., & Higuera, I. (2005). Within-group diversity in minority disproportionate representation: English language learners in urban school districts. *Exceptional Children, 71*(3), 282–300.
- Campbell, D. T., & Fiske, D. W. (1959). Convergent and discriminant validation by the multitrait-multimethod matrix. *Psychological Bulletin, 56*(2), 81–105.
- Creswell, J. W., & Miller, D. L. (2000). Determining validity in qualitative inquiry. *Theory into Practice, 39*(3), 124–130. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip3903_2
- Davies, B., & Harré, R. (1999). Positioning and personhood. In R. Harré & L. van Langenhove (Eds.), *Positioning theory* (pp. 60–73). Oxford, England: Blackwell.
- De Gaetano, Y. (2007). The role of culture in engaging Latino parents' involvement in school. *Urban Education, 42*(2), 145–162.
- Denton, J., Wexler, J., Vaughn, S., & Bryan, D. (2008). Intervention provided to linguistically diverse middle schools students with severe reading difficulties. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 23*(2), 79–89. doi:10.1111/j.1540-5826.2008.00266.x
- De Valenzuela, J. S., Copeland, S. R., & Qi, C. H. (2006). Examining educational equity: Revisiting the disproportionate representation of minority students in special education. *Exceptional Children, 72*(4), 425–441.
- Donovan, M. S., & Cross, C. T. (Eds.). (2002). *Minority students in special and gifted education*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
- Esparza Brown, J., & Doolittle, J. (2008). A cultural, linguistic, and ecological framework for response to intervention with English language learners. *Council for Exceptional Children, 66*–72.
- Geertz, C. (1973). Thick description: Toward an interpretive theory of culture. In C. Geertz (Ed.), *The interpretation of culture* (pp. 3–30). New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Gill, K. A. (1997). Instructional considerations for young children with autism: The rationale for visually cued instruction. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders, 27*(6), 697–714.
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1989). *Fourth generation evaluation*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Hansen-Thomas, H., & Caraghetto, A. (2010). What do mainstream middle school teachers think about their English language learners? A tri-state case study. *Bilingual Research Journal, 33*, 249–266. doi:10.1080/15235882.2010.502803
- Harré, R., & van Langenhove, L. (1999). *Positioning theory*. Oxford, England: Blackwell.

- Hibel, J., & Jasper, A. D. (2012). Delayed special education placement for learning disabilities among children of immigrants. *Social Forces*, *91*(2), 503–530. doi:10.1093/sf/sos092
- Kamps, D., Abbott, M., Greenwood, C., Arreaga-Mayer, C., Wills, H., Longstaff, J., . . . Walton, C. (2007). Use of evidence-based, small-group reading instruction for English language learners in elementary grades: Secondary-tier intervention. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, *30*(3), 153–168. doi:10.2307/30035561
- Klingner, J. K., Artiles, A. J., Kozleski, E., Harry, B., Zion, S., Tate, W., . . . Riley, D. (2005). Addressing the disproportionate representation of culturally and linguistically diverse students in special education through culturally responsive educational systems. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, *13*(38). Retrieved from <http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v13n38/>
- Klingner, J. K., & Harry, B. (2006). The special education referral and decision-making process for English language learners: Child study team meetings and placement conferences. *Teachers College Record*, *108*(11), 2247–2281. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9620.2006.00781.x
- Krashen, S. (1985). *The input hypothesis*. London, England: Longman.
- Levinson, B. A. U., Bucher, K., Harvey, L., Martinez, R., Pérez, B., Skiba, R., . . . Chung, C. (2007). *Latino language minority students in Indiana: Trends, conditions, and challenges*. Center for Evaluation & Education Policy. Retrieved from http://ceep.indiana.edu/projects/PDF/Latino_Language_Minority_Students_Indiana.pdf
- Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Meskill, C. (2005). Infusing English language learner issues throughout professional educator curricula: The training all teachers project. *Teachers College Record*, *107*(4), 739–756.
- National Center on Response to Intervention. (2010). Using response to intervention framework to improve student learning. Retrieved from http://www.rti4success.org/sites/default/files/Response_to_Intervention_Pocket_Guide_2.pdf
- National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities. (2012). *All about the IEP*. Retrieved from <http://nichcy.org/schoolage/iep>
- Norton Peirce, B. (1995). Social identity, investment, and language learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, *29*(1), 9–31. doi:10.2307/3587803
- Office of Civil Rights. (2005a). *Developing programs for English language learners: Lau v. Nichols*. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/ell/lau.html>
- Office of Civil Rights. (2005b). *Developing programs for English language learners: Glossary*. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/ell/glossary.html>
- Orosco, M. J., & Klingner, J. (2010). One school's implementation of RTI with English language learners: "Referring into RTI." *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, *43*(3), 269–288. doi:10.1177/0022219409355474
- Ortiz, A. A., Robertson, P. M., Wilkinson, C. Y., Liu, Y., McGhee, B. D., & Kushner, M. I. (2011). The role of bilingual education teachers in preventing

- inappropriate referrals of ELLs to special education: Implications for response to intervention. *Bilingual Research Journal: The Journal of the National Association for Bilingual Education*, 34(3), 316–333. doi:10.1080/15235882.2011.628608
- Pennsylvania Department of Education. (2001). *Educating students with limited English proficiency (LEP) and English language learners (ELL)*. Retrieved from http://www.education.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/pa_codes/7501
- Saldaña, J. (2009). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. London, England: Sage Publications.
- Samson, J. F., & Lesaux, N. K. (2009). Language-minority learners in special education: Rates and predictors of identification for service. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 42(2), 148–162. doi:10.1177/0022219408326221
- Stake, R. E. (2006). *Multiple case study analysis*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
- U.S. Census Bureau. (2010). States ranked according to per pupil elementary-secondary school system finance accounts: 2009-2010. Retrieved from http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/finance_insurance_real_estate/cb12-113.html
- U.S. Department of Education. (2006). *Building partnerships to help English language learners*. Retrieved from <http://www.ed.gov/nclb/methods/english/lepfactsheet.pdf>
- Viel-Ruma, K., Houchins, D. E., Jolivet, K., Fredrick, L. D., & Gama, R. (2010). Direct instruction in written expression: The effects on English speakers and English language learners with disabilities. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice*, 25(2), 97–108. doi:10.1111/j.1540-5826.2010.00307.x
- Wisconsin Education Association Council. (2014). *Special education inclusion*. Retrieved from http://www.weac.org/Issues_Advocacy/Resource_Pages_On_Issues_One/Special_Education/special_education_inclusion.aspx
- Yoon, B. (2008). Uninvited guests: The influence of teachers' role and pedagogies on the positioning of English language learners. *American Educational Research Journal*, 45(2), 495–522. doi:10.3102/0002831208316200
- Zehler, A. M., Fleischman, H. L., Hopstock, P. J., Stephenson, T. G., Pendzick, M. L., & Sapru, S. (2003). *Descriptive study of services to lep students and lep students with disabilities* (Contract No. ED-00-CO-0089). Retrieved from http://www.nclenet/files/rcd/BE021199/special_ed4.pdf

APPENDIX

Final Codebook

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Inductive Codes</i>
Personnel and Student Schedules	Scheduling Time
School Culture	School culture ESL priority/support Professional support Resources Location
ESL Program Models	Language program model Co-planning/co-teaching Communication between teachers
Expertise and Training	Teacher knowledge of ELL/SLA Teacher knowledge of disability Professional development Teacher role and responsibility
<i>Deductive Codes</i>	
Positioning discourse/action, ELL	
Positioning discourse/action, disability	
Tacit (unintentional) positioning	
Intentional positioning	